

20TH-CENTURY BRITISH FICTION:**COUNTRY SPACE / CITY SPACE****English 4543 #20939 (Autumn 2013)****Class Meet:** W F 9:35 pm–10:55 am, Hayes Hall 25**Instructor:** Brian McAllister**Office Hours:** M W F 12:30 pm–1:30 pm or by appointment, Denney Hall 503**Email:** mcallister.91@osu.edu**Mailbox:** Denney Hall 421**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This class tracks the development of British fiction from the beginning of the twentieth century to the present. We will map the shift from modernism to late modernism to postmodernism within the century and use these concepts to better understand both formal and thematic concerns running through each fictional work. We will supplement these fictional texts with passages from a variety of critical works. These critical texts will help us to enrich and better situate our own claims about literature from the period and ultimately allow us to see the ways that our readings fit within different scholarly conversations about British literature. Our goal throughout the semester will be to construct our own models for understanding the concerns of literature from the period, identifying thematic and formal trends that clarify aesthetic, political, and cultural changes in Britain throughout the twentieth century.

To help reach this goal, we will read with an attention to questions of place and space. In particular, we will focus on the places and spaces of the country estate. Long a popular literary setting, the British country estate—and the culture that revolves around its maintenance—continues in the twentieth century as a popular literary setting, despite (or perhaps because of) rapid urbanization. Some questions that we'll tackle throughout the semester include: Why, in a century of rapid urbanization, does the country estate and the countryside continue to hold such power? How do representations of the countryside, the country estate, and life in rural Britain shine a light on historical, political, cultural, and aesthetic shifts throughout the twentieth century? How do representations of the city and city living respond to or build from a relationship with the rural? Can we recognize the influence of the estate even in novels not explicitly set within its spaces—in, for instance, the urban *noir* genre? Most importantly, how does literature's relationship with the country estate change as we move from modernism to late modernism to postmodernism?

REQUIRED TEXTS

- EM Forster, *Howards End*
- Ford Madox Ford, *The Good Soldier*
- Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*
- Evelyn Waugh, *A Handful of Dust*
- Graham Greene, *The Third Man*
- LP Hartley, *The Go-Between*
- Iris Murdoch, *The Black Prince*
- Kazuo Ishiguro, *Remains of the Day*
- Zadie Smith, *On Beauty*
- Selected readings available on Carmen

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Participation**10%**

Good participation means firstly having read the material assigned for the day and being prepared to contribute your views on the assigned reading. Active listening and questioning are important components of participation. This grade is also contingent on you collaborating appropriately and respectfully with your classmates and me.

You will not earn a good participation grade if you just attend class and do not actively involve yourself in class discussions. Should there be any reason that hinders your ability to participate, please speak with me and we will work together to resolve the situation.

Reading Responses**10%**

Students will post 6, 300-word responses to particular prompts on the Carmen discussion board. These relatively informal responses will guide class discussion and address particular concerns, questions, and observations that students may have about the reading for the day. My hope is that these responses will serve as a space to prepare

for class discussion on the following day. With that in mind, reading responses must be posted to the discussion board by 7:00 pm on the day *before* class, so that I may read them and use them to help prepare class discussions.

Midterm Exam **25%**

The midterm exam will include a series of short answer questions; identification questions, which ask you to identify and analyze passages from works we've discussed; and an essay question asking you to engage in an extended discussion of the texts, criticism, and ideas that we've read through the first half of the semester. (More details to come.)

Final Exam **25%**

The final exam will employ the same format as the midterm exam, but will only deal with fiction from the second half of the semester. (More details to come.)

Final Paper **30%**

Final papers will engage in an extended examination of a selection of texts from the semester, attempting to link them together into a narrative that tracks the development of British fiction through the 20th century, situating this narrative within the various critical conversations we've tracked through the semester (and through your own research). (More details to come.)

Grade Scale

E: 0–59	D: 60–66	D+: 67–69	C-: 70–72	C: 73–76	C+: 77–79	B-: 80–82
B: 83–86	B+: 87–89	A-: 90–92	A: 93–100			

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance is essential to the success of this class. Therefore, each unexcused absence after four will result in the lowering of your final grade by *a third of a grade*. Excused absences, such as those for documented illness, family tragedy, religious observance, or travel for inter-collegiate athletics, will not affect your grade, though it is your responsibility to get all missed work. **Eight unexcused absences will automatically result in failure for the course.**

Tardiness is disruptive to the classroom environment, and prevents you from fully participating and assimilating the information and materials discussed in class. Excessive tardiness will lower your participation grade.

Cell Phones/Electronic Devices must be turned OFF before class (not on silent or vibrate). Texting or using other electronic devices during class will affect your ability to participate in class discussion and, therefore, affect your participation grade.

Plagiarism is the unauthorized use of the words or ideas of another person. It is a serious academic offense that can result in referral to the Committee on Academic Misconduct and failure for the course. Please remember that at no point during the writing process should the work of others be presented as your own.

Student Work must be completed and submitted on time. All assignments should be turned in during the class period when they are due. Late submission of a final graded assignment will result in the deduction of **one full letter grade** for each day past the due date (for example, B+ to C+). The grade will not be affected when a draft or final graded assignment is late for reasons that would result in an excused absence. Students who know they will miss the class when the assignment is due must contact the instructor as soon as possible in advance of class to arrange for submission of the assignment.

Class Cancellation Policy: In the unlikely event of an emergency, I will contact you via email and request that a note on department letterhead be placed on the door. In addition, I will contact you as soon as possible following the cancellation to let you know what will be expected of you for our next class meeting.

RESOURCES

The **Writing Center** offers the following free services to members of the OSU community:

- Help with any assignment (ranging from lab reports to dissertations) at any stage of the writing process (brainstorming, thesis development, revising, etc.).

- Face-to-face, 50 minute tutorials by appointment at our main location in 4120A Smith Labs, Monday through Friday.
- Online tutoring sessions via Carmen by appointment.
- Walk in appointments at our two satellite locations:
 - Smith-Steeb dorms, Monday-Wednesday, 7pm–9pm.
 - Thompson library 1st floor, Monday-Thursday, 11am–1pm and 5pm–7pm.
- Online appointment scheduling, available 24/7.

Please visit <http://cstw.osu.edu> or call 688-4291 to make an appointment.

Deb Kuzawa, University Libraries GAA, can provide assistance at any stage of the research process. She is available at the Writing Center in Thompson Library, from 11am–1pm and 5pm–7pm Monday through Thursday. All sessions are drop-in and last for up to 20 minutes. Deb can be reached at kuzawa.1@osu.edu.

The Office for Disability Services, located in 150 Pomerene Hall, offers services for students with documented disabilities. Contact the ODS at 2-3307.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Week One

- 21 August**
- Course Introduction
- 23 August** **City Space, Country Space, Suburban Space, pt. 1**
- Forster, *Howards End*

Week Two

- 28 August** **City Space, Country Space, Suburban Space, pt. 2**
RESPONSE 1 DUE IN CARMEN DISCUSSION BOARD BY 5:00 PM ON TUESDAY, 27 AUGUST
- Forster, *Howards End*
- 30 August** **City Space, Country Space, Suburban Space, pt. 3**
- Forster, *Howards End*

Week Three

- 4 September**
RESPONSE 2 DUE IN CARMEN DISCUSSION BOARD BY 7:00 PM ON TUESDAY, 3 SEPTEMBER
- Williams, from *The Country and the City* [Carmen]
- 6 September** **Impressionism and War, pt. 1**
- Ford, *The Good Soldier*

Week Four

- 11 September** **Impressionism and War, pt. 2**
- Ford, *The Good Soldier*
- 13 September** **Impressionism and War, pt. 3**
- Ford, *The Good Soldier*

Week Five

- 18 September** **Post-Impressionism in the Postwar Countryside, pt. 1**
- Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*
- 20 September** **Post-Impressionism in the Postwar Countryside, pt. 2**
- Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*

Week Six

- 25 September**
RESPONSE 3 DUE IN CARMEN DISCUSSION BOARD BY 7:00 PM ON TUESDAY, 24 SEPTEMBER
- Trotter, “The Modernist Novel” [Carmen]

27 September **Late Modernism and Farcical Aristocracy, pt. 1**
 - Waugh, *A Handful of Dust*

Week Seven

2 October **Late Modernism and Farcical Aristocracy, pt. 2**
 - Waugh, *A Handful of Dust*

4 October
 NO CLASS

Week Eight

9 October **Late Modernism and Farcical Aristocracy, pt. 3**
 RESPONSE 4 DUE IN CARMEN DISCUSSION BOARD BY 7:00 PM ON TUESDAY, 8 OCTOBER
 - Waugh, *A Handful of Dust*
 - Miller, from *Late Modernism* [Carmen]

11 October
 - Miller, from *Late Modernism* [Carmen]
 - Midterm review

Week Nine

16 October
 MIDTERM EXAM

18 October
 - Esty, from *A Shrinking Island* [Carmen]

Week Ten

23 October **Film Noir and the Postwar Urban Wasteland, pt. 1**
 - Reed/Green, *The Third Man*

25 October **Film Noir and the Postwar Urban Wasteland, pt. 2**
 - Reed/Green, *The Third Man*

Week Eleven

30 October **British Postmodernism, pt. 1**
 RESPONSE 5 DUE IN CARMEN DISCUSSION BOARD BY 7:00 PM ON TUESDAY, 29 OCTOBER
 - Murdoch, *The Black Prince*

1 November **British Postmodernism, pt. 2**
 - Murdoch, *The Black Prince*

Week Twelve

6 November **British Postmodernism, pt. 3**
 - Murdoch, *The Black Prince*

8 November **Dystopia and Liberal Ideology at Century's End, pt. 1**
 - Ishiguro, *Remains of the Day*

Week Thirteen

13 November **Dystopia and Liberal Ideology at Century's End, pt. 2**
 RESPONSE 6 DUE IN CARMEN DISCUSSION BOARD BY 7:00 PM ON TUESDAY, 12 NOVEMBER
 - Ishiguro, *Remains of the Day*
 - Wright, from *On Living in an Old Country* [Carmen]

15 November **Howards End Redux: British Fiction in the 21st Century, pt. 1**
 - Smith, *On Beauty*

Week Fourteen

20 November **Howards End Redux: British Fiction in the 21st Century, pt. 2**
 - Smith, *On Beauty*

22 November *Howards End Redux: British Fiction in the 21st Century, pt. 3*
- Smith, *On Beauty*

Week Fifteen

27 November
THANKSGIVING BREAK. NO CLASS.

29 November
THANKSGIVING BREAK. NO CLASS.

Finals Week

6 DECEMBER (FRIDAY), 8:00AM–9:45AM
FINAL EXAM
FINAL PAPER DUE IN CARMEN DROPBOX