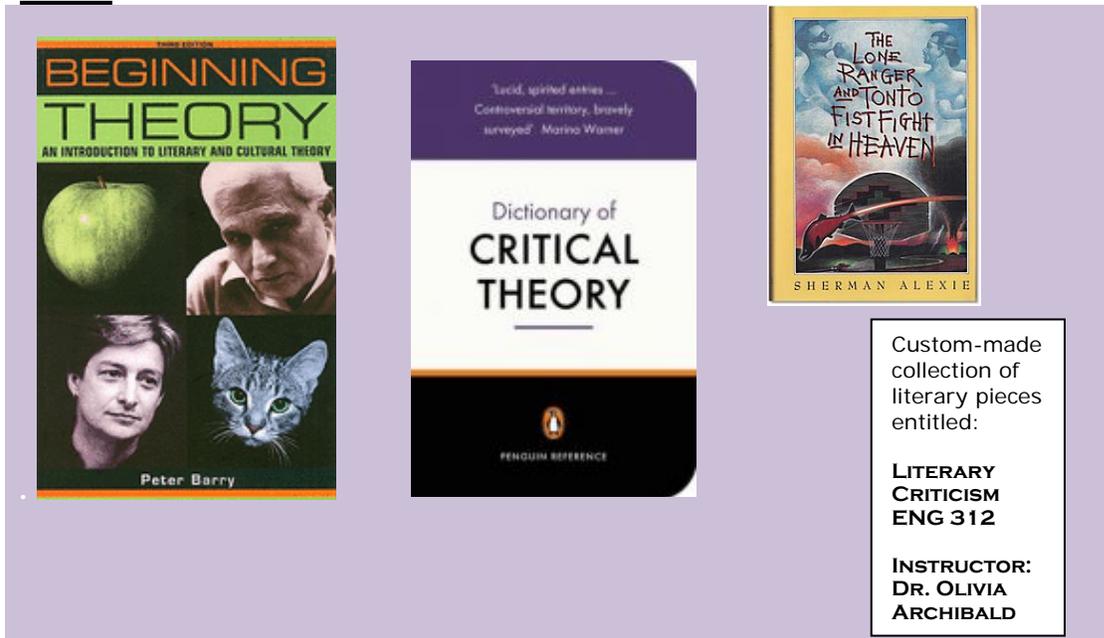


**ENG 312 Literary Criticism**  
**Saint Martin's University**  
**Fall 2012, 2:30-3:50 pm TTH**

Dr. Olivia Archibald  
Office: O'Grady Library U3  
Phone: 438-4357 (using email is a much faster way to reach me)  
Email: [oarchibald@stmartin.edu](mailto:oarchibald@stmartin.edu)

**Office hours:** Mondays, 1- 4 pm; Fridays, 11-noon and 1-2 pm; and other hours by appointment.

**Books:**



Barry, Peter. *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*, 3rd edition. Manchester Univ Press, 2009.

Macey, David. *Dictionary of Critical Theory*. NY: Penquin, 2001.

Alexie, Sherman. *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*. NY: Grove, 1993.

*Literary Criticism* (an anthology of selected "literature" created for this class). Chicago: McGraw Hill, 2010.

**Assigned handouts, including sections from these three texts:**

Eagleton, Terry. *Literary Theory: An Introduction*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota, 1996.

Bishop, Elizabeth. *The Complete Poems, 1927-1979*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1983.

Hall, Donald. *Literary and Cultural Theory*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2001.

**Course Description:** ENG 312: Literary Criticism is a one-semester course introducing students to many of the contemporary theories underpinning our interpretations of and assumptions about literature. Readings and writing assignments emphasize textual interpretation and the examination of the systems (theories, schools, lenses) we use to arrive at meaning, textuality, and interpretation. The course is designed to further students' understanding, enjoyment, and appreciation of "literature" by examining contemporary literary theory and its various applications in literary analysis. Kinds of literary theory examined include Formalist/New Critic, Psychological, Marxist, Feminist, Structuralist, and various incarnations of Cultural/Postmodern/Poststructuralist Criticisms. Assignments have been developed to hone skills in textual interpretation and critical thinking.

As a student in this class, you will fully participate in class discussions, write weekly response papers, take two exams, and complete two papers. Exams include course concepts (schools/theories of criticism, terms, and major players) and application of the concepts via an interpretation of a piece of writing.

### **Course Assumptions**

- No interpretation of literature is innocent of theory.
- “Literature” allows us to question ideological bases of society and psychological aspects of Self in ways that are otherwise often difficult, restricted, or impossible.

### **Course Goals:**

Literary Criticism is designed to enable students:

1. To enjoy and appreciate the careful reading of literary and cultural texts and to articulate a thoughtful and well-defended response to each text studied.
2. To become familiar with and be able to identify and explain the various contemporary approaches and schools of literary criticism and their major differences.
3. To demonstrate via orality and writing the careful reading of literary and cultural texts.
4. To demonstrate knowledge of key terminology in literary theories.
5. To further develop skills in reading the writings of literary scholars and theorists.
6. To demonstrate the ability to generate and articulate personal responses to literary, cultural, and critical texts, and to explain the premises and assumptions underlying these personal responses.
7. To discover and make use of the tools of literary research and criticism.
8. To demonstrate the ability to write a critical essay that states a clear thesis and supports it persuasively, integrating literary research with personal ideas.

### **Course Objectives**

After completing this course, students should demonstrate competence in using:

- contemporary schools of criticism to interpret literary and cultural texts, both orally and in writing
- concepts and terms in contemporary literary theory and criticism, orally and in writing
- research methods, techniques, and skills
- composition of an essay drawing on research from recent literary scholarship and relevant to interpretation of a literary piece within one of our course texts
- appropriate MLA documentation style guidelines
- effective skills of critical thinking in oral and written communication of ideas, supporting arguments, and discussion of examples from the text and other sources
- skills in oral presentation and oral discussion

### **Expectations:**

1. **Attendance.** You are expected to attend each class and come to class on time. Repeated absence and/or excessive lateness will affect the Daily Work grade in this course. Excessive absences (more than 8) will result in failing the course. It is important to realize that missing class will affect your course grade. A total of 20% of your grade is based on daily/weekly work. If you are not in class, you have failed to do that class’s activity. I take attendance each meeting; I mark unexcused absences as a zero for the day. The easiest way to fail the course is not to attend class.
2. **Class Preparation.** You should come to class with all assignments carefully read and be prepared to actively engage yourself in all class activities. These activities include thinking, listening, speaking, and writing involving such projects as individual activities, small group work, and large group discussion.
3. **Due Dates.** You are expected to honor all due dates for reading and writing assignments. Late assignments are penalized 1/2 of a letter grade for each class period late. No late papers or other assignments will be accepted after **3:30 pm on December 11.**
4. **Writing Assignments and Exams.** In this class you will take three exams, write informal weekly responses, and write two papers.

6. **Course Texts.** To be in this class, students must purchase course texts and bring these to class. This is not a course to take if you do not buy your books.

5. **Academic Honesty.** All work must be original (your own) and, when needed, properly documented. This class abides with the university's policy on plagiarism as detailed in the *SMU Student Handbook*. If you plagiarize, you will receive an F on the assignment, you may receive an F for the course, and the university may take disciplinary action against you.



### **One-Page Responses**

Beginning **Monday, September 5**, you should begin the practice of emailing me a weekly one-page response to something(s) read the past week or (and) something discussed in class the previous week. This one-page response will be due in my email **by midnight on Mondays**.

There is no wrong way to do this one-page response, other than not doing it or not writing a full page (can be longer, but not shorter) or not making the Monday midnight deadline – late responses will be not accepted. (Also please note my "no-class notes" policy at the end of this paragraph.) Perhaps you will write about what you understand now from the readings that week. Perhaps you will write about a question or questions you have about the readings. Perhaps you will use these writings for both. Perhaps you use these from time to time to share your drafts of one or both of the papers assigned this semester. Responses must be text-centered/course centered. **Do not send me your notes from class as part of this assignment unless they are written in paragraphed, coherent, connected sentences.**

You can miss up to 2 weekly writings without penalty. You will have an opportunity to turn in up to 14 responses in total. (For my discerning readers, each response is worth a total of .8% of the course grade.)

### **Evaluation**

Weekly one-page responses = 10 %

Daily work (completion and discussion of reading assignments; listening, thinking, and speaking activities; group work; presentations) = 10%.

Paper One = 15 %

Paper Two = 20 %

Exams on the assigned readings = 45%

Exam One = 15%

Exam Two = 15%

Final = 15%

### **Special Arrangements**

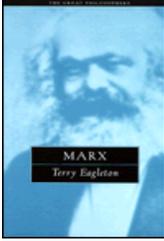
If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, if you have medical and/or safety concerns to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please see me as soon as possible.

Course Syllabus Fall 2012

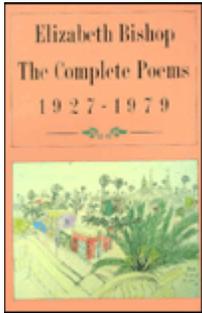
\*Asterisks in the syllabus below represent selections found in your *Literary Criticism* anthology compiled for the class. Other reading assignments come from the three other course texts (Barry, Macey, and Alexie) or come from handouts.

DATE	FOCUS	ASSIGNMENTS DUE
<b>Formalism/New Criticism/Liberal Humanism</b>		
<u>Aug. 28</u>	Introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Textbooks bought (or immediately after class)</li> </ul>
<u>Aug. 30</u>	What is literature?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Macey, "Canon"</li> <li>• *Ashbery, "A Prison All the Same," 16</li> <li>• Barry, "Reoccurring Ideas in Critical Theory," 33-35</li> </ul>
<u>T Sept. 4</u>	What is literature?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eagleton's "Introduction" (<b>handout</b>—read slowly and carefully.)</li> <li>• *Jonathan Edwards, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," 54-65</li> <li>• *Dylan, "A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall," 179-180</li> </ul>
<u>Sept. 6</u>	What is literature?  Next week...Formalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• *Nathaniel Hawthorne, "The Birthmark," 82-92</li> <li>• Macey, "DWEM"</li> </ul>
<u>T Sept. 11</u>	The Rise of English Formalism and New Criticism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eagleton, "The Rise of English," 15-20 (<b>handout</b>)</li> <li>• Hall, "The New Criticism and Formalist Analysis," 13-20 (<b>handout</b>)</li> </ul>
<u>Sept. 13</u>	Formalism and New Criticism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barry, "Ten Tenets of <del>Liberal Humanism</del> Formalism/New Criticism," 16-20</li> <li>• Macey, "Russian Formalism" and "New Criticism"</li> </ul>
<u>T Sept. 18</u>	Formalism/New Criticism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bishop, "Sestina" (<b>handout</b>)</li> <li>• *Carver, "What We Talk About When We Talk About Love," 31-39</li> </ul>

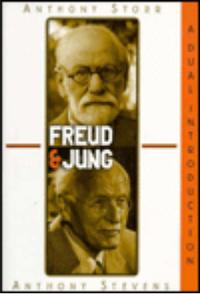
## Marxist Criticism

DATE	FOCUS	ASSIGNMENTS DUE
<u>Sept. 20</u>	Marxist Criticism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hall, “Marxist and Materialist Analysis,” 73-80 (<b>handout</b>)</li> <li>• Macey, “Marxist Criticism”</li> </ul>
<u>T Sept. 25</u>	Marxist Criticism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barry, Chapter 8, 150-53 and p. 161.</li> <li>• Alexie, “Every Little Hurricane,” 1-11.</li> <li>• *Piercy, “To the Pay Toilet,” 111</li> </ul>
<u>Sept. 27</u>	Marxist Criticism and Althusser: <b>Ideology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barry, Chapter 8, 156-160</li> <li>• Macey, “Althusser, Louis” (Macey’s definition of “Ideology” is too simplistic...best to ignore)</li> <li>• Bishop’s “A Miracle for Breakfast” (<b>handout</b>)</li> </ul>
<u>T Oct. 2</u>	Marxist Criticism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• *Tyler, “Average Waves in Unprotected Waters,” 138-143</li> </ul> 
<u>Oct. 4</u>	Exam, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussions around the question of “What is literature?”</li> <li>• Formalism/New Criticism School of Critical Theory</li> <li>• Marxist School of Critical Theory</li> </ul>	

## Feminist Criticism

DATE	FOCUS	ASSIGNMENTS DUE
<u>T Oct. 9</u>	Feminist Criticism  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barry, 116-124; and 128-130</li> <li>• *Chopin, “The Story of an Hour,” 40-42</li> <li>• *Glaspell, ”A Jury of Her Peers,” 66-81</li> </ul>
<u>Oct. 11</u>	Fall Break	During the break, read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hall, “Feminist Analysis” (<b>handout</b>)</li> <li>• Macey, “Feminist Criticism” and “Kristeva, Julia” and “Butler, Judith”</li> <li>• Alexie, pp. 12-75 (6 more stories)</li> </ul>
<u>T Oct. 16</u>	Feminist Criticism: Kristeva (psychological) and Butler (Marxist Althusserian)  And application	For today’s class, have read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• *Plath, “Mushrooms,” 112-114</li> <li>• From your readings in Alexie’s collection, we will focus today on his story “Crazy Horse Dreams,” 37-42</li> </ul>
<u>Oct. 18</u>	Feminist Criticism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bishop, “Roosters” (<b>handout</b>)</li> <li>• Bishop, “In the Waiting Room” (<b>handout</b>)</li> </ul> 
<u>T Oct. 23</u>	Feminist Criticism  <b>Paper assigned – due Nov. 8</b>	*Cisneros, “Woman Hollering Creek,” 44-51

## Psychological Schools of Criticism and Quick Look at New Historicism

DATE	FOCUS	ASSIGNMENTS DUE
<u>Oct. 25</u>	Psychological Schools of Criticism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hall, “Psychoanalytic Analysis,” 103-111 (<b>handout</b>)</li> <li>• Macey, “Psychoanalytic Criticism”</li> </ul>
<u>T Oct. 30</u>	Psychological Criticism: Freud <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> ...and a wee bit of Jung	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barry, 92-103</li> <li>• Macey, “Freud, Sigmund” and related terms</li> <li>• Frost’s, “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening” (<b>handout</b>)</li> </ul> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Macey, “Jung, Carl Gustav” and related terms</li> <li>• Blumenthal, “The Woman Inside” (<b>handout</b>)</li> </ul>
<u>Nov. 1</u>	Lacan’s Psychological Criticism: Taking Freudian Theory to Postmodern Heights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barry, 104-115</li> <li>• Macey, “Lacan, Jacques”</li> </ul>
<u>T Nov. 6</u>	Psychological Schools of Criticism ...interpreting a story	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• *Beattie, “The Burning House,” 17-26.</li> </ul>
<u>Nov. 8</u>	Literary School: New Historicism (quick look)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barry 166-168; 172-73.</li> <li>• <b>Paper due.</b></li> </ul>
<u>T Nov. 13</u>	Exam, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feminist School of Critical Theory</li> <li>• Psychological Schools of Critical Theory</li> <li>• New Historicism School of Critical Theory</li> </ul>	<div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p style="text-align: right;">Elizabeth Bishop</p>

## Postcolonial Theory

DATE	FOCUS	ASSIGNMENTS DUE
<u>Nov. 15</u>	Postcolonial Theory <b>Second paper assigned – due Dec. 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barry, 185-191</li> <li>• Hall, 265-274 (handout)</li> <li>• Macey, “Postcolonial Theory”</li> <li>• *Rodriguez, “Aria: Memoir of a Bilingual Childhood”</li> </ul>
<u>Nov. 20-22</u>	No class	Finish Alexie’s collection of stories
<u>T Nov. 27</u>	Postcolonial Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alexie’s stories</li> </ul>

## Structuralist and Poststructuralist/Deconstructionist Criticisms

<u>DATE</u>	FOCUS	ASSIGNMENTS DUE
<u>Nov. 29</u>	Structuralism Workshop on “Hello, David”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barry, 38-48</li> <li>• Hall, 135-138 (<b>handout</b>)</li> <li>• Macey, “Structrionalism” and “Saussure, Ferdinaund” and “Barthes, Roland”</li> </ul>
<u>Nov. 29</u>	Poststructuralism/Foucault	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barry, 51-71</li> <li>• Hall, 161-168 (<b>handout</b>)</li> <li>• Macey, “Postruactionalism” and “Foucault, Michel”</li> </ul>
<u>T Dec. 4</u>	Deconstruction/Derrida <b>2nd paper due</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> paper due <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Macey, “Derrida, Jacques”</li> <li>• TBD</li> </ul>
<u>Dec. 6</u>	Review for exam: Eliot, “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock workshop	Eliot, “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock ( <b>handout</b> )
<u>2:30, Dec. 11</u>	<b>Final</b>	

