ENG 5006-001: Modern Sexualities

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Goals: I have two main goals for the class. 1. To get a better understanding of British fiction of the period 1890-1939, broadly known as the modernist period, but which includes the "transition" (1890-1914), "high modernism" (1914-1930), and the "age of anxiety" (the politically anguished 1930s). My goal in this respect is to redefine "modernism" so that it includes the cultural tensions and upheavals of the 1890s and early 1900s as well as the stylistic experimentation of the 1920s. 2. To begin to understand how the representation of sexuality in literature responds to and shapes cultural shifts. Many historians argue that in the late nineteenth century, a change occurred in the way people wrote and talked about sexuality. Sexologists became increasingly concerned with categorizing sexual behavior as either "normal" or "deviant," while social commentators discussed eugenics, social purity, the birth rate, venereal disease, unmarried women, prostitution, homosexuality, and subsidized motherhood—all concerns related to the regulation of sexuality. We'll discuss how the novels of the period entered into and shaped these conversations.

Policies: English Department statement on 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 immediate assignment of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of NC for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.

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.

Since a graduate seminar is only as successful as participants' involvement in it, attendance at every class is expected. Call or e-mail if you run into problems.

Requirements: The most basic requirement is that you do the reading carefully and come to class ready to talk, ask questions, and argue. Don't be afraid to disagree with each other; just come prepared to back up your view with textual citations.

2 papers (one 3-4pp. and one 10-20 pp.), final exam, oral presentation

Grades: 20% participation
        40% papers (15/35)
        20% exam (covering assigned fiction, essays, and class presentations)
        20% presentation

Presentation: I'd like you to work in groups of 2/3, with each group being responsible for introducing and leading discussion of a single text. Presentation should include the following:
1. Information about the text's publication. When was it composed? When was it published? Was it well received? What biographical or sociohistorical issues might have influenced its composition and/or reception? What connections are there between this author and others we've read? What comments did the author make about his/her own work? (10-20 min)
2. HAND-OUT (NOT to be read out loud): annotated bibliography (MLA style) of relatively recent journal
articles dealing with the assigned text (6-10 articles, emphasis if possible on sexuality); the bibliography should also include the most authoritative biography, edition of letters, diaries, and/or autobiography if available. (You don’t need to have read these full-length works.) Article annotations should be 2-3 sentences long and should convey the author’s thesis and approach as well as any comments you have on its effectiveness.  

3. A detailed 10-minute presentation of your favorite article from the bibliography. Don’t read from the article. Instead, explain in your own words what the article’s thesis is, how the author supported it, and why you find it illuminating.  

4. 5-10 discussion questions. These should be carefully thought-out so that they highlight what you see as the key themes and questions developed and posed by the text. These questions will structure our discussion of the novel for the remainder of the hour and possibly beyond.  

How you divide these tasks is up to you. Take 30 minutes MAXIMUM to present material in lecture format. After that, use your questions to trigger discussion (feel free to be experimental).  
Come see me together AT LEAST ONE WEEK before your presentation to talk about your plans. Sometimes critical essays are difficult or make references to knowledge you may not have.  
Come see me to talk about these. It’s up to you to get the knowledge you need to make an effective presentation to the class.  

I will give you a written evaluation of your presentation in which I discuss: thoroughness (did you do all the assigned tasks?), clarity (was it organized effectively?), presentation (did you speak clearly, use handout, board effectively?), and thoughtfulness (did it show depth of understanding? did your questions stimulate useful discussion?). In most cases I will give a single grade to the group, so make sure you work together effectively; talk to me if problems arise. Anyone unhappy with a presentation grade will have the opportunity to do a second presentation later in the semester (if practical).  

Papers:  
Essay #1 (3-4 pp.) should make some very small connection between any of the following and an assigned text:  
A periodical or newspaper article from the time when the book was published or composed  
A theoretical issue (as explained in one of the essays in the course pack, or elsewhere)  
A sociohistorical issue current at the time the book was published  

Essay #2 (10-20 pp.) should grow out of some curiosity or insight that you develop during the semester in relation to one or more of the assigned texts. I’ll start asking you about your ideas in early November; I expect each of you to come see me at some point during the planning stages so that we can talk about your ideas. Your research paper could grow out of essay #1 or out of your presentation, but need not. Do decide on a topic early enough for you to get the sources you need: plan on using interlibrary loan and/or visiting the U of I library in the course of your research.  

Tentative syllabus  
M Aug 25: introduction to the class.  
M Sept 1: no class  
M 8: Wilde, Picture of Dorian Gray (1891). In course pack: Read Pater, "Conclusion to the Renaissance" (Beckson, ed.). Recommended: Foucault, Katz  
M 15: Forster, Room with a View (1908). In course pack: Read Carpenter, Whitman  
M 22: Presentation #1. Forster, Maurice (1913). In course pack: Read Plato, Sedgwick  
M 29: Presentation #2. Lawrence (1915), the Rainbow. In course pack: read Lawrence, Weininger
M Oct. 6: Lawrence. Library visit?
M 13: Mansfield (1915-): “Prelude,” “At the Bay,” “Bliss,” “The Daughters of the Late Colonel.”
  Paper #1 due.
M 20: Presentation #3. Mrs Dalloway (1925). In course pack: read Freud
M 27: Presentation #4. Hall, Well of Loneliness (1928). In course pack: read Ellis
M Nov 4 Hall
M Nov 11: Presentation #5. Rhys, Voyage into the Dark (1934). In course pack: Gilman
M 18: Rhys Good Morning Midnight (1938). In course pack: Butler
M Dec 1: Woolf, Between the Acts
M Dec 8: Discussion/review
There will be a final exam during final exam week.

Below is a very selective collection of resources. Come ask if you have questions, particularly about works on individual authors.

**Modernism**
Beckson, Karl. London in the 1890s.
Bradshaw, David. A Concise Companion to Modernism
Kern, Stephen. The Culture of Time and Space 1880-1914
Bradbury, Malcolm, and James McFarlane, eds. Modernism: 1890-1930.
Ellmann, Richard. Edwardians and Late Victorians.
Ellmann, Richard, and Charles Feidelson Jr., eds. The Modern Tradition
Faulkner, Peter. Modernism
Hynes, Samuel. The Edwardian Turn of Mind
Rose, Jonathan. The Edwardian Temperament

**Modernism/Gender/Sexuality**
Ardis, Ann. New Women, New Novels
Benstock, Shari. Women of the Left Bank
Chamberlin, J. Edward, ed. Degeneration: The Dark side of Progress
Dellamora, Richard, Ed. Victorian Sexual Dissidence
---. Masculine Desire: the Sexual Politics of Victorian Aestheticism
Dijkstra, Bram. Idols of Perversity
Doan, Laura, ed. The Lesbian Postmodern
---. Old Maids to Radical Spinsters
---. Fashioning Sapphism. The Origins of a Modern English Lesbian Culture
Felski, Rita. The Gender of Modernity
Ferris, Paul. Sex and the British: A Twentieth Century History
Gilbert, Susan and Sandra Gubar. No Man's Land.
Haste, Cate. Rules of Desire: Sex in Britain in World War I to the Present.
Jackson, Margaret. The Real Facts of Life: Feminism and the Politics of Sexuality c. 1850-1940.
Jeffreys, Sheila. The Spinster and her Enemies.
Rado, The Modern Androgyne Imagination: A Failed Sublime
Scott, Bonnie Kime, ed. The Gender of Modernism.
Showalter, Elaine. Sexual Anarchy: Gender and Culture at the Fin de Siecle
Snyder, Katherine. Bachelors, Manhood and the Novel.
Stevens, Hugh and Caroline Howlett, ed. Modernist Sexualities.
Wachman, Gay. Lesbian empire: Radical Crosswriting in the Twenties.
Walkowitz, Judith. City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London

The history and theory of gender and sexuality
Barret-Ducroco, Love in the Time of Victoria
Bland, Lucy and Laura Doan, Sexology in Culture
Bristow, Joseph. Sexuality.
Butler, Gender Trouble
Garber, Vested Interests
Faderman, Lillian. Surpassing the Love of Men.
Foucault, The History of Sexuality
Halberstam, Judith. Female Masculinity.
Hall, Donald. Queer Theories.
Laqueur, The Making of Sex
Mason, Michael. The Making of Victorian Sexuality
Murphy, Peter. Fictions of Masculinity: Crossing Cultures, Crossing Sexualities
Sedgwick, Eve, Between Men: English Literature an Male Homosocial Desire
---. The Epistemology of the Closet
Weeks, Jeffrey. Making Sexual History.
---. Sex, Politics and Society: The Regulation of Sexuality since 1800.

The web also has valuable resources including Voice of the Shuttle, Victorian Web, Index of Web Sites on Modernism. Modernism Timeline.
The journals *Modernism/Modernity* and *Modern Fiction Studies* are available on-line to subscribers to Project Muse (includes EIU).
The Gerritsen Index (on-line) has full-text early 20th century periodical articles dealing with women's issues

The library also has periodicals from the period:
Yellowbook
Blackwood's (1902-)
Edinburgh Review (1900-)
Mind (on psychology and philosophy)
Times Literary Supplement (1902-)
Review of Reviews (1890-)

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