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THROUGH DISCERNING EYES
ORIGINS AND IMPACT
OF CRITICAL THEORY
AT UCI

An exhibit in the
UC Irvine Langson Library
Muriel Ansley Reynolds
Exhibit Gallery

April 2015 - September 2015

Featuring a talk by the
Dr. Georges Van Den Abbeele
Dean, School of Humanities,
University of California, Irvine
Welcome to the UC Irvine Libraries’ spring exhibit, Through Discerning Eyes: The Origins and Impact of Critical Theory at UCI! One of the first programs of its kind in the world, the Critical Theory Emphasis supports and encourages the study of theory. Through Discerning Eyes: The Origins and Impact of Critical Theory at UCI explores the development of this international program from its roots in the department of Comparative Literature and English, to its current impact on the broader UCI community and global scholarship.

We are honored to have Dr. Georges Van Den Abbeele, Dean of Humanities at the University of California at Irvine, as our distinguished speaker at the opening night event on April 9, 2015. A native of Belgium, Dean Van Den Abbeele earned a bachelor’s degree at Reed College and a Ph.D. at Cornell University. A noted scholar of Philosophy and French Literature, as well as a prolific translator of Jean-François Lyotard’s work, Dean Van Den Abbeele’s books and edited volumes include Travel as Metaphor: From Montaigne to Rousseau, Community at Loose Ends, A World of Fables, and French Civilization and its Discontents. Additionally, Dr. Van Den Abbeele is the author of several articles on subjects such as continental philosophy and critical theory, travel narrative, tourism and immigration, and human geography.

This exhibit will be on display through mid-September 2015, during regular library hours. I invite you to explore the exhibit, which honors the UCI Critical Theory Emphasis, recognizes internationally acclaimed critical theorists, and highlights materials from the Libraries’ Critical Theory Archive. I also invite you to return to the UCI Libraries to view future thought-provoking exhibits.

Lorelei Tanji
University Librarian
Foundations in English and Comparative Literature

At the University of California, Irvine, exploration in the field of theory began, primarily, in what was then called the Department of English and Comparative Literature. In the late 1960s, English and Comparative Literature boasted three strong interconnected programs: English, Comparative Literature, and Creative Writing. Professor Hazard Adams, founder of the department and later Dean of the School of Humanities, believed that scholars, whether they were students of English literature, comparatists, or writers, should be exposed to literary and critical theory. The national reputation of this innovative and unique focus on theory brought new faculty to campus, including Dr. Murray Krieger, formerly of the University of Iowa and one of the foremost literary theorists in the nation, who came to Irvine in 1966. In the early 1970s, interest in theory began to spread to other disciplines and departments including history, linguistics, and the arts.

“The Program has been interested in literary theory as an international study, in translation as an artistic problem in itself, and in developing a view of literature as international as well as national. Its aim is to lay out areas of common concern and to support the idea of literary study as best carried on by a true community of scholars, pursuing their own interests, but also teaching and thinking together when and where they best can.”

Hazard Adams, Literary Study at Irvine, 1973

1. Cover and excerpt from Proposals for Programs of Graduate Study for the Master of Arts, Master of Fine Arts, and Doctor of Philosophy Degrees in English, and the Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy Degrees in Comparative Literature, 1965. UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. Department of English and Comparative Literature Publications, University of California, Irvine [PS-010].

2. Flyer for the Graduate Program in English, 1966. UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. Department of English and Comparative Literature Publications, University of California, Irvine [PS-010].

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the founder of the department of English and Comparative Literature, Hazard Adams, articulated a vision for a program in theory that did not ascribe to any particular “school” of criticism, leaving students in his department free to explore new ideas and trends in the field, but firmly rooting theory in the study of literary texts. The philosophical tools used by comparatists and critics to explore and deconstruct poetry and prose, however, began to be adopted by other disciplines and be applied to other subjects, such as history, art, and music. Faculty in departments outside the field of English and Comparative Literature began to propose interdisciplinary programs in the Arts and Humanities that would be devoted to the application of theory, such as the Critical Theory Emphasis would later become.

Dr. Wlecke was an early faculty member in the department.

Dr. Montgomery was also the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies in the School of Humanities. In 1972 he was appointed the Acting Dean for the School of Humanities.
10. **Photograph of Dr. Renee Riese Hubert of the Departments of Comparative Literature and French, circa 1970s.** UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. Communications Photographs [AS-061].

   Dr. Hubert was an early faculty member in the department.

11. **Cover letter and proposal for Interdisciplinary Ph.D. program in the history, theory, and criticism of the arts, 1976.** UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The Murray Krieger papers [MS-C002].

12. **Hand-edited memo draft from Murray Krieger “To all graduate students in School of Humanities interested in Theory,” 1974.** UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The Murray Krieger papers [MS-C002].

   With the support of Hazard Adams, and other faculty from various departments in the Humanities, Murray Krieger established critical theory as a humanistic interdisciplinary pursuit. The Critical Theory Emphasis opened a course of study in theory to undergraduates and graduate students in any discipline in the Humanities. This program, unlike any other anywhere in the nation, allowed students to explore any subject in the Humanities through a theoretical lens and would serve as a model for similar programs in University across the United States and abroad. In 1976, Krieger and Adams founded the School of Criticism and Theory, a joint UC-NEH sponsored summer program for advanced graduate and post-doctoral students in Critical Theory, which succeeded in bringing some of the greatest minds in the field to serve as faculty at UC Irvine in the Critical Theory Emphasis.


   Dr. Kruger was one of the first faculty members in the department. He went on to be the Director of the Program in Criticism in the Department of English and Comparative Literature. In April 1974 he was named one of nine University Professors by the UC Regents.

14. **Brochure for the School of Criticism and Theory, 1976.** UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. Department of English and Comparative Literature Publications, University of California, Irvine [PS-010].
Bright Past

The University of California, Irvine supports a rich tradition of internationally oriented Humanistic inquiry, research, and teaching that continues to inspire groundbreaking scholarship. *Through Discerning Eyes: Origins and Impacts* and Critical Theory, a Timeline contextualizes UCI’s contribution to Critical Theory, highlighting the fields of inquiry to which it has, and continues, to contribute.

The New Critics

Early UCI theory courses studied Ancient Greek aesthetics, British Romantic literary criticism, German Idealism, and New Criticism. The New Critics stressed close reading and focused on literature’s internal composition, rather than factors such as authorial intention. New Critics also enhanced academic literary studies in the United States, developing and improving important publications, including *The Southern Review* and *The Suwanee Review*.

**John Crowe Ransom** (b. 30 April 1888  d. 3 July 1974)
*The New Criticism* (1941)

**I. A. Richards** (b. 26 February 1893  d. 7 September 1979)
*The Principles of Literary Criticism* (1924/1925)

**Robert Penn Warren** (b. 24 April 1905  d. 15 September 1989) and

**Cleanth Brooks**:
 a) *Understanding Poetry* (1939)
 b) *Understanding Fiction* (1943)

**Cleanth Brooks** (b. 16 October 1906  d. 10 May 1994)

**William Wimsatt** (b. 17 November 1907  d. 17 December 1975) and

**Monroe Beardsley** (b. 10 December 1915  d. 18 September 1985)
“*The Intentional Fallacy*” (1946)
“*The Affective Fallacy*” (1949)
15. **A Syllabus from Murray Krieger’s course, CR 220B: Studies in Literary Theory and Its History.** Murray Krieger Papers [MS-C02].

The Linguistic Turn in the Humanities

Ferdinand de Saussure’s lectures at the University of Geneva between 1906 and 1911 influenced early twentieth-century European literary theory, especially Russian Formalism, and the development of significant linguistic “schools,” such as the Prague School and the Copenhagen School. Furthermore, Ludwig Wittgenstein’s work on language games, and J.L. Austen’s analysis of performative utterances, demonstrated the importance of linguistics in early twentieth-century European theory.

**Ferdinand de Saussure** (b. 26 November 1857  d. 22 February 1913)  
*Course in General Linguistics* (1916)

**Ludwig Wittgenstein** (b. 26 April 1889  d. 29 April 1951)  
*Philosophical Investigations* (1953)

**Viktor Shklovsky** (b. 12/24 Jan 1893  d. 6 December 1984)  
*Theory of Prose* (1925)

**Mikhail Bakhtin** (b. 17 November 1895  d. 7 March 1975)  
*Voprosy literatury i estetiki* (selections translated in *The Dialogic Imagination*) (1975)

**Roman Jakobson** (b. 11 October 1896  d. 18 July 1982)  
“Linguistics and Poetics” (1960)

**Émile Benveniste** (b. 27 May 1902  d. 3 October 1976)  

**J.L. Austen** (b. 26 March 1911  d. 6 February 1960)  
*How to Do Things with Words* (1955, pub. 1962)


18. **Avant-Propos from Étienne Balibar’s handwritten translation of Ludwig Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus***. Étienne Balibar Papers. [MS-C023].
The School of Criticism and Theory

In 1976, Professors Hazard Adams and Murray Krieger founded the School of Criticism and Theory. Supported in part by the National Endowment for the Humanities as a summer school for junior faculty and advanced graduate students, the School has become one of UC, Irvine’s most important contributions to the field of theory. The summer program offered a six-week session of classes prepared by a nationally selected board of senior fellows including such notable figures as M.H. Abrams, Northrop Frye, René Girard, Geoffrey Hartman, and Edward Said. Other teaching faculty included Geoffrey Hartman, Wolfgang Iser, Fredric Jameson, Louis Marin, and Hayden White, each representing divergent theoretical stances in both their courses and the weekly colloquia in which they all participated.

Krieger and Adams were initially the co-directors of the program; Krieger served as sole director from 1978-1981. The School brought nationwide recognition to UC Irvine, and cemented Critical Theory as an important and established discipline within the Humanities.

“At UC Irvine the department has, since the campus opened in 1965, developed balanced Ph.D. programs in the study of English and American Literature, Comparative Literature, and theory. Our Ph.D. Concentration in Theory, almost as old as our department, has developed to the point of making us appear an appropriate home for a School of Criticism and Theory. We believe that the advantages of its presence here add significantly to the attractiveness of all our graduate programs for students of literature who have a strong primary or secondary interest in critical theory.”

Concentration in Critical Theory memo to the department, 1976

20. **School of Criticism and Theory catalog description, 1976.** UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The Murray Krieger papers [MS-C002].

21. **School of Criticism and Theory flyer for graduate participants, 1976.** UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The Murray Krieger papers [MS-C002].

22. a. **School of Criticism and Theory board of fellow photograph, 1975.** Left to right are Dr. M.H. Abrams, Dr. Hazard Adams, Dr. Ralph Freedman, Dr. Rene Girard, and Dr. Geoffrey Hartman. UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The Murray Krieger papers [MS-C002].

b. **Photograph of the School of Criticism and Theory board of fellows, 1975.** Left to right are Unknown, Dr. M.H. Abrams, Dr. Hazard Adams, Dr. Ralph Freedman, Dr. Rene Girard, and Dr. Geoffrey Hartman. UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The Murray Krieger papers [MS-C002].

23. **Photograph of School of Criticism and Theory board of fellows conference panel, 1976.** UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The Murray Krieger papers [MS-C002].

24. **Colloquium Guest tag, 1975.** UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The Murray Krieger papers [MS-C002].

25. **Colloquium reception dinner invitation, 1975.** UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The Murray Krieger papers [MS-C002].

26. **School of Criticism and Theory reception photograph featuring Murray Krieger and fellow, 1976.** UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The Murray Krieger papers [MS-C002].

27. **School of Criticism and Theory reception photograph featuring Murray Krieger and John Carlos Rowe, 1976.** UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The Murray Krieger papers [MS-C002].
28. **School of Criticism and Theory reception photograph featuring Murray Krieger, 1976.**
UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The Murray Krieger papers [MS-C002].

29. **School of Criticism and Theory reception photograph featuring Murray Krieger, J. Hillis Miller, and Dorothy Miller, 1976.** UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The Murray Krieger papers [MS-C002].
In 1981, The School of Criticism and Theory moved to Northwestern University, with Krieger continuing as director for that year. It later moved to Dartmouth College and, as of 2000, resides at Cornell University. Over a thousand junior faculty and students have attended the School in its various iterations, many becoming themselves leading critics in their respective fields.

30.  a. School of Criticism and Theory edited brochure, 1977. UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The Murray Krieger papers [MS-C002].


31. Literature and History, Tenth Anniversary School of Criticism and Theory brochure, Dartmouth College, 1986. UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The Murray Krieger papers [MS-C002].
Marxist, Neo-Marxist, and Post-Marxist Critical Theory

Events such as the Bolshevik Revolution (1917) and the founding of the Soviet Union (1922) caused many European thinkers to return to works by Karl Marx, Immanuel Kant, and G.W.F. Hegel. Of note, György Lukács championed realist literature for its ability to discern the conditions that could lead to social change. In Germany, members of the Frankfurt founded a mode of critical theory that challenged dominant social ideologies and economic models. The writings of Marx and Marxist theorists, such as Antonio Gramsci, played a prominent role in the work of thinkers such as Ernesto Laclau and Louis Althusser.

György Lukács (b. 13 April 1885   d. 4 June 1971)
   Geschichte und Klassenbewuβtsein: Studien über marxistische Dialektik (History and Class Consciousness) (1923)

Walter Benjamin (b. 15 July 1892   d. 26 September 1940)
   Das Passagen-Werk (The Arcades Project) (1927, unfinished)

Max Horkheimer (b. 14 February 1895   d. 7 July 1973) and
Theodor Adorno (b. 11 September 1903   d. 6 August 1969)
   Dialektik der Aufklärung (The Dialectic of Enlightenment) (1944)

Max Horkheimer
   Eclipse of Reason (1947)

Theodor Adorno
   Negative Dialektik (Negative Dialectics) (1966)

Herbert Marcuse (b. 19 July 1896   d. 29 July 1979)
   One Dimensional Man (1964)

Hannah Arendt (b. 14 October 1906   d. 4 December 1975)
   The Origins of Totalitarianism (1951)

Louis Althusser (b. 16 October 1918   d. 22 October 1990)
   Lénine et la philosophie (Lenin and Philosophy) (1968)

Guy Debord (b. 28 December 1931   d. 30 November 1994)
   La Société du spectacle (The Society of the Spectacle) (1967)

Ernest Laclau (b. 6 October 1935   d. 13 April 2014) and
Chantal Mouffe (b. 17 June 1943)
   Hegemony and Socialist Strategy (1985)

Jacques Rancière (b. 1940)

Étienne Balibar (b. 23 April 1942)
   Spinoza et la politique (Spinoza and Politics) (1985)

Inter-War French Theory and Structuralism

Existentialism, Phenomenology, and Alexandre Kojève’s lectures on Hegel in the 1930s contributed to the innovative work of many early twentieth-century French thinkers. Furthermore, French theorists synthesized Saussure’s semiology with other research disciplines to create structuralism. In the field of literary criticism, structuralism named a method of analysis that studied a text as a linguistic system, often comparing several texts to find a common structure to base general conclusions.

André Breton (b. 19 February 1896   d. 28 September 1966)
   Manifeste du surréalisme, I, II (Surrealist Manifestoes) (1924, 1929)

Georges Bataille (b. 10 September 1897   d. 9 July 1962)
   La Part maudite (The Accursed Share) (1949)

Jacques Lacan (b. 13 April 1901   d. 9 September 1981)
   Écrits (1966)

Alexandre Kojève (b. 28 April 1902   d. 4 June 1968)
   Introduction à la lecture de Hegel: leçons sur la Phénoménologie de l’Esprit professées de 1933 à 1939 à l’École des Hautes Études (Introduction to the Reading of Hegel) (1947)

Claude Lévi-Strauss (b. 28 November 1908   d. 30 October 2009)
   Tristes Tropiques (1955)

Roland Barthes (b. 12 November 1915   d. 26 March 1980)
   Mythologies (1957)

Michel Foucault (b. 15 October 1926   d. 25 June 1984)
   L’archéologie du savoir (Archaeology of Knowledge) (1969)

Gérard Genette (b. 1930)

Tzvetan Todorov (b. 1 March 1939)
   Introduction à la littérature fantastique (The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre) (1970)

35. a. Excerpt from Paul de Man’s handwritten essay, “Roland Barthes and the Limits of Structuralism.”

b. Manuscript of Paul de Man’s essay, “Roland Barthes and the Limits of Structuralism.” Paul de Man Papers. [MS-C04].

The essay dates to 1972, and was commissioned, though never published, by The New York Review of Books. It was later published in Yale French Studies No. 77, Reading the Archive: On Texts and Institutions (1990), pp. 177-190.
The Critical Theory Institute and International Work in Theory

The success of the Critical Theory Emphasis and, especially, the School of Criticism and Theory has drawn internationally famous scholars to the Pacific coast to serve as both permanent and visiting faculty at UC Irvine. Many of these scholars have been, and continue to be, members of the prestigious Critical Theory Institute, a faculty research and reading group based at UCI and devoted to the promotion and exploration of theory. Established in 1986 by a proposal authored by Professor David Carroll of the French and Italian Department, the main activities of this group include reading and discussion sessions, seminars, lectures from visiting speakers, graduate student conferences, and the sponsorship of the yearly Rene Wellek Library Lecture series. Critical Theory Institute includes amongst their former and current members Jacques Derrida, Jean-François Lyotard, Wolfgang Iser, J. Hillis Miller, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Ellen Burt, Mark Poster, Alexander Gelley, Gabriele Schwab, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o, and Bill Maurer.

“I think the real question is whether there is not occurring now a general shift of intellectual activity to the West Coast and whether both of us might not have a greater effect for ‘deconstruction in America’ out there than in spending another decade at Yale […] At Irvine there is a chance at least to do something new, with new battles to be fought, and new challenges to see if anything can be made of it there.”

J. Hillis Miller to Jacques Derrida, 1985

    b. **Faculty Associates in Organized Research Unit in Critical Theory, 1986**. UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. Central Records Unit Records, University of California, Irvine. [AS-004]

37. **Photographs of the original Critical Theory Institute faculty associates:**

    a. **David Carroll, UCI department of French and Italian, circa 1970s**. UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. Communications Photographs. [AS-061].


    j. **Wolfgang Iser, UCI department of English and Comparative Literature, circa 2000.** Photo © Leonardo Aversa.

    d. **Murray Krieger, UCI department of Comparative Literature and English, circa 1970s**. UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. Communications Photographs. [AS-061].

37. **Photographs of the original Critical Theory Institute faculty associates Cont.:**

    e. **J. Hillis Miller in Venice, UCI department of Comparative Literature and English, April 1995**. UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. J. Hillis Miller papers. [MS-C013].

    f. **Mark Poster, UCI department of History, circa 1970s**. UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. Communications Photographs. [AS-061].


    i. **Juan Villegas, UCI department of Spanish and Portuguese, circa 1970s**. UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. Communications Photographs. [AS-061].
Though the Institute’s and emphasis faculty’s work was based primarily on campus at UCI, members of the group maintained and forged new connections with universities and intellectuals abroad. Many, such as Jacques Derrida and Wolfgang Iser for example, continued to serve on faculty at their home universities in Europe, while others traveled extensively giving lectures and serving as visiting faculty at universities all over the world. J. Hillis Miller is particularly credited with having brought Critical Theory to the People’s Republic of China in the 1990s and 2000s. UCI would continue to support the work done by its faculty both on campus and off.

38. Announcement flyer for a lecture on “The Affix of Reading (Henry James)” given by J. Hillis Miller in Germany, 1985. UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. J. Hillis Miller papers. [MS-C013].


In 1992, faculty at UC Irvine, in collaboration with others abroad, proposed an Organized Research Initiative called the International Center for Humanistic Discourses. The project was principally concerned with bridge-building between Western and Eastern cultures, and primarily devoted to the comparative study of the discourses of the humanities as they play their role in constituting each of the cultures. Funded jointly by UCI and a grant from the Humboldt Foundation in Germany, the Center sponsored a yearly conference to be held either in the United States or Germany. The conference also produced a journal, Surfaces, published by the University of Montreal. The International Center for Humanistic Discourse serves as one example as to how UCI has fostered international cultural exchange through scholarly dialog.

42. Schedule for the 3rd “International Conference for Humanistic Discourse,” in Munich, 16-20 September 1996. UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. J. Hillis Miller papers. [MS-C013].


44. International Center for Humanistic Discourses member list, circa 1990-1999. UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. International Center for Humanistic Discourses Records, University of California, Irvine. [MS-C021].

45. Photograph of the participants of the International Conference for Humanistic Discourses in Munich, 1996. UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. J. Hillis Miller papers. [MS-C013].


47. Photograph of International Conference for Humanistic Discourses participants, circa 1990-1999. UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. International Center for Humanistic Discourses Records, University of California, Irvine. [MS-C021].

48. Photograph of International Conference for Humanistic Discourses speaker’s panel, circa 1990-1999. UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. International Center for Humanistic Discourses Records, University of California, Irvine. [MS-C021].
From Structuralism to Postmodernism and Beyond

Many theorists would ultimately challenge Saussure’s semiology, and the methods of interpretation that it influenced. Such critiques contributed to postmodernism and other theoretical approaches associated with it, including poststructuralism and deconstruction. Furthermore, feminist critical theory became increasingly prominent, with feminist thinkers drawing from the work of, for example, Simone de Beauvoir, to challenge psychoanalysis and more traditional patriarchal and masculinist concepts.

Maurice Blanchot (b. 22 September 1907  d. 20 February 2003)
L’Espace littéraire (The Space of Literature) (1955)

Jean-François Lyotard (b. 10 August 1924  d. 21 April 1998)
La condition postmoderne: rapport sur le savoir (The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge) (1979)

Gilles Deleuze (b. 18 January 1925  d. 4 November 1995) and Félix Guattari (b. 10 April 1930  d. 29 August 1992)
L’Anti-Œdipe (Anti-Oedipus) (1972)

Jean Baudrillard (b. 27 July 1929  d. 6 March 2007)
Simulacres et simulation (Simulacra and Simulation) (1981)

Luce Irigraray (b. 3 May 1930)
Speculum de l’autre femme (Speculum of the Other Woman) (1974)

Jacques Derrida (b. 15 July 1930  d. 9 October 2004)
De la grammaatologie (Of Grammatology) (1967)

Fredric Jameson (b. 14 April 1934)
Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism (1991)

Alain Badiou (b. 17 January 1937)
L’Être et l’événement (Being and Event) (1988)

Hélène Cixous (b. 5 June 1937)
Souffles (1975)

Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe (b. 6 March 1940  d. 27 January 2007)
Typographies 2: L’Imitation des modernes (Typography: Mimesis, Philosophy, Politics) (1985)

Jean-Luc Nancy (b. 26 July 1940)
La communauté désœuvrée (The Inoperative Community) (1983)

Julia Kristeva (b. 24 June 1941)
Soleil noir: Dépression et mélancolie (Black Sun: Depression and Melancholia) (1992)

Giorgio Agamben (b. 22 April 1942)
Homo Sacer (1998)

Slavoj Žižek (b. 21 March 1949)
The Sublime Object of Ideology (1989)

   b. An excerpt from J. Hillis Miller’s eulogy for Jean-François Lyotard. J. Hillis Miller Papers. [MS-C013].

In the latter half of the twentieth century, many significant European thinkers came to teach, and to continue their research, in the United States. For example, from the late 1960s, till the early 1980s, Yale University became home to several important critics, including Paul de Man, Jacques Derrida, and J. Hillis Miller. In 1986, Miller and Derrida left Yale for UCI, further solidifying the University of California, Irvine as an institution committed to cultivating, and advancing, critical theory scholarship.

Paul de Man (b. 6 December 1919   d. 21 December 1983)

J. Hillis Miller (b. 5 March 1928)
*The Linguistic Moment: From Wordsworth to Stevens* (1985)

Geoffrey Hartman (11 August 1929)
*Criticism in the Wilderness: The Study of Literature Today* (1980)

Harold Bloom (b. 11 July 1930)
*The Anxiety of Influence* (1973)

Shoshana Felman (b. 29 January 1942)
*Le Scandale du corps parlant: Don Juan avec Austin, ou, la séduction en deux langues* (*The Scandal of the Speaking Body. Don Juan with Austin, or Seduction in Two Languages*) (1980)

Barbara Johnson (b. 4 October 1947   d. 27 August 2009)
*The Critical Difference: Essays in the Contemporary Rhetoric of Reading* (1985)


b. An excerpt from J. Hillis Miller’s letter to Jacques Derrida, describing the potential to leave Yale for the University of California, Irvine. J. Hillis Miller Papers. [MS-C013].

Theory Today among the Disciplines

By the 1980s and 1990s, theory encompassed a variety of European philosophies and analytical approaches, including Frankfurt School critical theory, post-structuralism, deconstruction, psychoanalysis, semiotics, and genealogical critique. Furthermore, theoretical contributions to post-colonial studies, and critiques of symbolic categories such as gender, galvanized UCI’s inter-disciplinary approach to critical theory research and teaching. The recent formation of the Culture and Theory Ph.D. program testifies to the significance of critical theory at UCI, particularly as it continues to wrestle with how theory can respond to contemporary issues within, and beyond, the Humanities.

“Culture and Theory participates in the broad trend of new interdisciplinary programs that have emerged on the national and international scene, yet retains an important distinction that builds on the particular strength and reputation of the humanities at UCI. Unlike other interdisciplinary Ph.D. programs in the humanities and social sciences, the goal here is to examine productively the intersections of Critical Theory with race, sexuality and gender studies through a problem-oriented approach.”

Culture and Theory Program, University of California, Irvine, Program Handbook, 2010

53. a. Cross-cultural women’s studies course announcement flyer, 1992. UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. UCI School of Humanities Publications. [PS-053].


55. a. **Photograph of David Theo Goldberg, UCI Department of Comparative Literature and Director of the UC Humanities Research Institute.** UC Irvine Strategic Communications & Marketing.

In 2012 Dr. Goldberg, along with Cathy Davidson of Duke University, were named Educators of the Year by the World Technology Network for co-founding the Humanities, Arts, Science & Technology Advanced Collaboratory


At UC Irvine, he serves on the Core Faculty and as Undergraduate Director of the Program in African American Studies, and on the Core Faculty and as Director of the Ph.D. Program in Culture and Theory.


Dr. Schwab is a Chancellor’s Professor and Chair of the Comparative Literature Department.


60. **Announcement flyer for Franklin Knight’s lecture, “The State of Sovereignty and the Sovereignty of the State in Latin America and the Caribbean,” 1991.** UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. UCI School of Humanities Publications. [PS-053].
At UCI, faculty and students rigorously approach the production and critique of knowledge. Moving beyond a strictly European philosophical and literary context, critical theory at UCI also incorporates insights from feminism, critical race theory, ethnic studies, postcolonial theory, queer studies, and media studies. Issues such as globalization, colonialism, diaspora, immigration, and social movements contribute to the innovative work of faculty associated with the Critical Theory Emphasis, and to UCI’s eagerness to welcome researchers from a variety of theoretical fields.

61. a. **Photograph of Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o, UCI Department of Comparative Literature.**
   UC Irvine Strategic Communications & Marketing.

   Dr. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o was the 2014 winner of the Nicolás Guillén Lifetime Achievement Award for Philosophical Literature.


   Dr. Chaturvedi is an Associate Professor in UCI Department of History focusing on Modern South Asia and Social and Intellectual History.


   Dr. Radhakrishnan is a UCI Chancellor’s Professor of English and Comparative Literature and a postcolonial theorist and literary critic.

64. **Graduate Emphasis in Asian American Studies brochure, circa 1998.** UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. UCI School of Humanities Publications. [PS-053].

   Faculty with interdisciplinary expertise in Asian American Studies also have affiliations with departments in the School of Humanities, Social Sciences, Social Ecology and Arts. Their graduate studies program focuses on the critical study of race broadly, and of Asian Americans in particular.

65. “**From Here to There: Languages in Conversation” conference poster, 2003.** UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. UCI School of Humanities Publications. [PS-053].
Brilliant Future

Critical theory’s interdisciplinary nature encourages new approaches to Humanities research and teaching. At UCI, faculty contribute to a broad area of research interests, and develop curriculum committed to addressing complex global issues. Exemplifying such diversity across the critical theory spectrum, UCI founded the Culture and Theory PhD program in 2006-2007. The Culture and Theory PhD Program and the Critical Theory Emphasis demonstrate UCI’s commitment to numerous fields of critical inquiry, including, though not limited to, Race and Social Criticism, Postcolonial Theory, Gender and Sexuality Studies, and Queer Theory.

Colonial and Postcolonial Theory

Postcolonial Theory often draws from Marxist, feminist, and poststructuralist critique to challenge concepts—including reason, humanism, and universalism—that support colonialism and neocolonialism. Additionally, Postcolonal theory examines the broader implications of decolonization.

Aimé Césaire (b. 26 June 1913  d. 17 April 2008)
Discours sur le colonialisme (Discourse on Colonialism) (1950)

Albert Memmi (b. 15 December 1920)
Portrait du colonisé, précédé par portrait du colonisateur (The Colonizer and the Colonized) (1957)

Franz Fanon (b. 20 July 1925  d. 6 December 1961)
Les damnés de la terre (The Wretched of the Earth) (1961)

Edward Said (b. 1 November 1935  d. 25 September 2003)
Orientalism (1978)

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o (b. 5 January 1938)
Decolonizing the Mind (1986)

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (b. 24 February 1942)
A Critique of Postcolonial Reason (1999)

Partha Chatterjee (b. 1947)

Dipesh Chakrabarty (b. 15 December 1948)
Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference (2000)

Homi K. Bhabha (b. 1949)
The Location of Culture (1994)

Achille Mbembe (b. 1957)
On the Postcolony (2000)

Chandra Mohanty (b. 1955)

Gender Studies, Sexuality Studies, and Queer Theory

As a form of critical theory, Gender Studies challenges the assumption that gender is natural and unmediated, and that biology determines gender identities. Sexuality Studies examines how numerous historical, political, and social factors shape sexual identifications and practices. Expanding the work of Gender Studies, Queer Theory, broadly speaking, critiques representations of normalcy, and discusses the implications that the concept of “normal” has on those identified as abnormal or deviant.

Simone de Beauvoir (b. 9 January 1908   d. 14 April 1986)  
*Le deuxième sexe (The Second Sex)* (1949)

Michel Foucault (15 October 1926   d. 25 June 1984)  
*Histoire de la sexualité, I-III (The History of Sexuality)* (1976, 1984)

Leo Bersani (b. 16 April 1931)  
*HOMOS* (1995)

Eve Kosoksy Sedgwick (b. 2 May 1950   d. 12 April 2009)  
*Epistemology of the Closet* (1990)

Lee Edelman (b. 1953)  
*No Future* (2004)

Judith Butler (b. 24 February 1956)  
*Gender Trouble* (1990)

Lauren Berlant (b. 1957)  
*The Queen of America Goes to Washington City* (1997)

Michael Warner (1958)  
*The Trouble with Normal* (1999)

Judith/Jack Halberstam (b. 15 December 1961)  
*Female Masculinities* (1998)

José Esteban Muñoz (b. 1967   d. 4 December 2013)  
*Disidentifications* (1999)

Jasbir Puar (b. 1967)  


Race and Social Criticism

Throughout twentieth- and twenty-first-century critical theory, many scholars and activists have responded to important social issues, including racism, and economic and gender inequality. Often promoting activism, these thinkers expose and analyze the conditions that breed social disparities.

W.E.B. DuBois (b. 23 February 1868  d. 27 August 1963)
    *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903)

Stuart Hall (b. 3 February 1932  d. 10 February 2014)
    *Encoding and Decoding in the Television Discourse* (1973)

Audre Lorde (b. 18 February 1934  d. 17 November 1992)

Angela Davis (b. 26 January 1944)
    *Woman, Race, and Class* (1983)

Patricia Hill Collins (b. 1 May 1948)

bell hooks (b. 25 September 1952)
    *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center* (1984)

Cornell West (2 June 1953)
    *Race Matters* (1994)

Paul Gilroy (16 February 1956)

Sara Ahmed (b. 30 August 1969)
    *The Promise of Happiness* (2010)

The J. Hillis Miller Papers

J. Hillis Miller, Distinguished Professor of Comparative Literature and English at UCI, began to donate his personal papers to the Critical Theory Archive in 2000. A member of the original Critical Theory Institute at UCI, he is an internationally recognized literary theorist, and a nineteenth- and twentieth-century English and American literature scholar. The papers best document Miller’s intellectual life as a specialist in Victorian and Modern British and American literature, a literary theorist, and a university educator. Miller’s work primarily focuses on the novels of Charles Dickens, Thomas Hardy, George Eliot, Anthony Trollope, Henry James, Wallace Stevens, Gerard Manly Hopkins, and Joseph Conrad, as well as the philosophical work and criticism of Emmanuel Kant, Friedrich Nietzsche, Walter Benjamin, Paul de Man, and Jacques Derrida.


71. Photograph of J. Hillis Miller with wife, Dorothy, and daughter, Robin, circa 1952. UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The J. Hillis Miller papers [MS-C013].

72. Photograph of J. Hillis Miller with daughter Robin, son Matthew, and daughter Sally, circa 1970s. UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The J. Hillis Miller papers [MS-C013].


74. Announcement for “‘The Labyrinth of the Wind:’ Yeats’s ‘Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen’” lecture by J. Hillis Miller, April 19, 1979. UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The J. Hillis Miller papers [MS-C013].

75. J. Hillis Miller’s journal with notes and a notecard from Jacques Derrida, 1977-1978. UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The J. Hillis Miller papers [MS-C013].

J. Hillis Miller and Jacques Derrida served on the faculty at both Yale University and the University of California, Irvine. Miller and Derrida, along with Paul de Man and others, are often referred to as members of the Yale School of Literary Criticism, which is primarily based on Derrida’s work on Deconstruction. Miller was ultimately responsible for bringing Derrida to UCI as a faculty member and member of the Critical Theory Institute in 1986.
76. **Letter from David Carroll to J. Hillis Miller regarding Miller joining the faculty at UCI, 1986.** UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The J. Hillis Miller papers [MS-C013].

77. **“Yale Critic to Arrive at UCI in the Abstract,” The Los Angeles Times (Los Angeles, CA) March 9, 1986.** The J. Hillis Miller papers [MS-C013].

78. **UCI Medal ceremony invitation, 2002.** UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The J. Hillis Miller papers [MS-C013].

79. **Photograph of J. Hillis Miller receiving the UCI Medal from Chancellor Cicerone with congratulatory note, 2002.** UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The J. Hillis Miller papers [MS-C013].
The Critical Theory Archive

The UCI Libraries supports the work of faculty and students in all disciplines, and its Critical Theory Archive safeguards critical theory scholarship and intellectual history. In 1981, the UCI Libraries’ Special Collections and Archives began to collaborate with English and Comparative Literature faculty in order to build a robust critical theory collection. Acquiring René Wellek’s Collection of the History of Criticism, which included Professor Wellek’s personal library, UCI established a foundation for collecting the papers of notable critical theorists. Special Collections opened the Critical Theory Archive in 1996 with the goal to assemble the largest academic collection of critical theory papers. The archive continues to collect manuscripts from leading theorists, and currently holds the personal papers of, for example, Jacques Derrida, Paul de Man, Stanley Fish, Ihab Hassan, Wolfgang Iser, Murray Krieger, J. Hillis Miller, and other influential figures in the field of theory.


The Critical Theory Archive is committed to preserving the manuscripts of critical theorists no matter the format. In addition to traditional paper records, photographs, and recordings, the archive preserves and provides access to born-digital records transferred to the archive on floppy disks, CD-ROMs hard drives, and cloud servers.

81. Photograph of young J. Hillis Miller and his father, circa 1930s. UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The J. Hillis Miller papers [MS-C013].

82. Photograph of J. Hillis Miller sailing, circa 1980s-1990s. UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The J. Hillis Miller papers [MS-C013].

83. J. Hillis Miller’s floppy disks, circa 1980s-1990s. UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The J. Hillis Miller papers [MS-C013].

84. Letter from Richard Rorty to his mother, circa 1936-1946. UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The Richard Rorty Papers [MS-C017].

85. Orchid drawing by Richard Rorty, circa 1936-1946. UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The Richard Rorty Papers [MS-C017].

86. Graded school essay “Shakespeare’s Idea of Kingship (after Henry IV, Act III, Scene
1),” 1950. UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The Jacques Derrida papers [MS-C001].


88. Holograph of “Genesis and Genealogy.” UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The Paul de Man papers [MS-C004].

89. Photograph of Paul de Man with his son, Marc de Man, and grandson, Stephen de Man, circa 1980s. UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The Paul de Man papers [MS-C004].

90. Recording of lecture, “Resistance to Theory,” delivered by Paul de Man at the University of Oregon, 1981. UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The Paul de Man papers [MS-C004].

The Wellek Library Lectures
Since 1981, the UCI Libraries and the Critical Theory Emphasis and Institute have sponsored the annual René Wellek Library Lectures. This series is named in honor of Professor René Wellek, a former Sterling Professor of Literature at Yale University, a scholar of English and Czech literature, and a historian of Literary Criticism. Each year, the Critical Theory Institute invites an internationally distinguished critical theorist to UCI to deliver a series of three lectures. Lecturers have included Harold Bloom, Jacques Derrida, Edward Said, Hélène Cixous, Fredric Jameson, Judith Butler, Gayatri Spivak, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o, and Timothy Morton.


93. **René Wellek’s Czech Passport, 1932.** UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The René Wellek papers [MS-C003].


The UCI Libraries, always eager to provide the greatest amount of support possible for the work of both students and faculty in all disciplines, collaborated early on with critical theory faculty to build a robust collection that would serve their needs. In 1981, Special Collections and Archives acquired the personal library of René Wellek, literary historian and theorist. The René Wellek Collection of the History of Criticism was the foundational collection in the Critical Theory Archive.


*Theory of Literature*, a collaboration between Wellek and his university of Iowa colleague Austin Warren, was published in 1948 by Harcourt, Brace, and Company. It is considered to be one of the first formal works on literary theory.


The Jacques Derrida Papers

Jacques Derrida was born in El-Biar, Algeria, in 1930 and died on October 9, 2004. A prolific thinker, Derrida earned international recognition with his paper, “La structure, le signe et le jeu dans le discours des sciences humaines” (Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences”) delivered in October 1966, during “The Language of Criticism and the Sciences of Man” conference at Johns Hopkins University. Derrida was not only the author of several books, including the landmark 1967 text, De la grammatologie, but he was also a committed teacher. From 1965 to 1984, Derrida taught at the École normale supérieure, after which time he divided much of his teaching between Paris and American universities, including Johns Hopkins and Yale. In 1986, Derrida became Professor of Philosophy, French, and Comparative Literature at the University of California, Irvine.

The Jacques Derrida papers contains manuscripts, typescripts, recordings, photographs, and an extensive clippings file, documenting the professional career of Jacques Derrida and providing comprehensive documentation of his activities as a student, teacher, scholar, and public figure. Ranging from his early work as a student to his recent seminars, the material in the archive spans from circa 1946 to 2000. The more public side of Derrida is also well represented by notes, working drafts, final drafts, and other materials related to his vast published output.


107. **Combat.** Tuesday, March 12, 1974. UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The Jacques Derrida papers [MS-C001].

   The article provides an excerpt from the 1973 CAPES de philosophie report, which, among other things, criticized French philosophers whose teaching undermined the traditional French academic institution of philosophical education. Adjacent to the excerpt is a note endorsed by Jacques Derrida and others, protesting the CAPES de philosophie report.

108. **Print from Valerio Adami’s, “Etude pour un dessin d’après Glas” (Study for a sketch after Glas).** February 27, 1975. UCI Libraries Critical Theory Archive. The Jacques Derrida papers [MS-C001].


110. **Postcard displaying the frontispiece of Prognostica Socratis basilei.** UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The Jacques Derrida papers [MS-C001].

   The frontispiece is featured on the cover of and a topic within Derrida’s *La carte postale: De Socrate à Freud et au-delà* (The Post Card: From Socrates to Freud and Beyond.)


   Geoffrey Bennington and Jacques Derrida imitate Plato and Socrates respectively, as depicted by the postcard displaying the frontispiece of Prognostica Socratis basilei. The original postcard appears in the foreground of the photograph.


113. **Bibliography for the seminar, La chose: Heidegger/Ponge.** École normale supérieure, 1975-76. UCI Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The Jacques Derrida papers [MS-C001].