

draft

McClure

English 220 Syllabus: Spring, 2007

Course Project: This course introduces several reading strategies central to contemporary critical practice. Each of these strategies focuses on a different aspect of narrative, each has its own technical terminology, and each provides a specific set of critical practices for analyzing literary (and non-literary) narratives. You will find some of these terms and practices more familiar than others, but each will, if studied and applied with care, extend your repertory of critical reading skills. The challenge, in each case, will be to set aside your already honed skills in order to try out new modes of reading. The different strategies will be introduced in lecture, with the help of passages from the "Critical Concepts and Categories Archive." The purpose of discussion sections, paper assignments, and tests is to provide opportunities for thinking through, trying out and using them.

Readings:

Dashiell Hammett	<u>Nightmare Town</u>
Charlotte Bronte	<u>Jane Eyre</u>
Joseph Conrad	<u>Heart of Darkness</u>
Michael Ondaatje	<u>The English Patient</u>
Leslie Marmon Silko	<u>Ceremony</u>
Tony Kushner	<u>Angels in America</u>

Course Schedule:

- Week 1: Introduction (Mark Madden graphics)
- Weeks 2-3 **Structural Analysis/ The Black Dahlia** (formula fiction, narrative conventions, and the idea of choice: Todorov, Madden)
- Weeks 4-6 **Character Development and Discourse Analysis/ Jane Eyre** (character, character projects, discourse, discursive field, discourse communities: Bakhtin)
- Week 7 *Mid-term*; discussion of questions
- Weeks 8-9 **Ethical Analysis/ Heart of Darkness** (the novel as "equipment for living"; a means of testing "the life and death possibilities of different styles of living: Burke, Bersani)
- Weeks 10-12 **Social and Historical Analysis/ Ceremony** (social landscape, actants, drama; history; national allegory: Jameson)
- Weeks 13-14 **Ontological Analysis/ Angels in America** (ontological landscapes and conflicts: Pavel, McHale)