

English 350: The Modern British Novel

MW 1-2:15

Rachel Trousdale

rtrousdale@agnesscott.edu

Buttrick 307, x6209

Office Hours MW 2:30-4:00, T 1:00-2:00, and by appointment

This class is an introduction to some of the major texts and themes of the British novelists of the Modern period (broadly defined as 1890-1950). We will examine these texts both on their own and in their historical and literary contexts. Discussions will cover the role of art and the artist, God, empire and the English language, changing class structures, the use of literary tradition, the purpose of reading or writing a difficult novel, gender and sexuality, and obscenity—and that's just in the first day on *Ulysses*. Other topics will include World War One, madness and realism, humor, and feminism.

Required Texts:

Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness and Other Tales*

Samuel Beckett, *Complete Short Prose*

Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*

Evelyn Waugh, *The Loved One*

James Joyce, *Ulysses*

Don Gifford, *Ulysses Annotated*

E. M. Forster, *A Passage to India*

Jean Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea*

Short stories by Katherine Mansfield available on Moodle

August

W 26 Introduction: What is Modernism?

M 30 *Picture of Dorian Gray* pp. 1-96

W September 1 *Picture of Dorian Gray* pp. 96-184

M 7 Labor day: no classes

W 9 "Heart of Darkness"

M 14 Beckett, "Text," "A Case in a Thousand," "First Love"

W 16 Beckett, "Enough," "As the story was told," "The Cliff," "Stirrings Still"

M 21 *Mrs. Dalloway* pp. 3-64

W 23 *Mrs. Dalloway* 64-128

M 28 *Mrs. Dalloway* 128-194

W 30 Mansfield, "The Garden Party," "The Daughters of the Late Colonel" on Moodle

F October 2 paper 1 (4-6 pp on Wilde, Conrad, Beckett, or Woolf) due by 3:00

M 5 *Ulysses* chapters 1-5. Handout topics: *Odyssey*, Telemachus; parodies of the Mass; *Don Giovanni*; *Hamlet*

W 7 *Ulysses* chapters 6-7. Handout topics: *Odyssey*, descent into Hades; *Exodus* and the *Haggadah*

M 12 *Ulysses* chapters 8-9. Handout topics: *Odyssey*, Lestrygonians; *Odyssey*, Scylla and Charybdis; Authorship of Shakespeare's plays

W 14 *Ulysses* chapters 10-11. Handout topics: *Odyssey*, Sirens; *The Awful Disclosures of Maria Monk*; "The Croppy Boy"

Th-F: Fall Break

M 19 *Ulysses* chapters 12-13. Handout topics: *Odyssey*, Cyclops; *Odyssey*, Nausikaa; Maria Cummins, *The Lamplighter*

W 21 *Ulysses* chapter 14. Handout topics: *Odyssey*, The Oxen of the Sun; Mallory, *Morte d'Arthur*

M 26 *Ulysses* chapter 15. Handout topics: *Odyssey*, Circe; the Potato Famine; *Venus in Furs*

W 28 *Ulysses* chapter 16. Handout topics: *Odyssey*, Eumaeus; Charles Stewart Parnell; *The Merchant of Venice*

M November 2 *Ulysses* chapter 17. Handout topics: *Odyssey*, Ithaca; The Catechism; Signs of the Zodiac

W 4 *Ulysses* chapter 18. Handout topics: *Odyssey*, Penelope

M 9 *The Loved One* 3-97

W 11 *The Loved One* 98-164

F 13 Paper 2 (4-6 pp on Joyce) due by 3:00

M 16 *A Passage to India* chapters I-XI

W 18 *A Passage to India* chapters XII-XXIV

M 23 *A Passage to India* XXV-end

W 25 Thanksgiving Break

M 30 *Wide Sargasso Sea* 17-107

W December 2 *Wide Sargasso Sea* 107-end

M 7 Class summary: What is Modernism?

In lieu of exam: Paper 3 (12-15 pp on any author besides the subject of paper #1)

#### Course requirements:

Students will write two shorter (4-6 pp) papers and one longer (12-15 pp) paper and present a handout on one subtext in *Ulysses*. The shorter papers are literary-critical analyses and should be based primarily on close readings of the text. The longer paper should include critical research. The handout should provide background information about one of Joyce's sources, and provide preliminary suggestions for how we can use that information to better understand the text.

#### Reading questions:

For every class, students should bring in at least one question about that day's reading. Questions should be geared towards generating class discussion and paper topics.

#### Attendance policy:

This class centers around discussion. If you don't participate in discussions, whether by contributing or listening to your peers, you haven't really taken the class. You will be allowed three absences over the course of the semester; after that, each absence will result in a reduction of the final grade by one third of a letter grade. Excessive lateness will also result in a reduced final grade. This will be true even when students have legitimate reasons for missing class. Bear in mind that the participation grade is not based on attendance; it's based on how you behave (listening, contributing to discussions, handing in substantive reading questions) once you show up.

#### Late paper policy:

You may have one three-day extension (i.e., from Friday to Monday) on any assignment, no questions asked. Beyond that, late papers will incur a penalty of one third of a grade per day past deadline unless they are delayed by a very good reason. Most importantly, let me know if you're going to hand a paper in late. Failure to hand in any of the papers will automatically result in failure of the course. Handouts, in general, should not be handed in late, since they are part of the day's discussion; if you run into serious trouble, let me know and we'll work something out.

#### Grading percentages:

Class participation and reading questions: 10%

Paper #1: 20%

*Ulysses* subtext handout: 10%

Paper #2: 25%

Paper #3: 35%

#### Revisions:

Talk to me if you would like to revise the first and/or second paper. The grade for a revision will replace the grade for the original paper. Revisions must be substantive, based on careful reconsideration of the paper's argument. (Fixing a few small things I've marked is not a revision, it's proofreading.) If you wish to revise a paper, you must meet with me within one week of when I returned the original paper to you. In most cases, revisions should be handed in at least one week prior to the deadline for the subsequent paper. Please note that this is *not* an opportunity to treat the original deadline as a "draft"

deadline; if what you hand in initially is clearly unfinished, I will consider it late until you give me a finished product. For reasons of time, I cannot accept revisions of the final paper. I will also not accept revisions of papers which received an A-, because life is too short.

#### Honor Code:

Students are expected to abide by the Agnes Scott College Honor Code. Plagiarism—the unattributed use, in any form, of someone else’s work—is a very serious offence which can result in failure or even expulsion, so be scrupulous in your documentation, and always make clear the difference between your own ideas and those of others. Students convicted by Honor Court of plagiarism will, in addition to any penalties Honor Court may assign, automatically fail the class. Don’t hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about citation, or if you run into trouble working on an assignment. If you’re having problems and the deadline’s approaching, don’t panic, just send me an e-mail and we’ll figure something out.

#### Course evaluations:

Toward the end of the semester, you will receive an e-mail asking you to submit an electronic evaluation of this course. Course evaluations are very important to me, to the department, and to the administration of the school as a whole. I take your feedback very seriously and will use it to improve both this course the next time I teach it and my teaching as a whole.

#### Office hours and how to reach me:

I will hold walk-in office hours every Monday and Wednesday 2:30-4:00 and Tuesday from 1:00-2:00. If you can’t make those times, I will be very glad to schedule extra appointments. Come talk about the papers, or about confusing texts, or to continue an argument we’ve started in class. To make an appointment, or to ask questions, the best way to reach me is by e-mail: [rtrousdale@agnesscott.edu](mailto:rtrousdale@agnesscott.edu).

#### Writing Center:

Use the writing center! Make an appointment online via the link at <http://www.agnesscott.edu/academics/centerforwritingandspeaking>. Their web site, [http://writing\\_center.agnesscott.edu](http://writing_center.agnesscott.edu), has useful information and handouts.