

CJT 764: Textual Analysis and Criticism

Spring 2018

Wednesday 2-4:45 p.m.

223 Grehan Building

Instructor

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W 1-2; T and H 12-2 or by appointment

Course Description

This seminar surveys diverse approaches to textual analysis, with an emphasis on traditions that emanate from the humanities. The seminar will contrast three traditions that employ textual analysis: The Anglo-Liberal tradition, the Germanic Critical Tradition, and the Social Sciences tradition.

Given the diversity of these theoretical orientations, the seminar will emphasize research praxis. Participants will learn to employ textual criticism as a methodology and, in the process, they will learn to structure research as a critical essay. Accordingly, seminar members will write assorted critical essays for their graded assignments. The seminar will engage several approaches to textual criticism including accurate interpretation, formal criticism, neo-classical criticism, narrative analysis, value-analysis, psychoanalytic criticism and several variants of ideological/cultural criticism.

Required Texts

Sillars, M.O. & Gronbeck, B.E. (2000). *Communication criticism: Rhetoric, social codes, cultural studies*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland.

Supplementary readings are listed at the end of this syllabus.

Recommended Texts

Machin, D. & Mayr, A. (2012). *How to do critical discourse analysis: A multimodal introduction*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Course Philosophy

Even as CJT 764 will emphasize categories and research typologies, please realize that these orientations often—usually—overlap. Yet each approach also offers unique vantage points, and not all approaches are compatible. To help you assimilate such diverse material, the seminar emphasizes scope over depth. It has been designed as a

survey course that will help you identify approaches to textual analysis that best complement your research agenda. This approach invites you to delve more deeply into areas that serve your needs. However, it also encourages you to gain a basic literacy in these diverse research orientations, to include understanding their interrelated advantages and limitations.

A good way to gain such perspective is to conduct research based upon these orientations. The assigned essays are designed to achieve this objective.

Course goals and learning objectives:

1. To understand a variety of interpretive, descriptive, and critical approaches to analyzing communication texts.
2. To understand the utility and problematics associated with the various academic traditions that employ textual analysis. Ideally you will become a more critical reader of the knowledge claims published in journals, books, and monographs.
3. To gain experience in conducting textual analysis and writing critical essays.
4. To learn to share your insights within a community of scholars.

Class Format

This class will employ a hybrid lecture-seminar format; consequently, your participation will be vital to its success. The course will be structured around an extensive, but manageable, series of readings. Given that these readings form the foundation of class discussions, you are expected to come to class having completed the readings assigned for that week. This means you should come to class prepared with questions, comments, and criticisms.

Being a valued member of the community of scholars entails values and practices best summarized in these two words: collegiality and communality. We will build this seminar into a community, one in which everyone feels comfortable to contribute and engage in all activities. Diverse, and even unorthodox opinions are encouraged. You should feel free to offer criticism and constructive comments on the work/words of others (to include members of this seminar—and your professor). Yet all critiques should be offered in a respectful manner. This noted, your professor occasionally makes controversial or incongruous comments to stimulate discussion or highlight divergent perspectives. Please take any such input in the spirit that it is offered.

As a courtesy to all members of this class, you should avoid any type of disruptive behaviors, such as cell phone rings or private conversations.

Assignments and Evaluation:

Grading

Your final grade for this course is based on the following percentage breakdown:

Digest Essays	40%
Final Essay (to include presentation)	40%
Participation and CRFs	20%

Critical Reading Forms (CRFs)

CRFs represent a structured approach to engaging a scholarly text. They help you evaluate the text as you read it and situate its findings in a particular context (in this case textual analysis). I have included a template for a CRF on pages 9 and 10 of this syllabus. Session respondents will complete graded CRFs as described below:

Session Respondents

Each student will serve as a primary respondent for at least one seminar session. Given the total number of CJT 764 students, this means that some Ph.D. students may serve as a session respondent more than once. Serving as a respondent entails the following responsibilities:

- Complete a CRF for each assigned reading (except for the Sillars & Gronbeck text).
- Send an e-copy of each CRF to the instructor no later than 5 p.m. of the day preceding class.
- Bring at least one hard copy of each CRF to class (for the instructor) and make e-copies available to all classmates on the day of class (I don't care how you accomplish the latter requirement).

I will grade each CRF using a 1-5 scale; then I will determine your total CRF score based on the percentage of each student's total CRF points. Even as respondents will not be responsible for completing CRFs for the Sillars & Gronbeck text, I do expect them to be thoroughly familiar with that week's assigned chapters. Accordingly, I will engage respondents through a modified version of the Socratic Method.

Graded Critical Essays

You will write four critical essays as part of this seminar. The first three will represent digest essays (1,500 words) of directed content as described below. Except for the first essay, for which I will supply a text, you may examine any text that serves your needs. This means you may analyze the same text multiple times, or you may select a different text for each essay. The final essay will represent a full research paper (7,000-7,500 words—inclusive of references). To receive an A for the final essay, it should be complete and significant enough to be presented at a major scholarly conference (e.g., AEJMC, NCA, ICA).

Even as it is possible to employ these research methods to address popular forums, each essay should be directed at a community of scholars. Your essay's value, thus, will relate to how well it creates new knowledge within this scholarly community.

Essay Assignments

- Essay 1: Accurate Interpretation of the five-part documentary *Adolph Rupp: Myth, Legend and Fact*. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YBwlgV_AHSU
- Essay 2: Your choice of Formal or Neo-classical criticism
- Essay 3: Your choice of one of the approaches Sillars & Gronbeck associate with the Social or Critical Tradition.
- Essay 4: A full essay employing your choice of critical orientation

You will present your final essays to the class on April 25; the final document is due on May 2. Some of your digest essays will effectively illustrate key learning objectives; consequently, I will ask one or two of you to present select digest essays on occasion. For this reason, be prepared to present your digest essays at any time.

Even as I may assign various point totals to assignments, in terms of percentages, all assignments will be graded on the following scale:

A: 90-100% B: 80-89% C: 70-79% D: 60-69%

Note: Even as I have spread the Sillars & Gronbeck chapters throughout the semester, the text is self-explanatory. I strongly recommend that you work your way through it well before midterm. The reason is simple: Your final essay may seek to emphasize material that we will not address until later in the semester. You will want to familiarize yourself with that material well before we address it in class.

Course Policies

Attendance is mandatory, and I expect you to be punctual. Participation in class discussions and activities will be counted toward your grade. Excused absences are reserved only for personal emergencies, as defined by the University Senate, at the discretion of the professor. **Two unexcused absences will result in one letter grade deduction from your final CJT 764 grade; three unexcused absences will result in a two-letter grade deduction from your final grade. You cannot pass the course with more than three absences** (see comments about "Incomplete" grades below). In the case that you miss a class, it is your individual responsibility to both find out from classmates what material you have missed and to make up any missed assignments.

Late Assignment & Incomplete

I am inflexible about deadlines. In some circumstances, I MIGHT accept late assignments (possibly with a penalty), but this acceptance certainly is not automatic. You will need to convince me why any requests for extensions are warranted.

I give "I" (Incomplete) grades only if you have completed a substantial amount of the course work at the time of the request. Furthermore, you must demonstrate that insurmountable circumstances have prevented you from completing the course during the remainder of the semester. This requires submitting a written appeal with all necessary documentation at the earliest date possible.

Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty

I have a zero tolerance policy for any form of cheating and/or plagiarism, including, but not limited to, using sources without proper attribution, fabricating data or information, presenting another's work as one's own. Engaging in any of these activities will result in a zero for this course and/or other possible consequences.

Course Schedule (Subject to Change)

Date	Topic and Assignments	Readings
1/10	Course Introduction	Course overview Student Introduction How to read academic articles Familiarize yourself with the Critical Reading Form Assign respondent sessions
1/17	What is Criticism? How to write a critical essay	Sillars & Gronbeck Ch. 1, Ch 3. Brockriede, 1974 Rosenfield, 1968 Stelzner, 1966
1/24	Analyzing a Text Content Analysis Exercise	Sillars & Gronbeck Ch. 2 Douglas, 2008 Schegloff, 1997 Hsieh, 2005
1/31	Accurate Interpretation Essay #1 (Accurate Interpretation) Due	Sillars & Gronbeck Ch 4: Osborn, 1983 Patterson, 1984 Hutchison, 2014 Campbell, 1972
2/7	Formal Criticism	Sillars & Gronbeck Ch. 5 Vaughan, 2004 Ryder, 1999 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WwGjpPlgqyo Clark, 1977 Vande Berg 1989
2/14	Neo Classical Criticism	Sillars & Gronbeck Ch. 6 Morhmann, 1974 Hill, 1972 Campbell-Hill, 1972 Voth, 2004

2/21	Semiotic Analysis Essay #2 Due	Sillars & Gronbeck Ch. 7, 8 Olson, 1983 Veil, 2011 Giora, 1999 Bonnsetter, 2011
2/28	The Social Tradition and Theory	Paper #2 Presentations
3/7	<i>Spring break. No class.</i>	
3/14	Narrative Analysis	Sillars & Gronbeck Ch. 10 Kafalanos, 2001 Newlyn, 1999 Gronbeck, 1980 Sellnow, 2014 Birdsell, 1987
3/21	Value Analysis	Sillars & Gronbeck Ch. 9 Trujillo, 1985 Sandeen, 1997 Nord, 1984 McGuckin 1968
3/28	Psychoanalytic Criticism	Sillars & Gronbeck Ch. 11 Ames, 2014 Fox, 2002 Livingstone, 1995 Terrill, 1993
4/4	The Critical Tradition Essay #3 Due	Sillars & Gronbeck, Ch. 12 Kellner, N.D. Oriard, 2005 Benjamin, 2014 (1936) http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/04/style/the-unending-anxiety-of-an-icy-world.html?_r=0
4/11	Applied Critical/Ideological Research	Dubrofsky, 2006 Cherry, 2017 Lloro-Bardt, 2017 Sender, 2006 Trujillo, 1991

4/18	Overflow Day	
4/25	Presentations	
5/2	Final Essay Due	

Critical Reading Form Example

Name

Endres, F. F. (1984). Frontier obituaries as cultural reflectors: Toward operationalizing Carey's thesis. *Journalism History*, 1 (3-4), 54-60.

Author's Purpose

To demonstrate how quantitative content analysis of appropriately selected historical newspaper content can address elusive issues regarding culture.

Central Thesis

Because of their standardized content, obituaries are a particularly valuable source of cultural insights into both cultural and news values of the frontier press during the first half of the 19th Century.

Author's approach to communication research

The author employed a content analysis of 19th Century frontier newspapers that focused on revealing journalistic, cultural and social patterns of the era.

Key Terms

- Cultural history (how people "grasped" reality)
- Content analysis
- Gender roles
- Cultural roles
- Standardized newspaper content (placement and form)

Key claims or propositions (10-15)

- News items that reflect standardized formats are particularly valuable artifacts for reflecting a cultural approach to press history.
- Traditional historical methods, as Carey noted, have not adequately conveyed the cultural dimension of journalism history.
- Focusing on routine historical items can reveal deep insights about cultural values.
- Obituaries reflected myriad cultural values ranging including journalistic, occupational, religious and gender values.
- The values reflected by seemingly cryptic obituaries paint a clear picture of the different gender roles of the early 19th Century.
- The content analysis reveals that women were largely viewed in terms of traditional, family centered roles. In effect, they were viewed as second-class citizens.
- The standardized form and consistent placement of obituaries reveals the extent to which news and cultural values were socialized among editors.

- The insights gained by such an analysis represent significant foundation for more focused follow-up research.

Favorite Quotations (2)

- Focusing on such common, standardized news items will lead the historian into such fruitful areas as item subjects, sources of information, placement, story structure, form and layout. (54)
- Men were respected and esteemed, women were beloved and well liked. (57)

Three discussion questions grounded in the question stems*

- What is an example of Endres utilizing other historical documents to triangulate his findings in the content analysis of newspapers?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of employing a comparatively rigid quantitative methodology such as content analysis can address elusive issues involving culture and values?
- What is the difference between “newspaper reality” and “social reality?”

***Question stems for facilitating discussion** (Please develop all questions from these stems—and do not answer the questions on the form)

1. How would you use _____ to _____?
2. What is an example of _____?
3. Explain why _____?
4. What do you think would happen if _____?
5. What is the difference between _____ and _____?
6. How are _____ and _____ similar?
7. What is a possible solution to the problem of _____?
8. What conclusions can you draw about _____?
9. How does _____ affect _____?
10. In your opinion, which is best, _____ or _____? Why?
11. What are the strengths and weaknesses of _____?
12. Do you agree or disagree with the statement: _____? Support your answer.
13. How is _____ related to _____ that we studied earlier?

CJT 764 Supplemental Readings

- Ames, M. (2014). Where have all the good men gone?: A psychoanalytic reading of the absent fathers and damaged dads on ABC's *Lost*. *Journal of Popular Culture* 47(3), 430-450
- Benjamin, W. (2008). *The work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction*. Penguin UK.
- Birdsell, D. S. (1987). Ronald Reagan on Lebanon and Grenada: Flexibility and interpretation in the application of Kenneth Burke's pentad. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 73(3), 267-279.
- Bonnsetter, B. E. (2011). Mel Brooks meets Kenneth Burke (and Mikhail Bakhtin): Comedy and burlesque in satiric film. *Journal of Film and Video* 63:1, 18-31.
- Brockriede, W. (1974). Rhetorical criticism as argument. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 60(2), 165-174.
- Campbell, K. K. (1972) Critique. Richard M Nixon's "Silent Majority" Speech.
- Campbell-Hill (1972) Rejoinder. *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 58(4), 451-454.
- Cherry, R. (2017). Black and Muslim women are invisible to the feminist movement. *Millennial Perspectives* 10(1), 39-41.
- Clark, T. D. (1977). An exploration of generic aspects of contemporary American Christian sermons. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 63(4), 384-394.
- Douglas, S. J. (2008) Does textual analysis tell us anything about past audiences? In (B. Zelizer Ed.) *Explorations in communication and history*. London and New York: Routledge, 67-76
- Dubrofsky, R. E. (2006). The Bachelor: Whiteness in the harem. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 23(01), 39-56.
- Fox, N. J. (2002). Refracting 'health': Deleuze, Guattari and body-self. *Health*, 6(3), 347-363.
- Giora, R. (1999). On the priority of salient meanings: Studies of literal and figurative language. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 31(7), 919-929.
- Gronbeck, B. E. (1980). Dramaturgical theory and criticism: The state of the art (or science?). *Western Journal of Speech Communication*, 44(4), 315-330.

- Hill, F. (1972). Conventional Wisdom—traditional form—the president’s message of November 3, 1969. *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 58(4), 373-386.
- Hsieh, H. F., & Shannon, S. E. (2005). Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative health research*, 15(9), 1277-1288.
- Hutchison, P. J. (2012). Reexamining Jack Johnson, Race, Stereotypes, and America’s White Press. *The Howard Journal of Communication* 23(3), 213-232.
- Hutchison, P. J. (2014). Usually White, But Not Always Great: A Journalistic Archeology of White Hopes, 1908-1913. *Journalism History* 40(1), 231-240.
- Kafalenos, E. (2001). Reading visual art, Making—and forgetting—fabulas. *Narrative*, 9(2), 138-145.
- Kellner D. & Lewis, T. (nd). Liberal Humanism and the European Critical Tradition. Unpublished Essay.
- Livingstone, S., & Liebes, T. (1995). Where have all the mothers gone? Soap opera's replaying of the Oedipal story. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 12(2), 155-175.
- Lloro-Bardt, T. When ‘Angelino’ squirrels don’t eat nuts: a feminist posthumanist politics of consumption across southern California. *Gender, Place & Culture* 24(6), 753-773.
- McGuckin Jr, H. E. (1968). A value analysis of Richard Nixon's 1952 campaign-fund speech. *Southern Journal of Communication*, 33(4), 259-269.
- Mohrmann, G. P., & Leff, M. C. (1974). Lincoln at Cooper Union: A rationale for neo-classical criticism. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 60(4), 459-467.
- Newlyn, A. K. (1999). Challenging Contemporary Narrative Theory: The Alternative Textual Strategies of Nineteenth-Century Manuscript Cookbooks. *Journal of American Culture*, 22 (3), 35-47.
- Nord, D. P. (1984). The Business Values of American Newspapers: The 19th Century Watershed in Chicago. *Journalism Quarterly*, 61(2), 265-73.
- Olson, L. G. (1983). Portraits in praise of a people: A rhetorical analysis of Norman Rockwell's icons in Franklin D. Roosevelt's “four freedoms” campaign. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 69(1), 15-24.
- Oriard, M (2005). *Reading football: How the popular press created an American spectacle*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1-20.

- Osborn, M. (1983). The abuses of argument. *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 49(1), 1-11.
- Patterson III, O. (1984). An analysis of television coverage of the Vietnam War. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 28(4), 397-404.
- Rogers, R. A. (1990). 1984 to Brazil: From the pessimism of reality to the hope of dreams.
- Rosenfield, L. W. (1968). The anatomy of critical discourse. *Communication Monographs*, 35(1), 50-69.
- Ryder, M. E. (1999). Smoke and mirrors: Event patterns in the discourse structure of a romance novel. *Journal of pragmatics*, 31(8), 1067-1080.
- Sandeen, C. (1997). Success defined by television: The value system promoted by PM Magazine. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 14(1), 77-105.
- Schegloff, E. A. (1997). Whose text? Whose context?. *Discourse & Society*, 8(2), 165-187.
- Selnow, D. (year) *The rhetorical power of popular culture: Considering mediated texts*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 73-83.
- Sender, K. (2006). Queens for a day: Queer Eye for the Straight Guy and the neoliberal project. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 23(2), 131-151.
- Stelzner, H. G. (1966). "War message," December 8, 1941: An approach to language. *Communications Monographs*, 33(4), 419-437.
- Terrill, R. E. (1993). Put on a happy face: Batman as schizophrenic savior. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 79(3), 319-335.
- Trujillo, N., & Ekdorn, L. R. (1985). Sportswriting and American cultural values: The 1984 Chicago cubs. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 2(3), 262-281.
- Trujillo, N. (1991). Hegemonic masculinity on the mound: Media representations of Nolan Ryan and American sports culture. *Critical studies in media communication*, 8(3), 290-308.
- Vande Berg, L. R. (1989). Dramedy: Moonlighting as an emergent generic hybrid. *Communication Studies*, 40(1), 13-28.
- Vaughan, D. R. (2004). Why the Andy Griffith Show is important to popular cultural studies. *The Journal of Popular Culture*, 38(2), 397-423.

Veil, S. R., Sellnow, T. L., & Heald, M. (2011). Memorializing crisis: The Oklahoma City national memorial as renewal discourse. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 39(2), 164-183.