

# Literary Criticism

I came to theory because I was hurting—the pain within me was so intense that I could not go on living. I came to theory desperate, wanting to comprehend—to grasp what was happening around and within me. Most importantly, I wanted to make the hurt go away. I saw in theory then a location for healing.

—bell hooks, “[Theory as Liberatory Practice](#)”

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Independent Study

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.; Tuesdays 1:45-5:45 p.m. (by appointment only)

Office location: Armstrong Hall 222

Make an appointment: <https://calendly.com/challener-scott/office-hours>

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Per the course catalog: “English 300 is a survey of the development of key concepts in literary theory from Plato’s ideas on the arts and society through current theorists. Students will examine primary works by these thinkers and synthesize major concepts to produce critical approaches to texts.”

## REQUIRED COURSE TEXTS

There are no required texts for this course. Instead, texts will be provided via hyperlink and PDF on the course website.

## RECOMMENDED COURSE TEXTS

*Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, Third Edition (Norton, 2018). ISBN: 9780393602951.

Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, Anniversary Edition (Blackwell, 2008). ISBN: 9781405179218.

Jonathan Culler, *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction*, Second Edition (Oxford UP, 2011).

Additional assigned texts will be provided on the course website.

## 15% PARTICIPATION

Regular attendance and active, thoughtful participation in class are required. Classes will be a mix of lecture, small-group and large-group discussion. Discussion requires every student to take the intellectual risk of offering observations, ideas, and arguments in class in response to one another and to the instructor. You aren't supposed to know all the answers in advance, but you are required to come to class prepared to join in a communal effort to figure things out. If you are apprehensive about speaking in class, please see me during office hours at the start of the semester.

The intentional use of laptops, smartphones, tablets, or smartwatches is permitted in class. Be mindful of their power to distract from discussion.

If you have a special obligation that will require you to miss several classes (e.g. religious observances, varsity athletics), please talk with me at the beginning of the semester. If you fall ill or miss class for a family emergency, please contact me as soon as possible. If you miss five classes without excuse, the maximum participation mark you can earn is a C. Missing more than five meetings will normally result in a failing grade for the course.

Lateness, lack of preparation, and disruptive behavior will affect the participation grade. Students who arrive late to class more than three times will receive one absence. Students who arrive later than 15 minutes past the start time will be counted as absent for that class period.

## GROUPME

Our course has a GroupMe. Click on the link to join. Our GroupMe will function as an informal space for “uncritical” responses that zero in on what is typically left out of traditional “critical” interpretation. See the [assignment sheet](#) for details on this difference.

## 20% DISCUSSION BOARD POSTS

Responses to readings (and other assigned material) to be submitted to the Discussion Board on Blackboard. These posts practice key ideas and skills from the class. One “primary post,” or initial written response (approx. 250 words +/-) is due Thursdays by midnight EDT. Two shorter “secondary posts” or responses to peers (approx. 150 words +/-) are due Sundays by midnight EDT. NOTE: You are permitted to miss two secondary posts without penalty. If you complete all posts satisfactorily, you will earn an A. See the [assignment sheet](#) for more details.

## 20% ESSAY

An interpretive essay (4-5 pp. min.) that argues with or against a Marxian or Freudian interpretation of a work of art, literature, or culture. See the assignment sheet [here](#).

### 15% MIDTERM EXAM

Short-answer and multiple choice on key concepts and terms. Given in class.

### 30% RESEARCH ESSAY OR RESEARCHED CREATIVE PROJECT

A research essay (7-10 pp. min.) making an interpretive argument about a work of art, literature, or culture that draws on one or more theoretical frameworks studied in class. You may opt instead to make an alternative creative project, but this project should a) clearly draw on research; and b) be informed by the theories we have studied in this class. Review the assignment sheet [here](#).

### CORE COMPETENCIES

Below you will find the core competencies identified by the department for literary studies.

Students pursuing literary studies at Hampton will be able to:

1. Meet requirements for graduate/professional study, and/or discipline related careers.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of language and literature in a variety of courses and activities.
3. Demonstrate their competency in written English within their English courses and across the curriculum.
4. Demonstrate their ability to understand, interpret, and evaluate a variety of oral, visual and written texts (e.g., novels, motion pictures, Web media productions).
5. Pursue independent study in a variety of contexts.
6. Demonstrate an awareness that literary criticism requires an examination of values and attitudes as an important component of intellectual growth, social awareness, and moral responsibility.
7. Complete courses that reflect ethnic and cultural diversity, including their own heritage.
8. Participate in a variety of co-curricular activities both on and off campus.
9. Demonstrate a basic awareness of intellectual thought about the ancient world and up to the present day;
10. Use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, and videos) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

The competencies listed above reflect the following university-wide core competencies:

1. **Critical Thinking** is the ability to identify how to act after careful evaluation of the evidence and reasoning presented in a communication.
2. **Ethics** is the ability to identify ethical ideas, issues and apply ethical principles relating to personal, professional and academic conduct.
3. **International Diversity** is the ability to understand the social customs, traditions, and artifacts of a culture.
4. **Information and Technology Literacy** is the ability to use electronic media to support research activities and the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information and its sources.
5. **Oral Communication** is the ability to deliver a spoken message of depth and complexity in a way that elicits a response from an audience of understanding, appreciation, assent or critical inquiry.
6. **Written Communication** is the ability to develop and express complex ideas clearly, coherently, and logically in a style appropriate for both purpose and audience and demonstrate mastery of accepted standards of written communication.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Recognize the history of literary criticism and theory as it has developed into various schools of thought;
2. Participate actively and effectively in the practice of literary criticism;
3. Prepare for Senior Seminar.

## DEPARTMENTAL STUDENT COMPETENCIES

- To gain facility in reading, interpreting, and analyzing works of literature
- To use literary terms accurately, effectively, and insightfully
- To understand different perspectives and to understand the relationships of genres
- To develop an argument effectively and persuasively; test and evaluate the argument of others
- To learn the elements of fiction, poetry, and drama and be able to apply them to oral and written communication
- To write essays of varying lengths and complexity
- To defend interpretations using textual support
- To make connections between different works of literature
- To gain insight into society's values through its literature

## MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

1. Students will generate data from performance on pre and post-tests; compose literary essays that demonstrate complexity and persuasiveness through appropriate topic selection, a precise thesis statement, and effective use of textual evidence.
2. Students will apply literary devices to analyze fiction, poetry and drama; and compare treatment of literary devices and critical approaches in different works.
3. Students will compare the relationship between the values of the text and those of society; and compare the interpretation of a text when transformed into film.
4. Students will construct thesis statements; develop positions with a variety of textual evidence and literary devices; analyze and support literary analyses; and defend explications.

## GRADING

As outlined in the [Student Handbook](#) (p. 43), Hampton uses a four-point grading system. The general standards for grades are as follows:

A range: Outstanding work, demonstrating thorough mastery of course materials and skills.

B range: Good work, demonstrating serious engagement with all aspects of the course but incomplete mastery of course materials and skills.

C range: Satisfactory work, meeting requirements but indicating significant problems mastering the course materials and skills.

D range: Poor or minimally passing work, meeting the basic course requirements, but frequently unsatisfactory in several major areas.

F: Failure due to unmet course requirements or consistently unsatisfactory work.

The grading scale is as follows:

A+ 97-100	A 93-96	A- 90-92	B+ 87-89
B 83-86	B- 80-83	C+ 77-79	C 73-76
C- 70-72	D+ 67-69	D 66-63	D- 60-62
F 59-below			

## RECORDING OF CLASS LECTURES & DISCUSSIONS

Students may not record class lectures and discussions without permission. Permission will be granted on a case-by-case basis.

## TUTORING & WRITING RESOURCES CENTER

Hampton offers a [Tutoring Center](#) and a [Writing Resources Center](#). The WRC offers consultations for students to discuss their work with well-trained writing consultants. Consultants will work with you at any stage in your writing process. They will work with you to break the writing process into small steps. They will help you do your own best work, so you should expect to be actively involved in your session. The WRC is a resource for all Hampton students. Whether you consider yourself to be a strong writer or a weak one, you can benefit from meeting with a writing consultant. I encourage you to reserve an appointment in advance.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is at the heart of the university, and we all are responsible to each other and to our community for upholding the ideals of honor and integrity. Your full participation and observance of [Hampton's Code of Conduct](#) is expected. To present something as your own original writing or thinking when it is not is plagiarism. Plagiarism and other forms of cheating are serious violations of trust. Academic and intellectual dishonesty, including plagiarism, will have severe consequences, in accordance with the student-led honor system. For details about your responsibilities as a student, please see the [Student Handbook](#).

## STATEMENT ON DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, & BELONGING

You are welcome regardless of status, documentation, gender, race, ethnicity, class position, or ability. This classroom is a safe space, but it is not a hermetically sealed environment. Rather, it is a microcosm of our larger community. To begin to make the classroom an equitable space you have to follow a few basic guidelines. You are expected to be respectful in your speech and actions. Intentions matter. Effects do too. Practice self-reflexivity. Consider the positions you inhabit and the positions you take. Recognize the impact you have on others.

Active participation does not necessarily mean that you talk; it means that you listen. It means that you recognize both the spaces you occupy and move through and the structures that organize them. Be aware of how much airtime you take up. Practice critical compassion. Whether you agree or disagree, acknowledge and respond in turn. Justify your perspective with textual evidence; and pose questions from your experience. Be curious. Learn the names of your peers. And finally, accept and sit with your feelings, whether “bad” or “good” or otherwise. Embrace and explore the full range of intellectual and affective possibilities at hand—including discomfort, confusion, anxiety, insecurity, pleasure, delight, gladness, joy, and all the mixtures thereof, for which we may not have a language.

## CHOSEN NAME & GENDER PRONOUNS

This course aims to be an inclusive learning community that supports students of all gender expressions and identities. Please let me know if you would like to be addressed by a different name or set of pronouns than those listed in the official class roster. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

## STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

I assume that all of us learn in different ways. If there are circumstances that may affect your performance in this course, please talk to me as soon as possible so that we can work together to develop strategies for accommodations that will satisfy both your learning needs and the requirements of the course. Whether or not you have a documented disability, Hampton provides many support services that are available to all students.

Hampton accommodates students with disabilities in accordance with federal laws and university policy. Any student who feels they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a learning, psychiatric, physical, or chronic health diagnosis should contact Compliance and Disability Services staff at 757-727-5493 or at [disabilityservices@hamptonu.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@hamptonu.edu) to determine if accommodations are warranted and to obtain an official letter of accommodation.

[Compliance and Disability Services](#) is the office responsible for assisting students with disabilities. If you have a disability that interferes with your learning (whether visible or invisible, physical or mental), you are encouraged to register with this office. Compliance and Disability Services will work with you to determine appropriate accommodations for your courses, such as additional time on tests, staggered homework assignments, or note-taking assistance. This office will give you a letter outlining the accommodations you need that you can share with your teachers; specific information about your disability will remain private. If you have any questions about accommodation, or what constitutes a disability, I invite you to speak with me or with Compliance and Disability Services.

## DRESS CODE

Hampton has a [dress code](#). You are expected to abide by it.

## RESOURCES ON THEORY & CRITICISM (ORDERED BY DATE OF FIRST PUBLICATION)

Matthew Arnold, "[The Function of Criticism at the Present Time](#)," *The National Review*, Nov 1864.

T.S. Eliot, "[The Function of Criticism](#)," *The Criterion*, Vol II, No. 5, October 1923.

I.A. Richards, *Principles of Literary Criticism*, Routledge, 1924; 1926; 2004. (selections on course website)

William Empson, *Seven Types of Ambiguity*, New Directions, 1930. (selections on course website).

John Crowe Ransom, "[Criticism, Inc.](#)," *Virginia Quarterly Review*, Autumn 1937.

Stephen Spender, "[On the Function of Criticism](#)," *The Kenyon Review*, Spring 1951, Vol. XIII, No. 2.

Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays*, Princeton UP, 1957; 2000.

Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, Oxford UP, 1976; 2014.

Lauren Berlant and Michael Warner, "[What Does Queer Theory Teach Us about X?](#)," *PMLA* 110, 1995.

Jonathan Culler, *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford UP, 1997.

M.H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. Seventh ed., 1999.

Rita Felski, *The Uses of Literature*, Blackwell, 2008.

M.A.R. Habib, *Literary Criticism from Plato to the Present: An Introduction*, Blackwell, 2011.

Heather Love, "What Does Lauren Berlant Teach Us about X?," *Communication & Critical/Cultural Studies*, Dec 2012, Vol. 9 Issue 4.

Roland Greene et. al., eds., *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, Princeton UP, 2012.

Frances Ferguson, "[Our I.A. Richards Moment: The Machine and Its Adjustments](#)," *theory aside*, Duke UP, 2014.

Virginia Jackson, "[The Function of Criticism at the Present Time](#)," *Los Angeles Review of Books*, April 12, 2015.

John Frow, *Genre*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Routledge, 2015. (selections on course website)

Caroline Levine, *Forms: Whole, Rhythm, Hierarchy, Network*, Princeton UP, 2015.

Michael Wood, *On Empson*, Princeton UP, 2017. (selections on course website).

Jonathan Kramnick and Anahid Nersessian, "[Form and Explanation](#)," *Critical Inquiry* 43 (Spring 2017).

Jeffrey J. Williams et. al., eds., *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, Third edition, Norton, 2018.



## SCHEDULE (subject to change)

### Week 1

#### Read:

- Eugenia Zuroski, six questions from “[“Where Do You Know From’: An Exercise in Placing Ourselves Together in the Classroom”](#)”
- Jonathan Culler, “What Is Theory?” and Jonathan Culler, “What Is Literature and Does it Matter?” from *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford UP, 1997. *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford UP, 1997). (course website)
- “Terry Eagleton,” *Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, Third Edition (2013-2026; focus on 2013-2019). (course website)

#### Recommended:

- Kyla Wazana Tompkins, “[We Aren’t Here to Learn What We Already Know](#)” (*Avidly*)

#### Tasks:

- Respond to Zuroski’s six questions in the “Introduce Myself” section of the Discussion Board.
- Write a primary post (250 words +/-) in response to hooks, Culler, Eagleton, and/or Tompkins in the “Week 1” section of the Discussion Board (due Thursday by midnight EDT). A more detailed prompt is available on the DB.
- Write two secondary posts (150 words +/-) responding to the primary posts of your peers (due Sunday by midnight EDT).

## I. Marx and Marxian Interpretations of Literature

### Week 2:

MLK readings, TBD.

“Marx and Engels,” *Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, Third Edition (652-680).

#### Tasks:

- Write a primary post (250 words +/-) in response to Marx in the “Week 2” section of the Discussion Board (due Thursday by midnight EDT). A more detailed prompt is available on the DB.
- Write two secondary posts (150 words +/-) responding to the primary posts of your peers (due Sunday by midnight EDT).

- \*\*\*Extra credit: GroupMe posts on MLK, Jr. and/or the manifesto as a literary genre. Find - or write! - your own.

## Week 3

### Read:

- Raymond Williams, [Marxism and Literature](#), “Literature,” (read all) “Dominant, Residual, Emergent,” “Structures of Feeling”; skim: “Ideology,” “Hegemony.”
- C.L.R. James, “Prologue,” “The Property,” “The Owners,” from [The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L’Overture and the San Domingo Revolution](#). Recommended: “The War of Independence,”; “Appendix: From Toussaint L’Overture to Fidel Castro.”
- A Toussaint L’Overture catalog: the dream of Haiti
  - Poems:
    - William Wordsworth, “[To Toussaint L’Overture](#)”
    - Henrietta Cordelia Ray, “[Toussaint L’Overture](#)”
    - Jacques Roumain, “Nouveau sermon nègre” [New Black Sermon] (course website)
    - English variations of Eugene Pottier, “[Internationale](#)” (1871)
    - Langston Hughes, “[A Poem for Jacques Roumain](#)” (*New Masses*, 1941); “[Kids Who Die](#)”; and the following selections from *Good Morning, Revolution* (on the course website): all of “Revolution,” “Memo to Non-White Peoples,” and “Goodbye Christ”; “Cowards from the Colleges” and “Retrospective.”
    - Ntzoke Shange, “[\[lady in brown\]](#) “[de library waz right down from de trolly tracks](#)” from *for colored girls who have considered suicide / when the rainbow is enuf*
  - Recommended:
    - Joe Fulton, “[Sermons](#)” (*Oxford Bibliographies*)
    - Watch: “[The Internationale: A Film](#)” (dir. Peter Miller)
    - Jacques Roumain, “[Is Poetry Dead?](#)” (*New Masses*, 1941); “[Guinea](#)” and “[When the Tom Tom Beats](#)” (1935)
    - [On Hughes and “the Scottsboro Boys”](#) (V Tech Special Collections, 2013)
  - Recommended articles:
    - Cora Kaplan, “[Black Heroes/White Writers: Toussaint L’Overture and the Literary Imagination](#)”;
    - Maurice Jackson, “‘Friends of the Negro! Fly with me, The path is open to the sea’: Remembering the Haitian Revolution in the History, Music, and

Culture of the African American People” (*Early American Studies*, vol. 6, no. 1, 2008)

Look:

- Explore Basquiat’s work.
- [Look](#) at Jacob Lawrence’s paintings responding to the Haitian Revolution

Tasks:

- Write a primary post (250 words +/-) in response to Roumain, James, and/or the work of Basquiat in the “Week 3” section of the Discussion Board (due Thursday by midnight EDT). A more detailed prompt is available on the DB.
- Write two secondary posts (150 words +/-) responding to the primary posts of your peers (due Sunday by midnight EDT).
- \*\*\*Extra credit: GroupMe posts on Haitian art, literature, or culture.

Week 4

Read:

- Cedric Robinson, *Black Marxism*, “Preface,” “Preface to the 2000 Edition,” “Introduction,” “Richard Wright and the Critique of Cass Theory,” and “An Ending.”
- Fred Moten, this [clip](#) and this clip (on “[Figuring it Out](#)”); “[Fred Moten’s Radical Critique of the Present](#)”; listen to / go find some poems of Moten’s.
- “Frederic Jameson” *Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, Third Edition (1731-1771).

Recommended:

- Robin D.G. Kelley, “[What Did Cedric Robinson Mean by Racial Capitalism?](#)”
- “[Dr. Jodi Melamed on Neoliberal Multiculturalism, Indigenous Organizing, & Revolution](#)” (Summer 2020)

Listen:

- Explore Noname (@noname), Fatimah Warner’s work, including their [book club](#) and socials.

Look:

- Kara Walker, “[A Subtlety](#)”
- Boots and shoes: a catalog, from Van Gogh to Warhol to Nike and Vans and custom prints; read Hanif Abdurraqib’s short essay, “[On Sneakers](#)”

Tasks:

- Write a primary post (250 words +/-) in response to Robinson, Moten, and/or the work of Noname (@noname, Fatimah Warner), including their book club and socials, in the “Week 4” section of the Discussion Board (due Thursday by midnight EDT). A more detailed prompt is available on the DB.
- Write two secondary posts (150 words +/-) responding to the primary posts of your peers (due Sunday by midnight EDT).

Week 5

Read:

- Lorraine Hansberry, *A Raisin in the Sun*.
- Listen: [Soyica Diggs Colbert](#) and [Imani Perry](#) on Hansberry.

Tasks:

- Submit a **draft of Essay 1 to Blackboard by the end of Week 5** (Sunday, February 13 by midnight EDT). See the assignment sheet here.
- Write a primary post (250 words +/-) in response to Hansberry, Diggs Colbert, and Perry, in the “Week 5” section of the Discussion Board (due Thursday by midnight EDT). A more detailed prompt is available on the DB.
- Write two secondary posts (150 words +/-) responding to the primary posts of your peers (due Sunday by midnight EDT).

## II. Freud and Psychoanalytic Interpretations of Literature

Week 6

Read:

- “Freud,” *Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, Third Edition (783-819).
- Elena Comay del Junco, “[Freud: A Star Is Born](#)” (*LARB*).

Tasks:

- Write a primary post (250 words +/-) in response to Freud and/or Comay del Junco, in the “Week 6” section of the Discussion Board (due Thursday by midnight EDT). A more detailed prompt is available on the DB.
- Write two secondary posts (150 words +/-) responding to the primary posts of your peers (due Sunday by midnight EDT).
- \*\*\*Extra credit: GroupMe posts on dreams, dreamwork, the uncanny, and the fetish.

## Week 7

### Tasks:

- Review for the midterm.
- Take the midterm exam on Blackboard by Sunday, February 27 by midnight EDT.
- Submit the final version of **Essay 1 to Blackboard by Friday, February 25 by midnight EDT**). See the assignment sheet [here](#).

## Week 8 Spring Recess.

# III. Feminist and Queer Theoretical Interpretations of Literature

## Week 9

### Read:

- Sojourner Truth, “Speech to the Women’s Rights Convention in Akron, Ohio, 1851” and transcription of what is known as her “Ain’t I a Woman?” (1851) speech. Read and compare these speeches [here](#).
- Anzaldúa, Moraga, eds. *This Bridge Called My Back*, selections.
  - Kate Rushin, “[The Bridge Poem](#).” Listen [here](#). Optional, but highly recommended: “The Black Back-Ups.” Listen [here](#).
  - “Catching Fire: Preface to the Fourth Edition,” “Acts of Healing,” “Foreword to the First Edition, 1981,” “La Jornada: Preface, 1981,” “Introduction, 1981,” *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*, Fourth Edition, SUNY P, 2015. (course website)
  - Cherrie Moraga, “[La guerra](#).”
- Audre Lorde, “[The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House](#)” and “[Poetry Is Not a Luxury](#).”
- Audre Lorde, “[Power](#).”

### Look:

- “[Sell the Shadow to Support the Substance](#).”
- Watch Alice Walker’s performance of Truth’s famous speech [here](#).

→ A “Declaration” catalog: from the “[Declaration of Independence](#)” (1776) to the

[“Declaration of Sentiments”](#) (1848) to the [Combahee River Collective Statement](#) (1977) to Guillermo Gómez-Peña’s [“A Declaration of Poetic Disobedience from the New Border”](#) (2005) to Tracy K. Smith’s [“Declaration”](#) (2018).

Recommended:

- More on the “Declaration of Sentiments” [here](#).
- Harriet Jacobs, from *Incidents*.
- Frederick Douglass, “[What to a Slave is the Fourth of July?](#)” (1852).
- Laura Wexler, “All Men and Women Are Created Equal,” *A New Literary History of America*.
- Kimberlé Crenshaw on “Intersectionality” [here](#) and [here](#). Read an interview [here](#).
- Listen to Crenshaw’s “Intersectionality Matters” [podcast](#) and check out the [African American Policy Forum](#) (AAPF).
- Audre Lorde, “[The Uses of the Erotic](#)” and “[The Uses of Anger](#).”

Tasks:

- Write a primary post (250 words +/-) in response to Truth and the reception of Truth’s speeches in the “Week 9” section of the Discussion Board (due Thursday by midnight EDT). Consider the radicalism of early feminist declarations. Compare with later declarations. A more detailed prompt is available on the DB.
- Write two secondary posts (150 words +/-) responding to the primary posts of your peers (due Sunday by midnight EDT).
- \*\*\*Extra credit: GroupMe posts on intersectionality..

Week 10

Read:

- Adrienne Rich, “[Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence](#).” (1980; 2003) → You may read the selection in the *Norton*; you do not have to read the whole essay.
- Adrienne Rich, “[Diving into the Wreck](#),” “[Tonight No Poetry Will Serve](#),”
- Lauren Berlant and Michael Warner, “[Sex in Public](#)” (*Critical Inquiry* 24, Winter 1998).
- Judith Butler, “[Preface](#).” *Gender Trouble* and “[We Need to Rethink the Category of Woman](#)” (*The Guardian*)
- Jordy Rosenberg, “[Gender Trouble on Mother’s Day](#).”
- Jules Gleeson, “[The Call for Gender Abolition](#).”

Watch: Judith Butler, “[Looking back on Gender Trouble](#)”; on “[Women as a Political Subject](#)”; on “[Shared Spaces](#)”

### Tasks:

- Write a primary post (250 words +/-) in response to Rich, Butler, Berlant and Warner, Rosenberg, and/or Gleeson in the “Week 10” section of the Discussion Board (due Thursday by midnight EDT). Consider the radicalism of early feminist declarations. Compare with later declarations. A more detailed prompt is available on the DB.
- Write two secondary posts (150 words +/-) responding to the primary posts of your peers (due Sunday by midnight EDT).
- \*\*\*Extra credit: GroupMe posts on gender trouble.

### Week 11

#### Read:

- José Esteban Muñoz, “‘The White to Be Angry’: Vaginal Davis’s Terrorist Drag” (*Social Text*, 1997).
- Explore and respond to the provocative materials produced by the Black Latinas Know Collective: <https://www.blacklatinasknow.org>.
- Alan Pelaez Lopez, “‘The X in Latinx Is a Wound, Not a Trend’”
- Explore Pelaez Lopez’s Instagram (@migrantscribble).

#### Watch:

- Elizabeth Acevedo, “Afro-Latina” and Mariposa (Maria Teresa Fernández) “Diasporican.”
- Alan Pelaez Lopez, “Why Blackness Is Radical in Latinidad.”
- “Cholita! En no Controles” and “That Fertile Feeling” (Parts 1 & 2). Vaginal Davis, “This Is Not a Dream.”
- Compare Davis’s disidentificatory performance of Cholita with the original “No Controles” music video by the all female Mexican group Flans. You might also check out the Puerto Rican boy band Menudo, which Davis’s performance also responds to.

#### Recommended:

- Dr. Vaginal Davis and José Esteban Muñoz, “No One Leaves Delilah: A W(rap) on Race” (NYU, 2012).
- Deborah R. Vargas, “Ruminations on Lo Sucio as a Latino Queer Analytic,” *American Quarterly*, Vol. 66, No. 3, Sep 2014).
- Tatiana Flores, “Latinidad Is Canceled.”
- Lorgia García-Peña, “Dismantling Anti-Blackness Together.”

Tasks:

- Write a primary post (250 words +/-) in response to Acevedo, Mariposa, Davis, Esteban Muñoz, BLKC, and/or Pelaez Lopez in the “Week 11” section of the Discussion Board (due Thursday by midnight EDT). A more detailed prompt is available on the DB.
- Write two secondary posts (150 words +/-) responding to the primary posts of your peers (due Sunday by midnight EDT).

## IV. Contemporary Social Theory and the Interpretation of Literature

### Week 12

Read:

- Coco Fusco, “The Oral History of Intercultural Performance.”

Watch:

- Coco Fusco and Guillermo Gómez-Peña, “[The Couple in the Cage](#)” (1992-1994).

Recommended:

- Guillermo Gómez-Peña, “[In Defense of Performance Art](#).”
- Guillermo Gómez-Peña, “[Radical Art, Radical Communities, Radical Dreams](#)” (TedXCalArts, 2014).
- Guillermo Gómez-Peña, [Dresher Conversations](#) (UMBCTube, 2016).

Tasks:

- Write a primary post (250 words +/-) in response to Fusco and Gómez-Peña in the “Week 12” section of the Discussion Board (due Thursday by midnight EDT). A more detailed prompt is available on the DB.
- Write two secondary posts (150 words +/-) responding to the primary posts of your peers (due Sunday by midnight EDT).

### Week 13

Read:

- Wendy Trevino, *Cruel Fiction*.
- “[Mexican Is Not a Race](#),” an interview with Wendy Trevino.

Recommended:



- Selected poems from Diane di Prima, *Revolutionary Letters*, and Frank O'Hara.
- "[On Thinking Cruelty: An Interview with Jean Franco](#)," *American Quarterly*, vol. 66, no. 3, 2014.

Tasks:

- Write a primary post (250 words +/-) in response to Trevino's work in the "Week 13" section of the Discussion Board (due Thursday by midnight EDT). A more detailed prompt is available on the DB.
- Write two secondary posts (150 words +/-) responding to the primary posts of your peers (due Sunday by midnight EDT).

## Week 14

Read:

- "bel hooks," *Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, Third Edition.
- hooks [on Beyoncé's visual album \*Lemonade\*](#).
- "[Theory as a Liberatory Practice](#)."
- Christina Sharpe, "[The Weather](#)," *In the Wake*.
- Morgan Parker, from *There Are More Beautiful Things than Beyoncé*.

Watch: *Lemonade*.

Tasks:

- **Draft of research essay or creative project storyboard (plan, concept map, outline, etc.) due Sunday by midnight EDT.**
- Write a primary post (250 words +/-) in response to hooks and/or Sharpe in the "Week 12" section of the Discussion Board (due Thursday by midnight EDT). A more detailed prompt is available on the DB.
- Write two secondary posts (150 words +/-) responding to the primary posts of your peers (due Sunday by midnight EDT).

## Week 15

Read:

First sequence:

- Elizabeth Alexander, "Can You Be Black and Look at this?" (course website).

- Autumn Womack, “Can You Be Black and Listen to This?”  
<https://lareviewofbooks.org/short-takes/can-black-listen/>
- Sonya Posmentier, “[A Language for Grieving.](#)”

Second sequence:

- Aren Aizura, “[A Mask and a Target Cart.](#)” *The New Inquiry* (2020)
- Tobi Haslett, “[Magic Actions.](#)” *n+1*.
- Mitchell Jackson, “[Running Failed Ahmaud Arbery and Black America](#)” (*Runner’s World* 18 June 2020).
- Keeyanga Yamahatta Taylor, selected essays, podcasts.
- Amiri Baraka, selected poems.

→ An Emmett Till catalog, [here](#) and [here](#).

Recommended:

- “[What Does it Mean to Be Black and Look at This?](#)” an interview with Christina Sharpe.

Wednesday, April 20 [Last Day of Classes for Graduating Seniors]

Recommended:

- Jamil Smith, “[What Does Seeing a Black Man Die Do For You?](#)” (*New Republic*, 2015); check out Smith’s more recent articles.
- Nell Irvin Painter, selected essays.

Week 16

Read:

- Zuboff on surveillance capitalism.
- [Feminism for the 99%.](#)

Recommended:

- Merve Emre, “Our Love-Hate Relationship with Gimmicks,” *The New Yorker* (Nov 2020).

Tasks:

- **Final version of Research Essay (7-10 pages) or Creative Project due during scheduled exam time.**