

ENGL 363
ARTISTS ASTRAY: BRITISH & IRISH MODERNISM
Spring 2012 T/R 12:30-1:45, Clough 300

Prof. Michael Bogucki
319 Palmer Hall

Email: boguckim@rhodes.edu
Office Hours: 2-3pm M, T, W, and by appt.

Overview

An advanced study of modernist thought and culture, this course will focus on the representation of artistic and intellectual work in England and Ireland in the first four decades of the twentieth century. We will read selections from some of the most innovative and challenging works of the canonical “high” modernists, examining how these writers’ fascination with perception, memory, and relation emerged from wild and raucous debates about the meaning of modernity and art across the pages of newspapers, journals, reviews, and little magazines.

First published in a magazine popular across the British Empire for its horror stories, Conrad’s *Lord Jim* presents a disorienting vision of failed agency and miscommunication. Yeats’s poems, prose, and plays borrowed and invented Irelands that demanded new forms of publication like *The Samhain* or the Cuala Press. The Dublin of Joyce’s *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* emerged from Austro-Hungarian enemy territory to appear in London in the pages of *The Egoist*. The Missouri-born Eliot’s “The Waste Land” appeared in London’s *The Criterion* and Woolf’s Hogarth Press, while the shell-shock depicted in Woolf’s own *Mrs. Dalloway* was one of the many consequences of the Easter Rising that had been debated in the *Irish Times*. Likewise, the aesthetics of maddened solipsism in Beckett’s *Murphy* had first appeared the Paris journal *transition* and the *Dublin Magazine*. In this course, we will investigate how these artists’ border-crossings and translations shaped their work—and ask what new exchanges they make possible.

Required Texts

Joseph Conrad, *Lord Jim* (Norton, ed. Thomas Moser)
W.B. Yeats, *Yeats’s Poetry, Drama, and Prose* (Norton, ed. James Pethica)
James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (Norton, ed. John Paul Riquelme)
T.S. Eliot, *Selected Poems* (Mariner)
Virginia Woolf, *The Mrs. Dalloway Reader* (Mariner, ed. Francine Prose)
Samuel Beckett, *Murphy* (Grove)

Course Objectives

The two main goals of this course are, first, to gain a broader understanding of modernist fiction and poetry as intellectually and socially significant activities, and, second, to learn how to effectively analyze and interpret the major aesthetic patterns and techniques developed by British and Irish modernist writers.

The five authors whose work will make up the bulk of our reading represent a wide range of (often conflicting) ideas about art, literature, national identity, modernity, and the business of

publishing. Although I will present key features and important backgrounds for these ideas in lectures, the core of this course is designed to be exciting—but also exacting—discussion. The classroom should be your rehearsal space for the ideas and interpretations you will work out in more detail in your writing.

As an upper-level seminar, this course will devote considerable attention to the relationship between the forms of these writers' works and their historical contexts. This means that I expect you to do some serious thinking about *how* and *why* these texts take the shapes that they do. Consequently, in addition to the substantial amount of reading (up to 60-70 pages per class) assigned over the course of the semester, this course requires you to engage with some of the professional scholarship in the field and to formulate your own critical interpretations of the works under discussion.

Course Requirements

Attendance is mandatory. Your success in this course depends heavily on your actively engaging with the texts and ideas under discussion as well as reading the material. I understand that wonderful and awful things sometimes happen to make you miss class, so there is no penalty for up to three absences. I do not require an explanation, although it's always appreciated. Beyond those three absences, *each* additional absence will cost your final course average one full letter grade, i.e. C to D, A- to B-, etc. If you miss more than six classes, you will fail the course. I will pass around an attendance sheet at the beginning of each class: if your signature is not there, you will be counted as absent. Chronic or unreasonable tardiness (i.e. more than once or twice, more than two or three minutes) will count as an absence.

1/ Participation: I expect everyone to participate in class discussions, but there will also be various reading quizzes, and short in-class or online writing assignments. Some of these are meant to keep you reading, but many are designed to give you the opportunity to explore ideas and responses in ways that the to-and-fro of spoken conversation can sometimes make difficult. I consider quality as well as quantity of participation (15%).

2/ Periodical Review: In addition to short in-class responses, students will work in small groups of 2-4 to conduct online archival research into modernist periodicals, including *Dana*, *The Egoist*, *The English Review*, and *The Freewoman*. Each group will present a short overview of one periodical and lead a discussion in class about the relation of their research to one or more of the required readings (15%).

3/ Critical Summary: This 3-4 page review should summarize two works of literary criticism taken from approved books or scholarly journals that discuss a text the class has been assigned to read. You should give your reader a useful account of the critic's main arguments and what examples they used. I will pass around a sign-up sheet for summary assignments in class (15%).

4/ Three Essays: 5-6 pages for the first two interpretive essays, and 10-12 pages for the final research paper. Each should analyze passages from the works we have read and concepts discussed in class. We will talk in detail in class about my expectations for these essays—if you have any questions, please email me or drop by my office hours. I will distribute suggested

topics a week before papers are due, but you are also free to develop your own topics with my approval. The first two essays are worth 15% of the final grade, and the third is worth 25% (55% total).

We will have an online draft workshop for the first essay to give you practice rehearsing your argument and clarifying your ideas with your classmates. These drafts can certainly be rough, but the more substantial you make them, the more productive your classmates' feedback will be. Bring a typed, paper copy of your rough draft to class for me. Your feedback to your classmates (posted online) will count toward your participation grade. This will be our only draft exchange, but I am happy to discuss your writing at any stage (from caffeinated epiphanies to polished drafts) in my office hours or by appointment.

Day	Date	Assignments
Thursday	January 12	Introduction
Tuesday	17	Conrad, <i>Lord Jim</i>
Thursday	19	Conrad, <i>Lord Jim</i>
Tuesday	24	Conrad, <i>Lord Jim</i>
Thursday	26	Conrad, <i>Lord Jim</i>
Tuesday	31	Hyde, "The Brow of Nefin"; "The Weariness and Grief"; Yeats, "The Stolen Child"; "The Lake Isle of Innisfree"; "Adam's Curse"; "Words"; "No Second Troy"; "The Fascination of What's Difficult"
Thursday	February 2	Joyce, <i>A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man</i> (I, pp. 1-34)
Tuesday	7	Joyce, <i>Portrait</i> (I & II)
Thursday	9	Joyce, <i>Portrait</i> (III)
Tuesday	14	Joyce, <i>Portrait</i> (IV) [ESSAY 1 DRAFT EXCHANGE]
Thursday	16	Joyce, <i>Portrait</i> (V)
Tuesday	21	Yeats, "On Hearing that the students..."; "To a Wealthy Man..."; "September 1913"; "The Magi"; "The Dolls"
Thursday	23	Yeats, "Easter 1916"; "The Second Coming"; "Sailing to Byzantium"; "Meditations in Time of Civil War" [ESSAY 1 DUE]
Tuesday	28	Eliot, "Sweeney Erect"; "Sweeney Among the Nightingales"
Thursday	March 1	Eliot, "The Waste Land"
Tuesday	6	Eliot, "The Waste Land"
Thursday	8	Eliot, "Ash Wednesday"; excerpts from <i>Commerce & Criterion</i>
Tuesday	13	Spring Break
Thursday	15	Spring Break
Tuesday	20	Mansfield, "The Garden Party"; excerpts from <i>Westminster Gazette</i>
Thursday	22	Woolf, <i>Mrs. Dalloway</i> , (Reader, pp. 163-183)
Tuesday	27	Woolf, <i>Mrs. Dalloway</i> (pp. 183-233) [ESSAY 2 DUE]
Thursday	29	Woolf, <i>Mrs. Dalloway</i> (pp. 233-263)
Tuesday	April 3	Woolf, <i>Mrs. Dalloway</i> (pp. 263-313)
Thursday	5	Easter Recess
Tuesday	10	Woolf, <i>Mrs. Dalloway</i> (pp. 313-343); "A Room of One's Own"
Thursday	12	Beckett, "Ding Dong"; Yeats, "The Statues"; "Circus Animals..."
Tuesday	17	Beckett, <i>Murphy</i> , ch. 1-4
Thursday	19	Beckett, <i>Murphy</i> , ch. 5-7
Tuesday	24	Beckett, <i>Murphy</i> , ch. 8-10
Thursday	26	Beckett, <i>Murphy</i> , ch. 11-13
	30-May	Final Exams [ESSAY 3 DUE]

