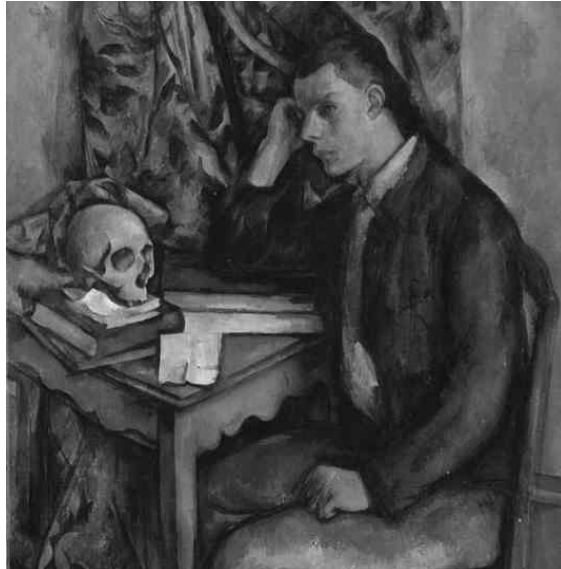


EN 6323/4323: Critical Theory Since Plato

Fall 2014
T/Th 8:00-9:15

Eric Vivier



Course Overview: This will be a course about big questions: What is literature? How does literature make meaning—or how do we make meaning when we read literature? What does it mean to interpret literature, and what are the politics of our interpretations? We will examine how some of the most important poets and philosophers in history engaged these questions, and we will explore some of the major theoretical paradigms that have emerged over the previous century: Formalism, Structuralism, Post-Structuralism, Reader-Response Theory, Psychoanalysis, Marxism(s), Post Colonialism, New Historicism, Feminism(s), Race, Queer Theory, Material Culture, Rhetorical Theory, and so on. The reading will be dense—and there will be a lot of it—but it will be profitable: you will be exposed to various ways of thinking about texts (both old and new), and you will emerge with a better sense of the history of literary studies as a discipline.

Possible texts include: *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism* (2nd ed.); Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction*; Shakespeare, *As You Like It*; Melville, *Billy Budd*; Morrison, *Beloved*; Auster, *City of Glass*.