

TENTATIVE SYLLABUS: 20TH CENTURY IRISH FICTION Spring 2007

M--1/29--Introduction

M--2/5-- Critical Review

M--2/12-- Critical Review

M--2/19-- James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916)

M--2/26— Joyce (cont.)

M--3/5-- Frank O'Connor, *Collected Stories* (1981)

M--3/12-- Liam O'Flaherty, *The Informer* (1925)

M--3/19-- Elizabeth Bowen, *The Last September* (1929)

M--3/26-- **SPRING BREAK**

M--4/2-- Flann O'Brien, *At Swim-Two-Birds* (1939)

M--4/9-- William Trevor, *Fools of Fortune* (1983)

M--4/16-- John Banville, *The Newton Letter* (1982)

M--4/23—John McGahern, *Amongst Women* (1991) **PRECIS DUE**

M--4/30-- Seamus Deane, *Reading in the Dark* (1996)

M--5/7-- Edna O'Brien, *Night* (1972)

M--5/14--LAST DAY OF INSTRUCTION

M--5/21--**FINAL EXAM**, 5:15-7:15 (bring Blue Book)

INSTRUCTOR: Dave Madden, Calaveras 156, Office Hrs: MW 11:00-12:00; M 6:-6:30; & W 2:30-3:00. Office phone: 278-5623 or English Dept.: 278-6586; email: maddendw@csus.edu. Entire syllabus posted at <http://www.csus.edu/indiv/m/maddendw>

EXPECTATIONS

- *Complete all reading assignments by dates assigned
- *Participate in class discussions
- *Attend class regularly

Since this is not a correspondence course and since we meet only once a week, attendance is mandatory. A student will be allowed no more than one (1) unexcused absence (and no more than one excused absence). Those who have more than 1 unexcused absence will have a whole grade deducted from the final grade for each additional absence. Attendance will be taken at the start of each class. If a student arrives after attendance has been taken, it is his/her responsibility to see that s/he is recorded as being present. Excused absences will be granted only for extenuating circumstances (neither general malaise nor an assignment in another class will do) and must be cleared no later than the next class period. It is your responsibility to check your attendance; my records are final.

I recommend you date your class notes in order to demonstrate your attendance should there be a conflict in records. Be prepared to show those notes at the time that you inquire about your absences.

Attendance policy--Class begins on the half hour; students arriving consistently late by more than 5 minutes will be considered absent for any time missed. The time missed will be calculated as absences which will affect the final grade as explained above.

GRADING

The final course grade will be based on:

2 essays: 60% final grade

1 essay final exam (blue book required): 25% final grade

1 precis of a critical work: 15% final grade

class participation, improvement: swing factors

*To miss any of the assignments above will result in an automatic failure of the course. NO EXCEPTIONS.

GRADING STANDARDS (as stated in CSUS. catalog under "Academic Regulations")

- A Exemplary achievement of the course objectives. In addition to being clearly and significantly above the requirements, the work exhibited is of an independent, creative, contributory nature.
- B Superior achievement of the course objectives. The performance is clearly and significantly above the satisfactory fulfillment of course requirements.
- C Satisfactory achievement of the course objectives. The student is now prepared for advanced work or study.
- D Unsatisfactory achievement toward the course objectives, yet achievement of a sufficient proportion of the objectives so that it is not necessary to repeat the course unless required to do so by the academic department.
- F Ineffective achievement toward the course objectives. The student has made no clearly significant progress.

NB: I do **not** negotiate grades. If you have questions about performance on an assignment (not about the grade on same), I will be glad to explain, but I will not barter a grade up or down.

GENERAL POLICIES

LATE PAPERS: In this class they do not exist; the date an assignment is due is the date the assignment is due. If there is some clear and compelling reason for a late paper (not great powder at one's favorite ski resort, general malaise, or an assignment in any other class), see or call me in advance of submission. All papers must be submitted in class the week before the essay is to be considered by the class.

TYPING: Mandatory for all papers. Papers should be neat and free of extreme typographical errors. Double space and use 1" margins. If you use a computer or word processor, use no less and no more than a 12 pt font. Number pages, beginning with second page, in upper right hand corner, and secure pages only with a staple in the upper left hand corner. On a cover page center the title and put in the lower right hand corner your name, the date the assignment is due, the title of the novel you are writing about, the course number (240S), and my name.

MISCELLANEOUS: Students must keep abreast of assignments; I will not accept the excuse that because someone misses a class s/he did not know there was a change in the syllabus or an assignment. If there are any changes in the syllabus, they will be announced in class, and students are then responsible for these on dates announced.

MECHANICS OF THE COURSE

SEMINAR PAPERS: For each novel there will be a pair of essays (5-6 pages in length) submitted on the same topic. These essays will form the basis of class discussion. Writers must keep in mind that their assignment, in every case, is to present a reasoned, well-documented, analytical, argumentative response to the topic assigned. In other words, the essays are not simply plot summaries but may indeed include some limited summary in order to make their cases. Keep in mind that your audience is one that has read the novel but that needs persuading of your point of view. These assignments are not necessarily exercises in literary research, though a knowledge of extant scholarship on your subject will, of course, be helpful in articulating an individual point of view. If you do use the words or ideas of someone else, be sure to document accurately according to the recent MLA style of citation reference. As stated above, papers will be submitted a week before they will be discussed. Writers must submit the original and 14 photo copies (anonymous if one prefers), one for each student in the class.

SEMINAR RESPONDENTS: Just as there will be two essays under consideration for each meeting, there will be two volunteers to lead discussion for that meeting. The respondents should consider the essays submitted, respond to issues and ideas presented there, raise any pertinent questions, as well as discuss or pose questions regarding other relevant issues suggested by or even ignored by the essays. The essays offer a place to begin but they are by no means all

that will be discussed.

CRITICAL PRECIS: On a first-come, first-served basis, students will select a critical text from a distributed list. Students must read the work and then summarize its main ideas, contents, critical position, bibliographic information, etc. in two pages only. The point of this assignment is to briefly describe the work for someone who is probably unfamiliar with it. Submit the original and copies for each member of the class. Thus each student will have a brief, carefully annotated bibliography of secondary sources for further reading or research.

BEHAVIOR: Certain fundamental standards of behavior must be observed in this class. Common courtesy and respect is demanded of all enrolled in this class. Therefore you are not to read the newspaper or a textbook for another course once the class meeting has begun. Likewise, no one is to work on assignments for another course in this class. Do not talk or otherwise interrupt me or another student who is speaking, and under no condition will anyone be permitted to sleep during class lectures or discussions. Please **turn the cell phones off**; no calls once class begins. Those who cannot or will not follow these obvious rules of behavior will be counted as absent for that class period and may be subject to dismissal from the course.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: The faculty union is in the midst of contract negotiations, and there is a possibility of a work interruption. Updates on this situation will be provided throughout the course.

ESSAY TOPICS: 20TH CENTURY IRISH FICTION

Spring 2007

Submission Date: Topics:

- 2/12 Explain the *Portrait*'s title; what does it mean; what are its implications?
- 2/19 Readers often associate *Portrait* with exile, and indeed this is dramatically presented with Stephen's determination to leave his homeland. However, exile, in one form or another, dominates the novel. Analyze the more subtle forms of exile and relate them to Stephen's ultimate decision.
- 2/26 In his study of the short story, *The Lonely Voice*, Frank O'Connor contends that the genre should "r[i]ng with the tone of a man's voice, speaking." What are the implications of this sense of voice in his stories, and compare this technique with those we have seen in the works of other Irish writers this semester.
- 3/5 Throughout *The Informer* there is a persistent and at times elaborate pattern of Christian imagery which has led some to describe the work as a New Testament allegory. Trace this pattern and analyze its significance, paying close attention to the three principle characters of Gypo Nolan, Mary McPhillip, and Dan Gallagher. What do all these images suggest; what may O'Flaherty be driving at?
- 3/12 In *The Last September* There are repeated references to shadows and light and the strong presence of the house at Danielstown. Explain the significance of these many references; what is the point; what do they suggest?
- 3/19 On p. 33 of *At Swim-Two-Birds* the narrator offers a description of the modern novel. What is his point and how does this remark pertain to this particular work?
- 4/2 In William Trevor's *Fools of Fortune* Father Kilgarriff, though a minor character, plays a crucial role. Analyze the importance of this character--who is he, literally what is his function in the novel, what exactly does he teach or try to teach Willie Quinton?
- 4/9 *The Newton Letter* abounds in allusions and references to art (in a variety of media). What is the point of these numerous references; analyze what these mean for the protagonist as well as for the reader (which may or may not be the same).
- 4/16 Although the title of *Amongst Women* might suggest that the focus is upon the daughters and step-mother, the father is the center of the reader's and characters' attention. Who is this man, what are his salient characteristics, how is McGahern using him (perhaps symbolically)? Analyze the character carefully.

- 4/23 The plot of *Reading in the Dark* revolves around events that have taken place years before and in the disturbed memories of various family members. What is the novel suggesting about the past and memory, especially for the Irish?
- 4/30 One critic has argued that Edna O'Brien's fictions oscillate between extremes of sublime, transcendent romanticism and sensual, hard reality. Analyze *Night* in terms of this paradox and explain how this conflict is elaborated and/or resolved.
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IRISH SCHOLARSHIP: TITLES FOR PRECIS

Averill, Deborah. The Irish Short Story Form from George Moore to Frank O'Connor

Backus, Margot Gayle. The Gothic Family Romance: Heterosexuality, Child Sacrifice, and the Anglo-Irish Colonial Order

Brophy, James D., ed, Contemporary Irish Writing

Browne, R. B., William J. Roscelli, & Richard Loftus, The Celtic Cross: Studies in Irish Culture and Literature

Cahalan, James, Great Hatred, Little Room

—. Double Visions: Women and Men in Modern and Contemporary Irish Fiction

Cairns, David & Shaun Richards, Writing Ire: Colonialism, Nationalism, & Culture

Carlson, Julia. Banned in Ireland

Carpenter, Andrew, ed, Place, Personality, and the Irish Writer

Connolly, Peter, ed, Literature and the Changing Ireland

Costello, Peter, The Heart Grown Brutal ...1891_1939

Cronin, Anthony. Heritage Now: Irish Lit in the Eng Lang

Cronin, John, The Anglo_Irish Novel, Vol II

Deane, Seamus, Celtic Revivals: Essays in Modern Irish Literature

Drudy, P. J., ed., Irish Studies

Dunn, Douglas, Two Decades of Irish Writing

Foster, John Wilson, Fictions of the Irish Literary Revival: A Changeling Art

_____, Forces & Themes in Ulster Fiction

Harmon, Maurice, ed, The Irish Novel in Our Time

____, ed, The Irish Writer and the City

Hart, Liam & Michael Parker, ed. Contemporary Irish Fiction: Themes, Tropes, Theories

Howarth, Herbert, Irish Writers, 1880-1940: Literature Under Parnell's Star

Hylland, Paul & Neil Sammells, Irish Writing: Exile & Subversion

Kenneally, Michael, Studies in Contemporary Irish Literature

Kiely, Benedict, Modern Irish Fiction: A Critique

Kilroy, James F., ed., The Irish Short Story

Krans, Horatio Sheafe. Irish Life in Irish Fiction

Krielkamp, Vera. The Anglo-Irish Novelist and the Big House

Lee, JJ, ed, Ireland, 1945-1970

Martin, Augustine, ed, The Genius of Irish Prose

McManus, Francis, The Years of the Great Test: 1926-1939

Mercier, Vivian, Modern Irish Literature: Sources and Founders

_____. Irish Comic Tradition.

O'Muirthe, Diarmaid, ed, The English Language in Ireland

Porter, Ray J, ed, Modern Irish Literature: Essays in Honor of W. York Tindall

Rafroidi, Patrick & Maurice Harmon. The Irish Novel in Our Time

— Rafroidi, Patrick & Terence Brown, The Irish Short Story (1979)

Schleifer, Ronald, ed, Genres of the Irish Literary Revival (80)

Sekine, Masaru, Irish Writers and Society at Large

Sloan, Barry, The Pioneers of Anglo-Irish Fiction, 1800-1850

St. Peter, Christine. Changing Ireland: Strategies in Contemporary Women's Fiction

Taylor, Estella Ruth, Modern Irish Writers

Watson, George, Irish Identity and the Literary Revival

Weekes, Ann Owens. Irish Women Writers: An Uncharted Tradition

Wilson, John Foster. Fictions of the Irish Literary Revival: A Changeling Art