

17.4285/6-001
TOPICS IN MODERNISM:
The “Battle of the Brows”

Term: FW 2008-2000
Time and Time Slot: W 2:30-5:15pm
Room: 3M61
Office Hours: TR 10:00-11:00am or by appointment

Professor: Dr. Candida Rifkind
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(see Note 13 on p.3)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an introduction to some of the key literary and cultural texts of modernism, understood as a series of contemporaneous artistic and cultural movements that emerged between 1910 and 1945. We focus on literature from Britain, the United States, and Canada but also read several works in translation to understand modernism's transnational manifestations. Theoretical and critical material will include readings from the modernist period itself as well as scholarship from the “new modernist studies” of the past twenty years that has re-shaped and opened up the field. In addition to written texts, class discussions will examine the visual, cinematic, and performance art of such movements as imagism, dadaism, futurism, surrealism, cubism, primitivism, and expressionism in relation to the poetry, prose, drama, mass media, and criticism of the period. Throughout the course we will pay attention to the dynamics of what Virginia Woolf in *The Death of the Moth* terms “the battle of the brows”: modernist distinctions between highbrow, middlebrow, and lowbrow readers inflected by conceptions of gender, class, race, ethnicity, nationality, and sexuality. Evaluation will include projects, journals, and presentations as well as essays.

REQUIRED TEXTS (in order of reading)

Note that a significant number of course texts are on e-reserve or must be accessed online. Check the reading schedule and make sure that you have copies of these required readings.

Woolf, Virginia. *The Waves*. 1931. London: Penguin Classics, 1992.

Treadwell, Sophie. *Machinal*. 1928. London: Royal National Theatre, 1993.

Larsen, Nella. *Quicksand and Passing*. 1929. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers UP, 1994.

Césaire, Aimé. *Notebook of a Return to the Native Land*. 1939; 1947. Trans.

Clayton Eshleman. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2001.

Forster, E.M. *A Passage to India*. 1924. London: Penguin Modern Classics, 2000.

Mann, Thomas. *Death in Venice*. 1912. Trans. Michael Henry Heim. New York: HarperCollins, 2004.

Smart, Elizabeth. *By Grand Central Station I Sat Down and Wept*. 1945. Toronto: HarperCollins Canada / Flaming, 1991.

de la Roche, Mazo. *Jalna*. 1927. Montreal: XYZ, 2006.

Christie, Agatha. *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*. 1927. New York: Berkley, 2004.

Cain, James M. *Double Indemnity*. 1935. New York: Vintage, 1989.

Baldwin, Faith. *Skyscraper*. 1931. *Femmes Fatales: Women Write Pulp*. New York: Feminist Press at SUNY, 2003.

Students may use any edition of the texts except for those in translation (i.e., Césaire and Mann).

RECOMMENDED TEXT(S)

Students should have access to a good English dictionary and an MLA style writing guide.

Since this is an Honours English course students should be familiar with basic literary terms and should acquire new ones over the course of the year through class discussion and independent study. There are many dictionaries of literary terms available (including the *Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* available on-line through the UW library website) but some are better than others. The one I most recommend is:

Cuddon, J.A. (rev. C.E. Preston). *The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*. New York: Penguin, 1999.

ASSIGNMENTS (more info on each assignment will be provided in class)

Critical Responses (500-750 words, two due each term)*	4x5% each = 20%
Group Presentations (Fall group presentations on poetry; Winter individual presentations)	2x10% each = 20%
First Term Project Written Report (2000-2500 words, due on November 26 th)	15%
Second Term Research Essay (3000-3250 words, due on April 1 st)	20%
Final Exam (3 hours on April 16, 2009, at 1:30pm)	25%

***see explanation below**

Note on attendance: If anything defines the complex world of modernism, it is dialogue, exchange, collaboration, and invention. As students of modernism we are like its creators in that these interactions can only happen between parties who are present and engaged. Since this is a discussion-based class attendance is crucial. Any absence could impact on your performance since regular oral participation is expected and all sorts of ideas can emerge unexpectedly. As students in an Honours course, you should come prepared each week with either comments or questions to make about the assigned reading. We will often begin the discussion with a roundtable to hear each other's initial responses, reflections, and queries about the texts.

It should be obvious that mere attendance is ineffectual if you haven't done the readings. We are reading some challenging texts and so, even if the number of pages seems light for some weeks, you need to schedule sufficient time to really work through the material in order to have something to contribute in class.

Attendance is also vital since this is an interdisciplinary course and a range of visual material will be presented during class time that is integral to the literary texts. Try not to miss more than one class a term. Please let me know in advance about any session you can't attend.

***Critical Responses**

Twice each term, you must email a reading response to me the evening before class (i.e., they must be in my inbox by 8am on Wednesday morning in order to receive a grade). You may select the weeks yourself but note that the responses must be based on readings not films.

Writing about what you have read will help you to understand the readings of the course and synthesize ideas. In addition, you will come to class ready to contribute to our discussions. I may

ask you to read aloud from your Critical Responses; be prepared to share your insights with the class.

You should not summarize the reading, do any research, or dwell on emotional reactions (i.e., liked, didn't like). Ideally, this is an opportunity to think through your intellectual experiences of the texts, probe your own thinking about modernism, and ask questions that may lead into a research paper.

The responses are worth 5% each and will be graded on the extent to which they engage with the material and course topics. This is the time for you to get really "into" something you've read and take the kinds of risks that you may not want to venture in a more formal essay.

GRADING SCALE

A+	90 - 100%	GPA 4.50	C+	65 - 69%	GPA 2.5
A	85 - 89%	GPA 4.25	C	60 - 64%	GPA 2.0
A-	80 - 84%	GPA 4.0	D	50 - 59%	GPA 1.0
B+	75 - 79%	GPA 3.5	F	Below 50%	GPA 0
B	70 - 74%	GPA 3.0			

NOTES

For more information regarding the English Department, please refer to our website at <http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/academic/as/english/index.shtml>.

1. This course outline should be considered a guideline only. Time constraints and other unforeseen factors may require that some of the above topics be omitted or covered in less detail than indicated.
2. Work submitted for evaluation must be either typed or text processed.
3. Cellular phones **MUST** be turned off during classes.
4. It is the student's responsibility to retain a photocopy or computer disk copy of **ALL** assignments submitted for grading; in the event of loss or theft, a duplicate copy is required. **All assignments must be submitted in hard copy form. No assignments will be accepted over email or by fax.**
5. Students are advised to read the pertinent pages of the 2008/2009 Calendar for the rules regarding Registration, Voluntary Withdrawals, Academic Misconduct including plagiarism, and Appeals. **Concerning plagiarism, please note** that as a general rule, an F in the course will be the penalty, recommended by the English Departmental Review Committee to the Senate Committee on Academic Misconduct, for plagiarism on major assignments in English Department courses.
6. Services for Students with Disabilities:
Students with documented disabilities requiring academic accommodations for tests/exams (e.g., private space) or during lectures/laboratories (e.g., access to volunteer note-takers) are encouraged to contact Andrea Johnston, Coordinator of Disability Services (DS) at 786-9771 or a.johnston@uwinnipeg.ca, to discuss appropriate options. Specific information about DS is available on-line at <http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/index/services-disability>. All information about disability is confidential.

7. Please note that registering in this course commits you to the date and time of the course final examination. If you are aware of possible conflicts with that date, please see me immediately during the first week of the course, in case you need to register in another course to accommodate the conflict. For appeals for deferred exams, please see the Calendar.
8. January 23, 2009 is the final date to withdraw without academic penalty from courses that begin in September and end in April.
9. **Late Assignment Penalties:** I encourage you to speak with me in advance if you anticipate handing an assignment in late due to extenuating circumstances, such as illness or a personal/family emergency. **Note that having a lot of work to do for your other courses is not a reasonable excuse for a late assignment in this course.** Unless prior arrangements have been made or you present a medical/legal note explaining why your assignment has been handed in late, the penalty for a late assignment is: **10% off immediately when it is not submitted on the due date and 2% off each extra day it is late. No unexplained late assignments will be accepted after they are 7 days late.** All requests for extensions should be made in person or, if you are unable to attend class or office hours, by phone. Email requests for extensions will not be acknowledged. No late assignments will be accepted after April 6th. Late assignments will receive a grade only (no written comments).
10. The English Department wishes to ensure that your right to privacy regarding handing in and getting back assignments is protected. Most assignments will be handed in and handed back in class or at the Instructor's office. If assignments are to be handled in another way and you are concerned about others having access to your work, you should attach to your assignment a self-addressed envelope that can be sealed. If this is not done, it is assumed that you have waived your concerns in this area.
11. Students will not be asked for identification when writing a test or examination.
12. No unauthorized material or equipment may be brought with you to the final exam.
13. **IMPORTANT NOTE ON EMAIL:** I only respond to students' emails during regular work hours (M-F 9am-5pm) and I may take up to 24 hours to respond. Due to the high volume of junk mail I receive, I can only respond to emails sent from UW student accounts (iam.uwinnipeg). Do not email me from hotmail, yahoo, gmail, or other non-UW accounts. Please observe professional email etiquette and do not add me to any mailing lists.

FALL TERM READING SCHEDULE

(subject to changes announced in class)

Date	Topic	Texts	Assignments and Other Info.
Sep. 3	Introductions	Screening: Charlie Chaplin, <i>Modern Times</i>	
Sep. 10	Manifestoes and Modernisms	e-reserves: F.T. Marinetti, "The Founding and the Manifesto of Futurism", Tristan Tzara, "Dada Manifesto," André Breton, From "First Manifesto of Surrealism" e-reserve: From "The Name and Nature of Modernism" by Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane	
Sep. 17	Highbrows: The little magazine I	<i>Blast</i> at the Modernist Journals Project (MJP): http://dl.lib.brown.edu:8082/exist/mjp/mjp_journals.xq Read: "Manifesto I," "Manifesto II," and prepare one poem by Wyndham Lewis, one poem by Ezra Pound, and one poem by another poet. e-reserves: T.E. Hulme, from "Romanticism and Classicism" and Preface to <i>Some Imagist Poets</i>	Email titles of your choice of <i>Blast</i> poems to me by Monday noon.
Sep. 24	Highbrows: The long poem	T.S. Eliot, "The Wasteland" (full text at http://www.bartleby.com/201/1.html or hypertext at http://eliotswasteland.tripod.com/) T.S. Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (http://www.bartleby.com/200/sw4.html)	
Oct. 1	Highbrows: The little magazine II	<i>Poetry</i> (MJP)	Group Presentations
Oct. 8	Highbrows: Prose	Woolf, <i>The Waves</i>	
Oct. 15	Highbrows: Prose	Woolf, <i>The Waves</i>	Prepare for Readers' Theatre
Oct. 22	Expressionism: Cinema	Screening: Fritz Lang's <i>Metropolis</i> e-reserves: Fritz Lang, "The Future of the Feature Film in Germany" and Willy Haas, "Metropolis"	
Oct. 29	Expressionism: Theatre	Sophie Treadwell, <i>Machinal</i>	
Nov. 5	The Harlem Renaissance: Poetry	e-reserves: Poems by Langston Hughes and Sharon Lynette Jones, "The Poetry of the Harlem Renaissance"	
Nov. 12	The Harlem Renaissance: Prose	Nella Larsen, <i>Quicksand</i> and <i>Passing</i>	
Nov. 19	First Term Project Oral Reports	The "isms" of modernisms	<u>First Term Written Project Report due before 5pm on Wednesday, Nov. 26th</u>

NO MIDTERM EXAM

WINTER TERM READING SCHEDULE
(subject to changes announced in class)

Date	Topic	Texts	Assignments and Individual Seminar Topics
Jan. 7	Documentary Modernism: Soviet Cinema	Screening: <i>Man with a Movie Camera</i> (dir. Dziga Vertov)	
Jan. 14	Radical Modernism: Spanish Civil War Verse	e-reserves: Poems by Muriel Rukeyser, Anne Marriott, and Spanish Civil War Verse by W. H. Auden, George Barker, Albert Brown, Nancy Cunard, Pablo Neruda	1. The Works Project Administration _____ 2. The Spanish Civil War _____
Jan. 21	(Anti)colonialism: The Long Poem	Aimé Césaire, <i>Notebook of a Return to the Native Land</i>	1. Negritude and surrealism _____
Jan. 28	(Anti)colonialism: Prose	E.M. Forster, <i>A Passage to India</i>	1. Colonialism and India _____ 2. E.M. Forster _____
Feb. 4	Writing Male Desire	Thomas Mann, <i>Death in Venice</i>	1. Queer modernism _____
Feb. 11	Writing Female Desire	Elizabeth Smart, <i>By Grand Central Station I Sat Down and Wept</i>	1. Elizabeth Smart _____
Feb. 25	Middlebrows: Historical Romance	Mazo de la Roche, <i>Jalna</i> e-reserves: Virginia Woolf, "Middlebrow" and Robert Scholes, from <i>Paradoxy of Modernism</i>	1. Mazo de la Roche _____ Meetings to discuss research paper take place this week and next
Mar. 4	Middlebrows: Detectives	Agatha Christie, <i>The Murder of Roger Ackroyd</i>	1. Classical detective fiction _____
Mar. 11	Vernacular Modernism: Hardboiled	James M. Cain, <i>Double Indemnity</i> Screening: <i>Double Indemnity</i> (dir. Billy Wilder)	1. Film noir/Roman noir _____
Mar. 18	Lowbrows: Comic Strips	<i>Little Nemo</i> and <i>Krazy Kat</i> (various library and internet sources)	1. <i>Little Nemo</i> and Surrealism _____ 2. <i>Krazy Kat</i> and Modern Poetry _____
Mar. 25	Lowbrows: Pulps	Faith Baldwin, <i>Skyscraper</i> First hour of class = peer editing workshop	1. Architecture: The International Style _____
Apr. 1	Lowbrows: Cinema	Screening: <i>King Kong</i> (dir. Merian C. Cooper) e-reserves: Theodor Adorno, "Culture Industry Reconsidered" and Clement Greenberg, "Avant-garde and Kitsch"	<u>Second Term Research Essay Due</u>

FINAL EXAM IS ON THURSDAY, APRIL 16TH FROM 1:30-4:30pm in 3M61