

Eastern Illinois University  
**The Keep**

---

Spring 1999

1999

---

Spring 1-15-1999

## ENG 3808-002: 20th Century British Literature

Ruth Hoberman  
*Eastern Illinois University*

Follow this and additional works at: [http://thekeep.eiu.edu/english\\_syllabi\\_spring1999](http://thekeep.eiu.edu/english_syllabi_spring1999)



Part of the [English Language and Literature Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Hoberman, Ruth, "ENG 3808-002: 20th Century British Literature" (1999). *Spring 1999*. 127.  
[http://thekeep.eiu.edu/english\\_syllabi\\_spring1999/127](http://thekeep.eiu.edu/english_syllabi_spring1999/127)

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the 1999 at The Keep. It has been accepted for inclusion in Spring 1999 by an authorized administrator of The Keep. For more information, please contact [tabruns@eiu.edu](mailto:tabruns@eiu.edu).

English 3808  
Spring 1999  
20th Century British Literature  
e-mail: cfrh@eiu.edu  
Office hours: MWF 1-2;

Ruth Hoberman  
Coleman 339A  
phone: 581-6289

**Texts:**

Norton Anthology of English Literature, vol 2  
Portable Conrad  
Forster, Howards End (1910)  
Lawrence, Sons and Lovers (1913)  
Portable Joyce  
Mansfield, Short Stories  
Woolf, To the Lighthouse (1927)  
Beckett, Waiting for Godot (1952)  
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 modern British period;
2. We will have talked about the period itself: what historical events and cultural forces might have contributed to the shaping of 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? At what point do new ideas about life demand new literary forms? What is the relationship between literature and the sociopolitical context out of which it emerges?

**Requirements:**

One group presentation  
One paper (8-10 pp)  
One fun project  
Two exams: midterm and final  
Reading responses  
Participation in class and on web page

**Group presentation:** I'll form you into groups of 3, based on your interests. Each group will have 10-15 minutes to present material to the class on the assigned topic. Make sure you consult me about sources and focus, and plan on having a 1-page hand-out (I'll photocopy if you get it to me at least 1 hour before class.) Keep in mind that you need to present your material in a way that will be interesting and clear to the class, and that will illuminate the text under discussion. I can provide VCR, CD player, or slide projector if needed.

**Paper:** this could grow out of your group presentation; it should explore one of the texts on the syllabus in greater depth than we could in class or make connections between texts. I'll provide a more detailed hand-out. I will only accept papers for which I have previously read a proposal and an annotated bibliography.

**FUN Project:** This is largely up to you, though I do need to okay project ideas. You might work in a group or individually. You might present material to the class or hand something in to me. Possibilities include: dramatic recitation of a poem, performance of a scene from a play, drawing cartoons based on novel, making tape of background music for a poem, presenting information on a text or author or historical event to the class, writing a lesson plan . . . The point is to make some connection between your particular interests and abilities and the course material that allows you to learn and have fun at the same time. Be imaginative. If you do choose to present, let me know well ahead of time and keep it to 10 minutes maximum.

**Reading Responses:** Each week, you will be expected to hand in a 1-2 pp. typed response to a reading assignment. You choose which day to hand it in, but the response **MUST** be about the reading assignment **FOR THAT DAY**, and it must be handed in **CLASS**. The purpose of this assignment is to help you focus your thoughts and shape class discussion; that's why it's crucial the response be about the reading assignment for that day. Focus your response on some **SINGLE** issue that strikes you about the assigned reading. At some point during your response, use direct quotation to develop your ideas.

Responses will be graded based on focus, development, thoughtfulness, and precision, with each receiving a maximum of 16 points. Unless you can give me a good reason for the delay, I will not read responses that are not received in the class at which I collect them. Please keep all your responses. You should have 13 at the end of the semester.

**Web page/participation:** We will be participating in the Vic/Mod chat page. Each week two literary passages will be posted, one from the 19th century and one from the 20th. Your comments on either or both are invited. Discussion will be entirely student based; instructors will get involved only if inappropriate postings need to be removed. This web page is open to the world; it's an opportunity to extend your discussion beyond the classroom and beyond the period. One posting per week will get you your full 100 points. If you don't post regularly, make sure you speak in class!! Even better, do both.

### Policies

--I expect students to be in class, to be prepared, and to participate in class discussion. 30% of your grade is based on activities that require keeping up with the reading and being in class (responses, participation, web page).

--If you're having problems with a writing or reading assignment, come see me! Stop by my office any time; e-mail me, or call, if it's before 9pm (351-1731).

--Reading responses will be accepted **ONLY** at the class for which they are due, not at any other time (except in cases of emergency or by prior arrangement).

### Grades:

Group presentation: 100 points

paper: 200 points

Exam #1: 100; exam #2: 200

Responses: 200

Vic/Mod Chat and participation: 100

Project: 100

Grading scale: 910-1000 = A; 810-909 = B; 710-809 = C; 650-709 = D; below 650 = F

Please note that because I use a 100-point grading scale, missing work (which receives a 0) has a major impact on your grade.

No one who has not written the paper and taken both exams will pass the course.

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.

Tentative Syllabus

January 11: introduction to course

Wed 13: Hardy, in Norton, "The Impercipient," "Neutral Tones," "The Darkling Thrush," "The Ruined Maid." Hand out: "The Ivy Wife," "Nature's Questioning"

Fri 15: Hardy. Response#1 due W/F

Mon18: no class

Wed20: Conrad, "Secret Sharer," in Portable Conrad.

Fri22: Conrad. Recommended: 705-710, "The Condition of Art." Response#2 due W/F.

Mon25: Forster, Howards End

Wed27: Forster. Group presentation #1: Cambridge, the Apostles, and G. E. Moore.

Fri29: Forster. Response#3 due M/W/F

Mon Feb 1: Forster. Group presentation #2: the women's suffrage movement 1906-1911

Wed Feb 3: Forster

Fri Feb 5: Lawrence. Response#4 due M/W/F

Mon 8: Lawrence

Wed 10: Lawrence. Response#5 due M/W. Group presentation #3:

Frieda Lawrence's influence; Otto Gross

Fri 12: no class

Mon 15: Lawrence.  
Wed 17: In Norton, Brooke, "The Soldier," Sassoon, "They,"  
"The Glory of Women,"; Rosenberg, "Break of Day in the  
Trenches" Group presentation #4: World War I: how was it  
different? (Fussell, Gittings).  
Fri 19: Owen, "Anthem for Doomed Youth," "Dulce et Decorum Est."  
Response#6 due M/W/F.

Mon 22: Joyce, Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man  
Wed 24: Joyce.  
Fri 26: Joyce. Response#7 due M/W/F

Mon March 1: Joyce  
Wed 3: Joyce. Group presentation #5: Joyce's later work.  
Fri 5: Joyce. Response#8 due M/W/F

Mon 8: midterm  
Wed 10: Mansfield  
Fri 12: Mansfield. Response#9 due W/F.

March 15-19: spring break

Mon March 22: Yeats, "Stolen Child," "Lake Isle of Innisfree,"  
"Easter 1916," "The Second Coming"  
Group presentation #6: the Irish Literary Renaissance.  
Wed March 24: "Sailing to Byzantium," "Byzantium," "Dialogue of  
Self and Soul," "Among School Children"  
Group presentation #7: Yeats and automatic writing; A  
Vision  
Fri March 26: "Lapis Lazuli," "Circus Animals Desertion," "Crazy  
Jane talks with the Bishop." Give me a one-paragraph  
description of your project idea. Response#10 due M/W/F

Mon 29: Woolf, To the Lighthouse.  
Wed 31: Woolf. Group presentation #8: Woolf as a feminist; A  
Room of One's Own  
Fri Ap 2: Woolf. Response#11 due M/W/F

Mon Ap 5: Woolf  
Wed Ap 7: Woolf  
Fri Ap 9. Auden. in Norton, "Spain 1937," "In Memory of W.B.  
Yeats," "Shield of Achilles." Group presentation #9: the  
Spanish Civil War. Paper proposal due. Response#12 due  
M/W/F.

Mon Ap 12: Auden. Group presentation #10: England/World War II  
Wed Ap 14: Beckett.  
Fri Ap 16: Beckett. Productions of "Waiting for Godot." 5-10  
item annotated bibliography due. No response.

Mon Ap 19: Walcott in Norton, "A Far Cry from Africa,"  
"Midsummer."  
Wed Ap 21: Walcott. Paper due.  
Fri Ap 23: Carter, "The Bloody Chamber" in The Bloody Chamber. No

response.

Mon Ap 26: Carter "The Courtship of Mr Lyon" and "The Tiger's  
Bride." Group presentation #12: Carter's fairy tales

Wed Ap 28: Carter.

Fri Ap30: review. Response#13 due M/W/F

There will be a final exam during exam week.

Modernism:

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

"Agnosticism 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 personality 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

## Nature's Questioning

When I look forth at dawning, pool,  
Field, flock, and lonely tree  
All seem to gaze at me  
Like chastened children sitting silent in a school;

Their faces dulled, constrained, and worn,  
As though the master's ways  
Through the long teaching days  
Had cowed them till their early zest was overborne.

Upon them stirs in lippings mere  
(As if once clear in call,  
But now scarce breathed at all)--  
"We wonder, ever wonder, why we find us here!

Has some Vast Imbecility,  
Mighty to build and blend,  
But impotent to tend,  
Framed us in jest, and left us now to hazardry?

"Or come we of an Automaton  
Unconscious of our pains? ...  
Or are we live remains  
Of Godhead dying downwards, brain and eye now gone?

"Or is it that some high Plan betides,  
As yet not understood  
Of Evil stormed by Good  
We the forlorn Hope over which Achievement strides?"

Thus things around. No answerer I. . . .  
Meanwhile the winds, and rains,  
And Earth's old glooms and pains  
Are still the same, and Life and Death are neighbours nigh.