

Fall 8-15-2011

## ENG 3808-001: Modern British Literature

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English 3808  
 Fall 2011  
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## Modern British Literature

### Texts:

*Broadview Anthology of British Literature*, vol 6: 20<sup>th</sup> C and beyond  
 Christie, *Peril at End House*  
 Doyle, *Hound of the Baskervilles*  
 Forster, *Room with a View*  
 Joyce, *Dubliners*  
 Rhys, *Good Morning Midnight*  
 Waugh, *Vile Bodies*  
 West, *Return of the Soldier*  
 Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*  
 Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*

### Goals

By the end of the semester I hope a number of things will have happened:

1. We will have talked about a number of texts, in the process getting acquainted with the themes and techniques most characteristic of the modern British period
2. We will have talked about the period itself: the historical events and cultural forces that shaped and were in turn shaped by these texts and their authors
3. We will have talked about the theoretical issues raised by these texts: why experiment with style or narrative technique? How does a writer's gender, social class, sexual orientation or racial identity affect his or her work? What is the relationship between literature and the sociopolitical context out of which it emerges?

### Requirements:

2 imitations (10%)

2 essays: one 3-5 pp. (10%), the second 8-10 pp. (essay #2 to be handed in in two separate drafts ; no paper will be accepted that has not gone through both drafts [20%])

Midterm (10%) and final (20%)

Reading responses (both in class and at-home) (20%)

Participation/involvement (10%)

I base essay grades on Guidelines for Evaluating Writing Assignments in EIU's English Department  
 Grading scale: 91-100: A; 81-90: B; 71-80: C; 65-70: D; below 65 = F

### Policies

**Attendance:** Attendance at every class is expected. Note that a portion of the grade is based on class participation and reading responses--both of which require keeping up with the reading and being in class.

**Excessive absences will result in a grade of 0 for the in-class portion of your grade.** If illness or personal emergency keeps you from class, let me know; when you return, ask about hand-outs and reading assignments you may have missed.

**Preparation:** The class involves a heavy, challenging reading load. Please plan your time carefully, so that you are able to keep up with the reading. I expect you to come to class with comments and questions, and to respond to each other thoughtfully. When you face a challenging text, don't give up. Take notes

as you read, jotting down what you do understand in one column, posing questions in another. Use post-it notes to mark passages in the book that you want to quote or ask about in class.

**Late work:** I will accept brief writing assignments (responses, imitations) only at the appropriate class; those handed in late or by students who are not in class will not be accepted. In the case of serious illness or personal emergency, talk to me, and I'll see that you're not penalized. If you're having difficulty with either of the two formal essays, talk to me ahead of time. NO assignment will be accepted more than **a week after the due date**. If you run into problems keeping up with the reading or writing a paper please come see me! Even a brief conversation can help you get interested in a paper or make sense of the reading. Take advantage of my office hours, but feel free to stop by my office any time, or to email. If I can, I'll help.

### **English Department Statement Concerning Plagiarism:**

Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism--"The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's original work" (Random House Dictionary of the English Language) has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including the immediate assignment of a grade of F for the assigned essay and the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office. Respect for the work of others should encompass all formats, including print, electronic, and oral sources.

In other words, if you're using a source—whether you're borrowing an idea or quoting directly—make that clear. Don't present someone else's work as your own. Be especially careful with the internet. If you read it on-line and you want to use it, you need to cite your source. If you're using someone else's words, put quotation marks around them.

If you have a documented **disability** and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

### Syllabus (tentative)

TuAug23: introduction to course. Hand-out: Wordsworth, "The Tables Turned," excerpts from Shelley, Wordsworth; Hardy, "Nature's Questioning," "The Impercipient"

#### I. The Transition: late Victorian/Edwardian period

Th25: Hardy in Broadview, "Hap," "The Darkling Thrush," "Neutral Tones," "The Ruined Maid," "Convergence of the Twain," "Channel Firing," "During Wind and Rain"

Tu30: Conrad, "The Secret Sharer" in Broadview, 64-83

ThSept1: Forster, *Room with a View*

Tu6: Forster

#### II. High Modernism: 1914-1930

Th8: "Eliot, Pound, and the Vortex of Modernism": Broadview, read 477-8; poems by Hulme, Pound, H.D. (479-80), "imagism and vorticism" 482-485. Go to <http://www.modjourn.org/> and click on BLAST, then click again on BLAST, and click on VIEW PDF. Scroll through the magazine, reading particularly Manifesto I, p. 11. Imitation #1 due: Hardy or Conrad.

Tu13: WWI poets: Hand-out; read in Broadview, Brooke, "The Soldier" (106), Sassoon, "Glory of Women" and "They" (102), Owen, "Dulce et Decorum Est" and "Anthem for Doomed Youth" (112), Rosenberg, "Break of Day in the Trenches" (108), McCrae, "In Flanders Field" (126-7).

Th15: Essay #1 due. Group discussion and presentations.

Tu20: West, *Return of the Soldier*

Th22: Joyce, *Dubliners*

Tu27: Joyce

Th29 Joyce

TuOct4: Yeats, "Stolen Child" (hand-out); read in Broadview, "Lake Isle of Innisfree" (146), "Easter 1916" (148), "Prayer for My Daughter" (153), "Second Coming" (155), "Leda and the Swan" (158)

Th6: Yeats, "Sailing to Byzantium" (160), "Among School Children" (159), "Dialogue of Self and Soul" (163), "Byzantium" (164), "Crazy Jane Talks with the Bishop," "Lapis Lazuli."

Tu11: Midterm

Th13: Read Lawrence, in Broadview: "Tortoise Shout" (377) "Snake" (378), "Bavarian Gentians" (380), "The Odour of Chrysanthemums" (391-400).

Tu18: Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*

Th20: Woolf

Tu25: Woolf

Th 27: Woolf. Imitation #2 due: Joyce, Lawrence, or Woolf

III. The 1930s, a "low, dishonest decade"

TuNov1: Waugh, *Vile Bodies*

Th3: Waugh

Tu8: Christie, *Peril at End House*

Th10: Rhys, *Good Morning Midnight*

Tu15: Rhys

Th 17: David Lean (dir), *This Happy Breed*. Hand in draft of Essay #2.

Thanksgiving Break

IV: In the wake of World War II

Tu29: Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*

ThDec1: Beckett

Tu6: Read Auden in Broadview, "Spain 1937" (576), "Musee des Beaux Arts" (579), "In Memory of W. B. Yeats" (580), "The Shield of Achilles" (583)

Th8: Auden; Thomas, "Refusal to Mourn," 660 in Broadview. Hand in final version of Essay #2.

There will be a cumulative final exam during finals week

Things to think about as you read and talk about when you come to class (with bookmarked pp. to develop your ideas):

**Characterization:** What is the main character like (physically, mentally, gestures, speech, values)? What parallels or contrasts do you see between two characters? Focus on a minor character and discuss why he/she's there. How does a character change during the course of the work? Do characters seem divided within themselves? How is the complexity of the self conveyed?

**Setting:** How is the setting described? Is there a contrast set up between two settings? How much detail does the narrator provide about setting? Physical description of characters?

**Plot:** What conflicts do you see (within a character? Between characters? Between a character and the environment?) Is there a crucial moment or turning point when someone makes a big mistake or does something right? To what extent does the work's final page or paragraph provide closure?

**Narration:** What is the narrator's relation to the action? Why is he/she telling the story? How are his/her values shaping what he/she notices? Is the narrator aligned with a particular character? How is consciousness depicted?

**Exposition:** Significance of title? How does opening paragraph set up key images, themes?

**Style, image, symbol:** Is there an object or moment that works symbolically, or a pattern of imagery or a key word that recurs?

**Context:** What historical events would it be helpful to know about? Look up one allusion and explain its significance.

**Theme:** Is there an authorial mouthpiece? How do you know? What's she/he saying? Is the ending "happy?" For whom? Who gets left out? How does the work depict gender, race, sexuality, or class? To what extent does the work as a whole reinforce values you share or don't share?

**For poems: FIRST:** read in terms of punctuation, not line breaks. Then look up words you don't know.

Who is the poem's speaker? What is his/her situation? Is the speaker speaking to anyone in particular, on a special occasion, or to make something specific happen?

What is the poem's tone? How do you know? Is there any irony?

Does the poem follow a particular form (sonnet, rhymed couplets, free verse)? If so how does its form relate to its meaning?

Does the poem fall into sections? How do they build on or contrast with each other?

What do you notice about the sounds of words or rhythmic patterns or line breaks and how they relate to the poem's meaning?

Pick a single word that seems significant, look it up in the dictionary, and discuss its significance.

Do the speaker's thoughts change during the course of the poem? Are there two or more viewpoints?

What conflicts do you see in the poem?

Discuss a pattern of images (lots of disease references? Flowers?)

Is there a particularly difficult phrase or line? What ideas do you have about what it means?