

Spring 1-15-2006

ENG 3808-001

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English 3808
 Spring 2006
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 Office hours: MWF 2-3; Tu 10-11

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Texts:

Longman Anthology of British Literature, 2C
 Forster, *Room with a View*
 Joyce, *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*
 Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*
 Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*
 Rhys, *Voyage in the Dark*
 Kureishi, *Buddha of Suburbia*
 Carter, *The Bloody Chamber*

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 period
2. We will have talked about 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:

Two formal papers: one short (3-4 pp.), and one long (6-8 pp.), the second paper revised at least once (10/20)

Midterm and final (10/20)

10 weekly reading responses and other at-home assignments (20)

Presentation (10)

participation/involvement/in-class writing (10)

I try to base essay grades on Guidelines for Evaluating Writing Assignments in EIU's English Department

Note that because I grade on a 100-point scale, missing assignments affect your grade tremendously.

Grading scale: 91-100: A; 81-90: B; 71-80: C; 65-70: D; below 65 = F

Weekly reading responses: almost every week, as designated on the syllabus, you need to hand in a one-page typed response to some aspect of the assigned reading. You choose which class day to hand it in on, but no matter what, you must be in class to turn it in, and the response's topic must be the reading assigned for that day. (The point is for you to formulate your ideas about the reading before we discuss it). Ideas for responses are listed on the final page of the syllabus, but I may also make suggestions in class. The only requirements: **keep focused on a single issue for the whole response; quote directly from the text at some point; and type.** Conclude your response with any questions you have about the reading. I will grade these on a ten-point scale, on the basis of completeness (is it a full page, does it include a direct quotation?), thoughtfulness, and development (does it go into detail about whatever issue it raises?).

Presentation: In groups of two, plan on taking 5-10 minutes of class to explain a topic linked to a particular

decade of British history. Start by consulting a time line:

<http://www.britishempire.co.uk/timeline/20century.htm>

http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/timelines/britain/cen_science.shtml

<http://history1900s.about.com/library/time/bltime1900.htm>

Then do enough research to give an interesting, informative presentation to the class on the day designated in the syllabus. *Each* of you should also hand in to me an annotated bibliography of the research underlying your presentation and any additional comments you want to make about the process.

Policies

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.

Attendance: This class involves a heavy reading load; plan your time so that you can keep up with the reading. 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 (obviously) 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.

Late work: I will only accept responses and brief writing assignments handed in at the appropriate class. Responses and writing assignments 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. NO assignment will be accepted more than *a week after the due date*. If you're having problems with a writing or reading assignment, come see me. Stop by my office any time; particularly on MWF afternoons, I'm likely to be there. I'm also a compulsive e-mail checker.

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.

EWP: this is a writing-intensive course; your final paper may be used in your electronic writing portfolio.

Syllabus (tentative)

I. The Transition: late Victorian/Edwardian period

MJanuary 9: introduction to course. Hand-out: Hardy, "Nature's Questioning," "The Imprecipient"

W11: Hardy, hand-out and in Longman, "Hap," "The Darkling Thrush," "Neutral Tones," "The Convergence of the Twain" (2156-2157; 2159)

Fri 13: Conrad, "Secret Sharer" in *Portable Conrad*. Response #1 due W or F

M16: No class

W18: Conrad, "Secret Sharer"

F20: Forster, *Room with a View*. Response #2 due W or F.

M23: Forster. Presentation 1: 1900s (1900-1910)

W25: Forster

F27: Forster. Response #3 due M,W or F

M 30: West, "Indissoluble Matrimony" in Longman 2594.

II. World War I and After

WFebruary 1: Brooke, "The Soldier," Sassoon, "Glory of Women" and "They," Owen, "Dulce et Decorum Est" in Longman 2183-92.

F3: Presentation 2: 1910s. In Longman, Owen, "Anthem for Doomed Youth," Rosenberg, "Break of Day in the Trenches." Hand in essay #1.

M6: Joyce, Portrait

W8: Joyce. Hand in cartoon.

F10: Presentation 3: 1910s. Joyce.

M13: Joyce,

W 15: Joyce. Response #4 due M or W

F 17: no class

M20: Joyce.

W22: Yeats in Longman, 2246: "Lake Isle of Innisfree," "Easter 1916," hand-out, "Stolen Child."

F24: Presentation 4: 1920s. Yeats hand-out, "Dialogue of Self and Soul." In Longman, "Second Coming," "Prayer for my Daughter." Response #5 due M, W or F

M27: Yeats, "Sailing to Byzantium," "Leda and the Swan," "Among School Children," "Byzantium."

W March 1: Presentation 5. 1920s. Yeats, "Crazy Jane Talks with the Bishop," "Lapis Lazuli," "Circus Animals' Desertion."

F3: Lawrence, "Odour of Chrysanthemums" in Longman 2647-2659. Response #6 due M, W or F

M6: Lawrence, "Horse-dealer's Daughter" in Longman 2660-70.

W8: Midterm

F10: Woolf, To the Lighthouse

Spring break

M20: Presentation 6. 1920s. Woolf

W22: Woolf

F24: Woolf. Response #7 due M, W, or F.

M27: Presentation 7: 1930s. Woolf

W29: Rhys

F31: Rhys Response #8 due M, W or F

M April 3: Rhys

W5: Presentation 8: 1940s. Auden, "Spain 1936," "In Memory of W. B. Yeats" in Longman.

F7: no class. Hand in essay #2 to my mailbox.

M10: Presentation 9: 1950s. Beckett, Act I.

W12: Beckett, Act II.

F14: Presentation 10: 1970s Carter, "The Bloody Chamber" in *The Bloody Chamber*. Response #9 due M,

W, or F

M17: Carter

W19: Carter. Presentation 11: 1970s.

F21: Churchill, *Cloud Nine* in Longman, 2838, Act I. Response #10 due, M, W or F

M 24: Presentation 12: 1980s. Churchill, Act II.

W26: Heaney in Longman.

F28: Review. Hand in final version of essay #2.

There will be a cumulative final exam during exam week.

Response questions: focus on a SINGLE question or choose your own issue:

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 is the setting described? Is there a contrast set up between two settings?

Focus on a single conflict (within a character? Between characters? Between a character and the environment?)

Is there an authorial mouthpiece? How do you know? What's she/he saying?

What is the narrator's relation to the action? Why is he/she telling the story? How is his/her values shaping what he/she notices?

Significance of title?

How does a character change during the course of the work?

Is there a crucial moment or turning point when someone makes a big mistake or does something right?

Is there an object or moment that works symbolically, or a pattern of imagery or a key word that recurs?

What historical events would it be helpful to know about?

Look up one allusion and explain its significance.

To what extent does the ending tie up loose ends?

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.

Discuss the poem's speaker and his/her situation.

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

How is the poem structured and how does this structure tie in with 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?

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 the connotations of a few words

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?

Modernism:

1. Questions whether there is a preexisting order or meaning to the world.

"Agnoticism has taken away Providence as death takes away the mother from the child and leaves us forlorn of protection and love."--Mark Pattison

2. Questions power of reason, the validity of absolute moral values, the existence of progress, the superiority of English culture

3. Questions whether we can know ourselves or understand others

4. Questions effectiveness of language

5. Anti-Victorianism

In literary terms this leads to:

1. use of symbols to depict inner, psychological world rather than "realistic" detail to depict physical world.

2. alogical structure or Frank's "spatial form": "move away from chronology, continuity."

3. sense of consciousness as fluid, "stream of consciousness"

4. self is seen as layered, complex, with irrational, unconscious element

5. interest in shared forces (Freud, Jung, myth) shaping behavior

6. international cosmopolitanism: influence of French novel, Russian ballet, African art.

7. emphasis on solipsism: inability of self to get outside itself:

"Experience, already reduced to a group of impressions, is ringed round for each one of us by that thick wall of responsibility through which no real voice has ever pierced on its way to us, or from us to that which we can only conjecture to be without. Every one of those impressions is the impression of the individual in his isolation, each mind keeping as a solitary prisoner its own dream of a world."--Pater, conclusion to The Renaissance (1868)

"The world of each is peculiar and private to that soul."

--F. H. Bradley, Appearance and Reality (1893)

"Another man's truth is only a dismal lie to me."

--Conrad, letter, 1895.

"We live as we dream--alone." --Conrad, Heart of Darkness

8. mixed diction, concrete imagery, formal experimentation, sexual explicitness

9. artist as hero

10. art as separate realm offering an order unavailable in life, not to be limited by moral pressures. Art as autonomous.

11. anti-Aristotelian emphasis on character rather than plot.

12. artist alienated/exiled, with problematic relation to audience and to story

13. quest for alternative belief systems or kinds of coherence: Unity of Being, epiphany, moment of vision, spiritualism, social meliorism

Modernists on Victorianism:

Virginia Woolf in Orlando: Rugs appeared; beards were grown; trousers were fastened tight under the instep. The chill which he felt in his legs the country gentleman soon transferred to his house; furniture was muffled; walls and tables were covered; nothing was left bare. Then a change of diet became essential. The muffin was invented and the crumpet. Coffee supplanted the after-dinner port, and, as coffee led to a drawing-room in which to drink it, and a drawing-room to glass cases, and glass cases to artificial flowers, and artificial flowers to mantelpieces, and mantelpieces to pianofortes, and pianofortes to drawing room ballads, and drawing room ballads (skipping a stage or two) to innumerable little dogs, mats, and china ornaments, the home--which had become extremely important--was completely altered.

Love, birth, and death were all swaddled in a variety of fine phrases. The sexes flew further and further apart. No pen conversation was tolerated. Evasions and concealments were sedulously practised on both sides. (1928)

Lytton Strachey in Biographical Essays: Victorian era was a time "when gas-jets struggled feebly through the circumambient fog, when the hour of dinner might be at any moment between two and six, when the doses of rhubarb were periodic and givantic . . . when an antimacassar was on every chair, and the baths were minute tin circles and the beds were full of bugs and disasters."

E.M. Forster 1920: The English are "the people who have built up an Empire with a Bible in one hand, a pistol in the other, and financial concessions in both pockets" --Abinger Harvest