TENTATIVE, VERY TENTATIVE SYLLABUS: ENGLISH 200A
Spring 2008

M–1/28--Introduction
W–1/30--Eagleton, Introduction and Chap. 1

M–2/4--Eagleton, Intro & Chap. 1
W–2/6--

M–2/11--Computer Lab, CLV 131
W–2/13--Keesey, "General Introduction" & Sec. I "Historical Criticism I: Author as Context"

M–2/18--Computer Lab, CLV 131
W–2/20--Keesey, Sec. I "Historical Criticism I: Author as Context"

M–2/25--MLA Forword, Ch. 1, Ch. 2, & 3
W–2/27--Abrams, "New Criticism" pp. 246-48; Keesey, Sec. II "Formal Criticism: Poem as Context"

10 ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHIC ENTRIES DUE

M–3/3--MLA, Ch. 4
W–3/5--

M–3/10--MLA, Ch. 5
W–3/12--Abrams, "Reader Response & Reception Theory," pp. 268-73; Eagleton, Ch. 2;
Keesey, Sec. III "Reader-Response Criticism: Audience as Context"

M–3/17--
W–3/19--Keesey, Sec. III (cont.)

M–3/24--MLA: Appendix A & B
Marxist Criticism" pp. 241-46
Eagleton, Ch. 5 (recommended)
Keesey, Sec. IV "Mimetic Criticism: Reality as Context"

M–3/31--SPRING BREAK

M–4/7--BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE
W–4/9--

Eagleton, Ch. 3
W–4/16--Keesey, Sec. V "Intertextual Criticism: Literature as Context"
Methods & Materials--2

M–4/21--Keesey, Sec. V (cont.)
W–4/23--

    Eagleton, Ch. 4
    Keesey, Sec. VI ""Poststructural Criticism: Language as Context"
W–4/30--CRITICAL ESSAY DUE

M–5/5---Keesey, Sec. VI (cont.)
W–5/7--

    Keesey, Sec. VII "Historical Criticism: Culture as Context"
W–5/14--Keesey, Sec VII (cont.)

M–5/19--TAKE HOME FINAL DUE BY 9:00AM !

INSTRUCTOR--Dave Madden, Calaveras 156, Office Hrs--MW 11:00-12:00; M 6:00-6:30; &
    W 2:30-3:00 (for grad students). Office phone: 278-5623 or English Dept.: 278-6586; email:
maddendw@csus.edu. Entire syllabus posted at http://www.csus.edu/indiv/m/maddendw

EXPECTATIONS

*Complete all reading assignments by dates assigned
*Participate in class discussions
*Attend class regularly

Since this is not a correspondence course and since we meet only twice a week,
attendance is mandatory. A student will be allowed no more than two (2) unexcused
absence (and no more than two excused absences). Those who have more than 2
unexcused absences will have a whole grade deducted from the final grade for each
additional absence. Attendance will be taken at the start of each class. If a student
arrives after attendance has been taken, it is his/her responsibility to see that s/he is
recorded as being present. Excused absences will be granted only for extenuating
circumstances (neither general malaise nor an assignment in another class will do) and
must be cleared no later than the next class period. It is your responsibility to check your
attendance; my records are final.

I recommend you date your class notes in order to demonstrate your attendance
should there be a conflict in records. Be prepared to show those notes at the time that you
inquire about your absences.

Chronic tardiness is not allowed. Class begins on the hour; students arriving
consistently late by more than 5 minutes will be considered absent for any time missed.
The time missed will be calculated as absences which will affect the final grade as
explained above.

BOOKS
Abrams, M. H.  A Glossary of Literary Terms (required)
Eagleton, Terry.  Literary Theory: An Introduction (required)
Gibaldi, Joseph.  MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers (required)
Keesey, Donald.  Contexts for Criticism (required)
Ellison, Ralph.  Invisible Man
Joyce, James.  Dubliners
O’Neill, Eugene.  Long Day’s Journey into Night
Robinson, Marilynne.  Housekeeping

GRADING
The final course grade will be based on:

1 essay--50% final grade
1 bibliography--30% of final grade
1 take home final--20% final grade
class participation, effort, improvement--swing factors

*To miss any of the assignments above will result in an automatic failure of the course. NO EXCEPTIONS.

GRADING STANDARDS (as stated in CSUS catalog under "Grading System," p. 97)

A  Exemplary achievement of the course objectives. In addition to being clearly and significantly above the requirements, the work exhibited is of an independent, creative, contributory nature.

B  Superior achievement of the course objectives. The performance is clearly and significantly above the satisfactory fulfillment of course requirements.

C  Satisfactory achievement of the course objectives. The student is now prepared for advanced work or study.

D  Unsatisfactory achievement toward the course objectives, yet achievement of a sufficient proportion of the objectives so that it is not necessary to repeat the course unless required to do so by the academic department.

F  Ineffective achievement toward the course objectives. The student has made no clearly significant progress.
NB: I do not negotiate grades. If you have questions about performance on an assignment (not about the grade on same), I will be glad to explain, but I will not barter a grade up or down.

ASSIGNMENTS

BIBLIOGRAPHY--each student is responsible for preparing a bibliography of secondary sources on a writer from a list distributed on the first day. Students must choose only from that list. First come first served is the policy for author selections. Begin early.

CRITICAL ESSAY--each student must write an analytical essay on one of the four (and only one of those four) “anchor texts” selected for the class (Invisible Man, Dubliners, Long Day’s Journey into Night, Housekeeping, or Night). Students may choose from any of the critical methods discussed but must choose one, research critical approaches on the work chosen, and then place your approach within that community of views.

FINAL EXAM--one week before the due date, I will assign a short story and each student must prepare a bibliography of secondary materials on that work and take a critical position and analyze the work in light of that position.

GENERAL POLICIES

LATE PAPERS--in this class they do not exist; the date an assignment is due is the date the assignment is due. If there is some clear and compelling reason for a late paper (not great powder at one's favorite ski resort, general malaise, or an assignment in any other class), see or call me in advance of submission. All papers must be submitted in class the week before the essay is to be considered by the class.

TYPING--mandatory for all papers. Papers should be neat and free of extreme typographical errors. Double-space and use 1" margins. If using a computer or word processor, use no less than and no more than a 12 pt font. Number pages, beginning with second page, in upper right hand corner, and secure pages only with a staple in the upper left hand corner. On a cover page center the title and put in the lower right hand corner your name, the date the assignment is due, the title of the novel you are writing about, the course number (200A), and my name.

MISCELLANEOUS--Students must keep abreast of assignments; I will not accept the excuse that because someone misses a class s/he did not know there was a change in the syllabus or an assignment. If there are any changes in the syllabus, they will be announced in class, and students are then responsible for these on dates announced.

BEHAVIOR---recently a professor in another department did a survey of standards of behavior, and the results suggested there is some confusion about what is (and is not) acceptable in university classes. She has advised that professors define their standards, so here are mine:
certain fundamental standards of behavior must be observed in this class. Common courtesy and respect is demanded of all enrolled in this class. Therefore you are not to read the newspaper or a textbook for another course once the class meeting has begun. **Turn off your cell phones**; no one is to take or make a call during class. Likewise, no one is to work on assignments for another course in this class. Do not talk or otherwise interrupt me or another student who is speaking, and under no condition will anyone be permitted to sleep during class lectures or discussions. Those who cannot or will not follow these obvious rules of behavior will be counted as absent for that class period and may be subject to dismissal from the course.

**STUDY QUESTIONS TO KEESEY’S CONTEXTS FOR CRITICISM**

**GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

1.) What does Keesey mean on p. 1 when he says there “can be no unmediated response” to a work?

2.) When he says that literary criticism involves the “art of interpreting literature,” what do you make of that phrase?

3.) Do you understand his illustration on p.3?

4.) What does he mean on p. 7 when he says that “the best literary criticism must be an eclectic combination of all contexts.” Is that reasonable, esp. given what Hirsch says on pp. 20-21?

**HISTORICAL CRITICISM--I**

**Introduction**

1.) Keesey says on p. 12 that it’s often “difficult to use specific pieces of biographical info to explain the meaning of a lit. work.” What about a writer’s life; how is it important to the interpretive process?

2.) What does he mean when he says on p. 13 that poems are not like other documents?

3.) What about the issue of our readings being guided by period standards (p. 14)? Should we criticize Melville for not being a feminist; Sherwood Anderson for using the “N” word in “I Want to Know Why”; or praising Margaret Atwood’s “Rape Fantasies” for being written by a woman but a weaker story if written by a man?

4.) What about the student who couldn’t understand particular cultural or historical details?

**E. D. Hirsch**
1.) Why should we study the “older tradition” esp. in order to maintain the “vitality of literature” (18)?

2.) Hirsch says that a critic can construe a poem “wrongly” and that criticism must be founded on “A self-critical construction of textual meaning...on objective interpretation” (18). What does that mean?

3.) He speaks of the speaker or author’s “subjective act is formally necessary to verbal meaning...” (19)? What does that mean and how can we determine this?

4.) Do you agree w/ Hirsch’s conclusion on p. 20 that “the meaning of [of the Wordsworth passage] is essentially ambiguous”?

5.) What do you think of his 4 steps for verification of a reading (p. 24: legitimacy, correspondence, generic appropriateness, & plausibility or coherence)?

Watson

1.) What do you think about his assertion on p. 32 about poetic pedigrees fallen in oblivion? [good, common sense; no argument]

2.) What do you think of his final assertion that “[hist crit] commonly forbids explanations that run counter to what the poet could have thought or felt”?

FORMAL CRITICISM--II

1.) What are the primary principles underlying this approach?

2.) Keesey proposes the use of the term “objective criticism.” What does he mean by this?

3.) He next proposes the term “formal criticism”; what does he mean by this?

4.) What is K’s point about formalism and mimesis?

Irony as Principle of Structure, Brooks

1.) What is Brook's pt when he talks about poets just telling us what they want to say rather than going thru all the obscurity of poetry (85)?

2.) Explain I. A. Richards notion of the theory of "poetry of synthesis" (86).

3.) What is Brooks suggesting with his title about irony?
4.) Brooks insists early in the essay that "context endows the particular word or image or statement w/ significance" (85). Yet when discussing the Randall Jarrell poem he mentions Pontius Pilot, the book of Matthew in the Bible and the notion of a multiplicity of meanings?

_"The Relevant Context of a Literary Text," Ellis_

1.) Ellis's remarks about the nature of literature on p. 92 recall some of Eagleton's in his introduction. What constitutes literature for Ellis?

2.) Summarize Ellis's argument opposing the idea that the more we know [about a literary work] the better . . . " (94).

3.) Interpret what you think Ellis means by the "whole society for which it is a literary text" (95).

4.) How does Ellis account for "the literary tradition"(97)?

5.) How is this essay relevant to the formalist approach?

**READER RESPONSE--III**

1.) I. A. Richards, who is often thought to be a precursor to New Criticism, is mentioned in this context; why?

2.) What does Keesey suggest is the point of any criticism?

3.) Both Eagleton & Keesey mention phenomenology; what is this?

4.) What is the idea behind the reader response approach?

_"Readers & the Concept of the Implied Reader," Iser_

1.) Who does Iser say is the "hypothetical reader"?

2.) Who then is the ideal reader and how does this figure differ from the hypothetical reader?

3.) What is the point of mentioning the 3 other reader response theorists?

4.) Who is the implied reader?

5.) He speaks of the reader’s role as a “textual structure” and a structured act”; what is his pt?

_"The Miller’s Wife....," Holland_
1.) What is Holland’s thesis, the governing idea behind this essay?

2.) What is the pt w/ the lima bean diagram?

3.) How does Holland answer the frequently asked question about every reading simply being a totally subjective experience?

4.) How does he answer the question about misreadings of a work?

MIMETIC CRITICISM--IV

“The Uses of Psychology,” Bernard Paris

1.) On p. 217 Paris says that “Not all approaches are equally valid: the most satisfying kind of criticism is that which is somehow congruent w/ the work & which is faithful to the distribution of interests in the work itself.” Explain and compare with Nuttall’s objections that poetic lang is never purely formal.

2.) On p. 218 he writes, “One of the basic problems of the novel as a genre is that it attempts to integrate impulses which are disparate & often in conflict. The problematic existential portrayal of reality defies, by its very nature, authorial attempts at analysis & judgment.” Do you agree?

3.) On p. 219 he states that “if we come to novels expecting moral wisdom & coherent teleological structures we are usually going to be disappointed. . . . the mimetic impulse that dominates most novels often works against total integration & thematic adequacy.” What do you think?

4.) What do you make of the assertion on p. 222 that the “function of criticism is to talk about what the artist knows, and to do that it must speak in the language of science and philosophy rather than the language of art.”

“Beyond the Net: Feminist Criticism as a Moral Criticism,” Josephine Donovan

1.) What does she mean with her discussion of the “authenticity of female characters” (p. 225)?

2.) What is she getting at when discussing Bergman and Allen and complaining that women characters fulfill only “superficial aesthetic purposes” (227)?
3.) Move to the ¶ at the bottom of p. 227; how do you interpret the comment that we should not identify w/ a char’s suffering when that suffering “breaks the boundaries of appropriateness w/in the moral context of the work?”

4.) How do you respond to her claim on p. 230: “All moral criticism of lit is based on the assumption that lit affects us, that it changes our attitudes & our behavior; in other words it assumes that lit can precipitate action, harmful or otherwise, in the ‘real’ world.”

**INTERTEXTUAL CRITICISM--V**

**Introduction**

1.) What is “intertextual criticism and how does it differ from other approaches we’ve seen?

2.) What does Keesey mean when he says on p. 268 that “all poems are to some degree ‘mock’ forms”?

3.) How does Keesey define or describe structuralism? (274f)

"Critical Path," Northrop Frye

1.) What is the basis for Frye's attempt at critical correction? (280)

2.) What specifically are the problems he sees with all forms of extraliterary criticism?

3.) What does Frye mean by the term "archetype"?

4.) What is his point about history and historical criticism?

5.) Now that he's created a hermetic world of lit, what does Frye suggest we do w/ history, biography, psychology, etc., in other words all the extraliterary concerns?

6.) Explain Frye's reformulation of Schiller's two responses to lit--naive and sentimental? (285)

"Structuralism & Lit," Jonathan Culler

1.) How does Culler define structuralism?

2.) What is the point of his contrasting New Criticism and structuralism?

3.) As a structuralist, Culler appears to attempt the very thing Eagleton found impossible--to define lit. How does Culler define lit?
4.) After discussing the process of naturalization, Culler discusses two kinds of codes which aid in this process of naturalization--the semic code and the symbolic code. Explain these and their importance.

“From the Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse,” Mikhail Bakhtin (ditto) PDF version available at web site

1.) What is parody to Bakhtin?

2.) What is his point about polyglossia; what does this mean and how does it relate to parody?

3.) What is his point about literary styles becoming “dialogized”?

4.) Having said all this, what does it have to do w/ the novel as a genre?

POSTSTRUCTURALISM--VI

"Introduction," Keesey

1.) How does Keesey describe Derrida's philosophical point of view?

2.) What does all this have to do w/ notions of empiricism?

3.) In spite of their deep affinities w/ the structuralists, the deconstructionists have fundamental differences w/ them. What are these differences?

“Structure, Sign, & Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences,” Derrida

1.) What is the point of the opening ¶s & the idea of center?

2.) What does he mean when he says on p. 355 that “there is no transcendental or privileged signified” and that this conception should be extended to the “word sign itself”?

3.) What is his point on p. 357 when he says that “language bears w/in itself the necessity of its own critique”?

4.) What is the point of the discussion of bricolage on p. 358?

5.) What is the point of the discussion on freeplay on p. 391?

“Semiology and Rhetoric,” de Man

1.) What is the occasion for the writing of this essay?
2.) What is the point of the Archie Bunker reference? (368)

3.) What does he demonstrate with the analysis of Yeats? (369)

4.) What is the point with the extended treatment of the Proust passage?

5.) What is de Man’s ultimate point?

“What Makes an Interpretation Acceptable?,” Fish (ditto) **PDF version available at web site**

1.) What is the point of the consideration of different interpretation of Blake’s “Tyger”? [406f]

2.) What is the point of the reader response approach to Faulkner’s “A Rose for Emily”? (409)

3.) So where does all this lead Fish; what’s the point?

4.) Why does he pick on Stephen Booth and his reasonable introduction to his study of Shakespearean sonnets?

**HISTORICAL CRITICISM II--VII**

**Introduction**

1.) What ideas of assumptions does this diverse group share? [410]

2.) How is Foucault significant in this context? [411]

3.) Who are the New Historicists?

4.) Who are the culture critics and what is their concern? [412]

5.) What are the shortcomings or objections to this approach? [414]

"Literature & History," Eagleton

1.) What is Marxist criticism? [420]

2.) What is art in this context? [421]

3.) What is the point of the discussion of Eliot's *The Waste land*? [424]

4.) What is the relationship b/w literature and ideology? [425]
“Literature, History, Politics,” Belsey

1.) What is the point of using the exam and paper topics early in the essay? [428]

2.) Why does she discuss structuralism and deconstructionism in this context? [429]

3.) What is the point of discussing Foucault’s study of Pierre Rivière? [430]

4.) What is she getting at w/ the discussion of Lawrence Stone’s *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500-1800*? [431]

5.) What is she suggesting when discussing Literature” [473]

6.) What, finally, is she proposing as an alternative to tradition and current methods of reading and analysis? [473]

“Culture,” Greenblatt

1.) What is culture? [437]

2.) What is the relationship b/w culture and literature? [438]

3.) What is the point of the discussion of Spenser and Dickens? [439]

**STUDY QUESTIONS TO EAGLETON’S LITERARY THEORY**

**Introduction: What is Literature?**

1.) What answer does Eagleton propose for the central question this chapter poses?

2.) So what is the point of asking a question only to demonstrate there is no single or final answer?

3.) What are we left with?

**Chap. 1, The Rise of English**

1.) What is Eagleton's point behind this chapter?

2.) What is his point about mentioning the Romantics?

3.) How and why was English taught in academia?
Chap. 3, "Structuralism & Semiotics"

1.) How does Eagleton say that Northrop Frye conceives of literature, and compare this to the New Critics?

2.) How does Eagleton describe structuralism?

3.) Explain Saussure's contributions.

4.) What is Jakobson's contribution to this system of thought?

5.) What is the distinction b/w structuralism and semiotics; these terms are often used synonymously?

6.) Eagleton finally doesn't have a great deal of admiration for structuralism; what drawback or deficiencies does he detect?

Chap. 4, “Post-Structuralism”

1.) What are the implications of Saussure's theories, esp. difference, and the development of post-structural thought? (pp.127-28)

2.) What are the implications of the idea of the sign being unstable? (p. 129)

3.) Explain the significance of the terms "writing" and "textuality." (p. 138)

4.) Where does Eagleton feel the origins for post-structural thought originate? (p. 142)

5.) What are the results of post-structural thought in academic discourse? (p. 144)

6.) What relationship does Eagleton see b/w New Criticism and Deconstructionism? (p. 146)
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MAJOR REFERENCE SOURCES

The following is by no means a comprehensive list; however, these titles represent major sources for any scholar to consult. I have included sources for both British and American literatures.

MLA International Bibliography

Annual Bibliography of English Language and Literature

Essay and General Literature Index

Humanities Index

Book Review Index

Index to Book Reviews in the Humanities

Dissertation Abstracts International

New Cambridge Bibliography of British Literature

Literary History of the United States

Bibliography of United States Literature

Bibliography of British Literary Bibliographies

The Year's Work in English Studies

American Literary Scholarship

Dictionary of National Biography


Dictionary of Literary Biography

Guide to Reference Books

Guide to Reference Material

World Bibliography of Bibliographies
Anyone doing research today must consult available electronic resources. Many of these are available through the CSUS library’s home page (http://library.csus.edu/), but in order to access these you must have a SacLink account (provided free by the university). To create a SacLink account visit https://www.saclink.csus.edu/saclink/register/register1.aspx or one of the computer labs on campus. Here are some of the most useful.

**Search Engines:**

There are many of these, but these three are particularly helpful.

*Google*–http://www.google.com  
*AltaVista*–http://www.altavista.com  
*Dogpile*–http://www.dogpile.com  
*Copernic*–http://www.copernic.com

**Electronic Indexes and Bibliographies:**

*EBSCO*–includes some full text entries & contains *MLA Bibliography, Academic Search Premier, Eric,*  
*OCLC*–which contains *ArticleFirst, Books in Print, Eric (good for Comp/Rhet concentration), WorldCat,* & *WorldCatDissertations*  
*JSTOR* (some full text entries)  
*Project Muse* (some full text entries)  
*Lexis-Nexis: Academic Universe*  
*Proquest*  
*Factiva* (select “Publications Library” for excellent database of newspaper articles and book reviews)

**Other Libraries:**

*Melvyl* (for UC holdings)  
*State of California Library*
A QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE TO MLA CITATION FORMATTING

BOOK (see 4.6)


1. Author’s full name (last name first)
2. Full title (including any subtitle)
3. Edition (if the book is a second or later edition)
4. Number of the volume and the total number of volumes (if the book is a multivolume work)
5. City of publication
6. Shortened form of the publisher's name (see 6.5)
7. Year of publication

ARTICLE IN A BOOK (4.6.9)


ARTICLE IN A SCHOLARLY JOURNAL (see 4.7.1-4)


1. Author's name
2. Title of the article
3. Title of the journal
4. Volume number
5. Year of publication
6. Inclusive page numbers of the article (i.e., the number of the page on which the article begins, a hyphen, and the number of the page on which the article ends)

NEWSPAPER OR MAGAZINE ARTICLE (see 4.7.5-6)


1. Author's name
2. Title of the article
3. Title of the periodical
4. Date of publication
5. Inclusive page numbers of the article

INTERVIEW (4.8.8)


INTERNET SOURCE (see 4.9.1-4)

1. Author's name
2. Title of the document
3. Title of the scholarly project, database, periodical, or professional or personal site
4. Name of the editor of the scholarly project or database
5. Date of electronic publication or last update
6. Name of the institution or organization sponsoring or associated with the site
7. Date when you accessed the source
8. Network address, or URL


Besides the data needed for the works-cited list, it is useful to add other information to items in the working bibliography. For example, if you derive a source from a bibliographic work, record where you found the reference, in case you need to recheck it. Always also note the library call number, the network address (URL), or other identifying information required to locate each work.