

Project Narrative Summer Institute, 2022
Narrative Theory: Foundations and Innovations
Directors: James Phelan and Amy Shuman
July 11—22 on-line

Foundations and Innovations may conjure up the terminology of "classical" and "postclassical" narratology, but for the Project Narrative Summer Institute for 2022 we have something bigger and more dynamic in mind. Rather than orienting the field of narrative theory around distinct periods, we'll explore it by setting up feedback loops among strong theories, primary narratives in different media, and their implicit challenges to interpretation. One goal of this exploration will be to identify ways in which knowledge gets constructed in our constantly changing field. We'll range from Aristotle's *Poetics* to contemporary fiction, (serial) television, and graphic narrative, from structuralist narratology to queer and feminist narratologies, from Chicago School theory to narrative medicine and disability studies. We'll also examine other contemporary narrative-theoretical approaches and save time for participants to workshop their own innovative—and newly foundational—projects.

We'll meet once a day for 2 hour and 30 minutes minus a fifteen-minute break.

In advance of the Summer Institute

Participants should obtain copies of the following books.

Aristotle, *Poetics*.

Shakespeare, *Macbeth*

Kazuo Ishiguro, *The Remains of the Day*

Roz Chast, *Can't We Talk about Something More Pleasant?*

(Where multiple editions are available, feel free to choose which one looks best to you.) Other readings will be provided via a GoogleDrive site for the Summer Institute, and we'll figure out a way for you to watch several episodes of Breaking Bad.

N.B. Please do as much of the reading before the Institute as possible. The more you do in advance the more time you'll have to work on your project. And in light of our schedule (see below), it's imperative that you do the reading for Monday, July 11 and Tuesday, June 12 before you arrive.

Schedule of Topics, Readings and Events

Week One: Foundations and Innovations
July 11--15

N. B. Beginning with Wednesday's session participants will collaborate in small groups to post initial questions for discussion about the reading. We'll set up the groups at our first session, so think about which day you'd most like to set the agenda for.

Monday (am): The Rhetorical Strand (1)

Theoretical readings:

- Aristotle, *Poetics*.
- R.S. Crane, excerpts from "The Concept of Plot and the Plot of *Tom Jones*."
- James Phelan, "The Chicago School: From Neo-Aristotelian Poetics to the Rhetorical Theory of Narrative."

Primary materials:

- Shakespeare, *Macbeth*.
- Ishiguro, *The Remains of the Day*

Monday (pm): Presentation of Participant Prospectuses

Tuesday: The Rhetorical Strand (2)

Theoretical readings:

- Wayne C. Booth, Excerpts from *The Rhetoric of Fiction* on "unreliable narration"
- James Phelan, Introduction to *Reading People, Reading Plots*
- Chapter on *The Remains of the Day* in *Living to Tell about It*

Primary materials:

- Ishiguro, *The Remains of the Day*
- Cisneros, "Barbie-Q"

Wednesday: Sociolinguistic Approaches and Theory of Character

Theoretical readings: TBD

Primary materials: TBD

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Thursday: Structuralism and its Legacies: Time and Perspective

Theoretical readings :

- Gérard Genette, "Time and Narrative in *A la recherche du temps perdu*."
- Genette, excerpts from chapter on "Mood," from *Narrative Discourse*, pp.169-198.
- Amy's work on temporality

Primary materials: Remains of the Day; TBD; Tobias Wolff, "Close Calls"

Friday: Structuralism and its Legacies : Feminist and Queer Narratologies (2)

Theoretical readings:

- Susan Lanser, "Toward a Feminist Narratology."
- Warhol and Lanser, Introduction to *Narrative Theory Unbound*
- Lanser, "Toward a (Queerer and) More (Feminist) Narratology."
- Amy Shuman and Robyn Warhol, "The Unspeakable, the Unnarratable, and the Repudiation of Epiphany in 'Recitatif': A Collaboration between Linguistic and Literary Feminist Narratologies"

Primary materials:

- Toni Morrison, "Recitatif."
- Roz Chast, *Can't We Talk about Something More Pleasant?*

Week Two. Innovations and New Horizons
July 18--22

Monday: Natural and Unnatural Narratology.

Theoretical readings:

- Monika Fludernik, *Toward a 'Natural' Narratology*, pp. 12-35, 43-52.
- Brian Richardson "Unnatural Narrative Theory."
- Responses to Richardson by Jan Alber, Stefan Iversen, Roy Sommer, and Phelan.
- Richardson's reply.

Primary materials:

- Morrison revisited
- Molly Patterson, "Honors Track" (we-narration)

Tuesday: Seriality and Complexity in Television.

Theoretical readings:

- Jason Mittell, from *Complex TV*: Introduction; Chapter 4, "Characters."
- Sean O'Sullivan, "Six Elements of Serial Narrative"

Primary materials:

- *Breaking Bad*, season 1, episodes 1-4

Wednesday: Applied Narrative Theory: Narrative Medicine

Theoretical readings:

- Rita Charon, et al. Chapters from *The Principles and Practices of Narrative Medicine* on "Relationality," "Close Reading" and "Ethics"
- Christina Crosby, "Faithful to the Contemplation of Bones: Disability and Irremediable Grief"

Primary materials:

- Joyce Carol Oates, "Hospice/Honeymoon"
- Chast, *Can't We Talk?* Revisited

Thursday: Participant Presentations

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