

Critical Theory Reading List

Aim for inclusive coverage from all categories.

Theory Before “Theory”

1. Plato *Republic*, Book X
2. Aristotle *Poetics*
3. Horace *Ars Poetica*
4. Longinus *On the Sublime*
5. Samuel Johnson Preface to *Shakespeare*
6. David Hume “Of the Standard of Taste”
7. Immanuel Kant from *Critique of Judgment*
8. William Wordsworth Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*
9. Samuel Taylor Coleridge from *Biographia Literaria*
10. G. W. F. Hegel Introduction to *The Philosophy of Art*
11. Matthew Arnold “The Function of Criticism at the Present Time”
12. Friedrich Nietzsche from *The Birth of Tragedy*, “On Truth and Lies in an Extramoral Sense”
13. T.S. Eliot “Tradition and the Individual Talent”
14. Mikhail Bakhtin from *Discourse in the Novel*
15. Virginia Woolf Shakespeare's Sister from *A Room of One's Own*
16. Kenneth Burke “Literature as Equipment for Living”
17. Jean-Paul Sartre “Why Write?”
18. Simone de Beauvoir “Myths: Of Women in Five Authors” (*Second Sex*)
19. Northrop Frye “Archetypes of Literature” (*Anatomy of Criticism*)
20. Erich Auerbach “Odysseus' Scar” (*Mimesis*)
21. Hans-Georg Gadamer The Elevation of the Historicity of Understanding to the Status of the Hermeneutical Principle

Formalisms

22. Victor Schlovsky “Art as Technique”
23. Cleanth Brooks “Irony as a Principle of Structure”

Structuralism, Semiotics, and Deconstruction

24. Ferdinand de Saussure “Nature of the Linguistic Sign”
25. Claude Lévi-Strauss “The Structural Study of Myth”
26. Roman Jakobson from *Style in Language*
27. Vladimir Propp *Morphology of the Folktale*
28. Gérard Genette “Frontiers of Narrative”
29. Jacques Derrida *Of Grammatology* (including Spivak introduction)
30. Roland Barthes *S/Z*
31. Kaja Silverman from *The Subject of Semiotics*
32. Michel Foucault “What is an Author?”
33. Paul de Man “Semiology and Rhetoric”
34. Cynthia Chase from *Decomposing Figures*
35. Barbara Johnson from *The Critical Difference*

36. Jonathan Culler *On Deconstruction*, 1-3
 37. Geoffrey Hartman *Saving the Text: Literature/Derrida/Philosophy*

Intentionality and Speech Act Theory

38. Wimsatt and Beardsley "The Intentional Fallacy"
 from *Validity in Interpretation*
 39. E.D. Hirsch from *Speech Acts*
 40. John Searle *How To Do Things With Words*
 41. J. L. Austin from *Must We Mean What We Say?*
 42. Stanley Cavell *Limited Inc.*
 43. Jacques Derrida "Against Theory"
 44. Knapp and Michaels "There's No Such Thing as Free Speech"
 45. Stanley Fish "Sovereign Performatives"
 46. Judith Butler

Reader-Response Criticism

47. Wolfgang Iser "The Reading Process: A Phenomenological Approach"
 48. Stanley Fish "Is There a Text in this Class?"
 49. Jane Tompkins from *Sensational Designs*

Psychoanalytic Theory

50. Sigmund Freud *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality, Civilization and its Discontents*
 51. Paul Ricoeur *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay in Interpretation*
 52. Harold Bloom *Anxiety of Influence*, introduction ("A Meditation upon Priority")
 53. Jacques Lacan *Ecrits*
 54. Jane Gallop from *Reading Lacan*
 55. Deleuze and Guattari from *Anti-Oedipus*
 56. Jacqueline Rose from *The State of Fantasy*
 57. Neil Hertz *The End of the Line: Essays on Psychoanalysis and the Sublime*

Marxist Criticism

58. Karl Marx *Capital* (Part I of Vol. I), *The German Ideology*
 59. Walter Benjamin "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction"
 60. George Lukács "The Ideology of Modernism"
 61. Theodor Adorno "Odysseus or Myth and Enlightenment," *Minima Moralia*
 62. Antonio Gramsci *The Prison Notebooks*
 63. Louis Althusser "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," excerpts from *Reading Capital*
 64. Raymond Williams "Pastoral and Counter-pastoral" from *The Country and the City; Culture and Society*, chapter 1
 65. E.P. Thompson "Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism"

66. Perry Anderson *In the Tracks of Historical Materialism*, chapter 1
 67. Terry Eagleton *Criticism and Ideology*
 68. Fredric Jameson *The Political Unconscious*, chapter 1
 69. Pierre Bourdieu from *Outline of a Theory of Practice*
 70. Jürgen Habermas from *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*
 71. Martin Jay from *Marxism and Totality*
 72. Laclau and Mouffe from *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*
 73. Hardt and Negri "The Political Constitution of the Present" (*Empire*)

New Historicism and Cultural Studies

74. Pierre Bourdieu "The Market of Symbolic Goods,"
 75. Clifford Geertz "Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight"
 76. Edward W. Said Introduction to *Orientalism*
 77. Stephen Greenblatt "Invisible Bullets"
 78. D.A. Miller *The Novel and the Police*, Chapter 1
 79. Jean-François Lyotard *Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*
 80. Fredric Jameson "Postmodernism; Or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism" *New Left Review* 146 (1984)
 81. Constance Penley "Feminism, Psychoanalysis, and the Study of Popular Culture"
 82. Stuart Hall "Encoding, Decoding"
 83. Michel de Certeau "Walking in the City"
 84. Stallybrass and White from *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression*
 85. Dick Hebdige "From Culture to Hegemony"
 86. Andrew Ross Introduction and Chapter One of *No Respect*

Feminist Literary Criticism / Gender Studies and Queer Theory

87. Gilbert and Gubar "Infection in the Sentence: The Woman Writer and the Anxiety of Authorship"
 88. Laura Mulvey "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema"
 89. Hélène Cixous "The Laugh of the Medusa"
 90. Michel Foucault *The History of Sexuality*, Vol. I
 91. Julia Kristeva from *Powers of Horror*
 92. Luce Irigaray "This Sex Which Is Not One"
 93. Teresa de Lauretis *Technologies of Gender*
 94. Gayle Rubin "Thinking Sex"
 95. David Halperin "One Hundred Years of Homosexuality"
 96. Judith Butler *Gender Trouble*
 97. Ann Laura Stoler from *The Education of Desire*
 98. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick *Epistemology of the Closet*, "Introduction: Axiomatic"
 99. Leo Bersani "Is the Rectum a Grave?" *Homos*
 100. Michael Warner from *The Trouble with Normal*

Multiculturalism and the Canon Wars

101. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. "Writing, 'Race,' and the Difference It Makes"
102. John Guillory *Cultural Capital*, chapter 1
103. Barbara Christian "The Race for Theory"
104. Homi K. Bhabha "The Location of Culture"
105. Cornel West "The New Cultural Politics of Difference"
106. Chandra Mohanty *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism*

Postcolonial Theory

107. Ngugi wa Thiong'o *Decolonizing the Mind*
108. George Lamming "The Occasion for Speaking" from *The Pleasures of Exile*
109. Chinua Achebe "An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*"
110. Gayatri Spivak "Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism," "Can the Subaltern Speak?"
111. Paul Gilroy *The Black Atlantic*, Introduction
112. Homi Bhabha "Signs Taken for Wonders," in *Location of Culture*
113. Arjun Appuradai "Playing with Modernity The Decolonization of Indian Cricket," from *Modernity at Large*
114. Mary Louise Pratt from *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*
115. Simon Gikandi *Maps of Englishness*, Introduction
116. Anne McClintock from *Imperial Leather*