

Aesthetics and Interpretation: Paper 1

Approximately 7 full pages: Times New Roman 12 pt; double-spaced; 1 inch margins.

Rough draft due Friday, March 10 (2 copies)

Final Draft **Due Monday, March 20 (hand in this rough draft, any in class work (see the back of this handout), and peer review sheet)**

**** You will also have the opportunity to share your final draft with peers in class****

You have two options for this paper; choose one. For “theorists” you may use anyone we’ve studied up through March 8. (Sartre, Rich, Emerson, Eliot, Freud, James, Poe, Plato, Aristotle, Woolf, Barthes, or Brooks)

OPTION ONE: The crazy creative option. This option is one part creative attempt to engage with a class concept, and one part critical commentary to explore the ways creative forms and critical forms go at issues in different ways.

The three parts of your paper:

1. In the first section of your paper you will analyze a work of your own creative writing, linking ONE concept, theme, process, or intention of the piece with one of the theorists we have studied. Analyze the similarity and difference of the element in your creative piece vs. the theory. Use quotations from the theorist when discussing his or her ideas. 3 pages.
2. Now, take this theorist’s concept and write a new creative work (2-3 pages) that engages the theorist’s concept. You might find it fun (but this is not a requirement) to take inspiration from one of the Blackboard creative readings.
3. Now, tell how your new creative work (part 2) engages/refutes the concept. Tell us how this process of composition differs from and is similar to your usual process of composition if you consider yourself primarily a creative writer. If you consider yourself primarily a reader-of and writer-about literature, tell us how this process differs from and is similar to the way you write critical texts. (2-3 pages)

You will NOT be graded on how fabulously artful your creative writing (part 2) is. Instead, I am looking for a record of your experience of thinking through these two approaches—the theoretical and the creative—to understanding the world.

OPTION 2 (7 pages): The more traditional literary-critical option.

Explore a major idea by any one of the theoretical authors we have read (Sartre, Rich, Emerson, Eliot, Freud, James, Poe, Plato, Aristotle, Woolf, Barthes, or Brooks). Your job is to explain what the theorist meant by this idea, and to interpret this idea for yourself in terms of why literature and art matter.

Dig deep: your theorist’s idea and how this helps you express why literature matters should not be something too obvious and should be something that requires exploration, explanation, interpretation. Along with using and unpacking quotations from the theorist, you should also discuss what you mean by “mattering.” Literature matters to what person (maker, interpreter, culture)—how and why? It is probably a good idea to use a creative text to help you show the application of the idea. You are welcome to use your own creative writing (in which case you should include a copy). But you may also use another text, including (but not limited to) the creative texts on BlackBoard *or* a creative text by the theorist him or herself!

TIMELINE and INCLASS WRITING and what to **BRING**:

Feb 27th: in class: creative-analytical free write (turn in with final draft)

March 1st: before class at home: have theorist and one or two concepts/quotes selected. Suggestion: choose what you love, not what you think will be quickest or fanciest

BRING anthology to class
(in class: selecting quotes)

March 3rd: before class at home: have quotations/passages from theorist selected

BRING quotes printed out on a separate sheet of paper (turn in with final draft)
(in class: writing/small group discussion of meaning)

Weekend: create rough draft/ outline or tackle at least 1 of the sections of the paper

March 6th: **BRING** rough draft or outline thus far

(in class: peer feedback) (turn in with final draft)

March 10th: **DUE: Rough Draft** (turn in with final draft)