

GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE
DEPARTMENT OF ARTS, EDUCATION, AND COMMERCE

1996-97

COURSE: ENGLISH 3700:
EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY BRITISH LITERATURE

INSTRUCTOR: G. Hanna

CREDIT: 6 (3-0) UT (6): Full-Year course.

PREREQUISITE: English 1010 or its equivalent: six credits of first-year English.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Representative works by the foremost British novelists, essayists, and poets to mid-century, including Hardy, Lawrence, Joyce, Conrad, Forster, Orwell, Eliot, Yeats, and others.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

1. Frank Kermode and John Hollander, eds. Modern British Literature. Toronto: Oxford UP, 1972.

2. Hardy, Thomas. Tess of the D'Urbervilles (1891). Ed. David Skilton. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1978.

3. Butler, Samuel. The Way of All Flesh (1903). Ed. James Cochrane. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1966.

* Although The Way of All Flesh was published posthumously in 1903, Butler had begun writing it thirty years earlier, in 1873, putting it aside untouched for many years, but also revising sections of it at intervals.

4. Lawrence, D.H. Sons and Lovers (1913). Ed. Helen Baron and Carol Baron. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin.

5. Joyce, James. A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man (1914-15). New York: Signet.

6. Forster, E.M. A Passage to India (1924). Ed. Oliver Stallybrass. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin.

RECOMMENDED TEXT:

Baldick, Chris. The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms. New York: Oxford UP, 1990.

COURSE TESTS AND ASSIGNMENTS:

MIDTERM WEEK TEST: AN IN-CLASS ESSAY-STYLE EXAM, SCHEDULED FOR (THURSDAY), OCTOBER 17 - OUR SECOND CLASS DIRECTLY AFTER THE THANKSGIVING DAY LONG WEEKEND (OCTOBER 12-13-14).

MINIMUM LENGTH: 600-750 Words.
WEIGHTING: 10% of course grade.

ONE 1500-WORD ESSAY, ALSO WORTH 10% OF THE COURSE GRADE.
DUE DATE: (THURSDAY), NOVEMBER 21.

TWO 2000-WORD ESSAYS, EACH WORTH 20% - (2 X 20% = 40%).
* FIRST DUE (THURSDAY), JANUARY 30
* SECOND DUE (THURSDAY), MARCH 27.

ONE ORAL PRESENTATION ON A SET TOPIC, GROUP EXERCISES,
AND ORAL PARTICIPATION THROUGHOUT THE SEMINAR. 10%

A THREE-HOUR FINAL EXAM TO BE SCHEDULED DURING 30%
EXAM WEEK, APRIL 14-22.

*** ESSAY ASSIGNMENTS: BASIC REQUIREMENTS:

1. All essays must be typed.
2. Essays are due on the dates indicated.

Students who submit essays after the deadline will be penalized at the rate of half a stanine per day.

Essays submitted more than one week late will not normally be accepted.

3. Extensions are not normally granted, except in cases of sickness, providing the student can produce a note from a doctor.

GRADES:

All grades will be expressed in stanine according to the following scale:

STANINE	PERCENTAGE EQUIVALENT	
9	90-100	EXCELLENT:
8	80-89	FIRST CLASS STANDING
7	72-79	GOOD:
6	65-71	SECOND CLASS STANDING
5	57-64	AVERAGE OR SATISFACTORY
4	50-56	PASS

3	45-49	FAIL
2	36-44	
1	0-25	

REQUIRED READING: Keep up with the assigned readings and be prepared to discuss them fully in class. Do not show up for class without having read previously assigned material.

INDIVIDUAL CONTACT WITH THE INSTRUCTOR:

Individual work with the instructor on specific compositions is necessary and expelld.

POLICY ON ATTENDANCE:

EXCESSIVE ABSENTEEISM - DEFINED AS FOUR OR MORE UNEXCUSED ABSENCES PER TERM - MAY ADVERSELY AFFECT YOUR GRADE.

*** AND AN IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT PLAGIARISM:

ALL STUDENTS ARE ADVISED TO READ AND BE FAMILIAR WITH THE GPRC POLICY ON PLAGIARISM. AS DEFINED IN THE 1996-97 COLLEGE CALENDAR, p. 19.

EXTENDED COURSE DESCRIPTION:

With its primary focus on works written during the four-decade period between 1890-1930, English 3700 explores the evolution of Early Modern British Literature, tracing its origins back to latent tensions within the strained fabric of late Victorian culture. While a new, essentially anti-Victorian spirit becomes readily apparent in such works as Thomas Hardy's Tess of the D'Urbervilles (1891) and Samuel Butler's The Way of All Flesh (1903), earlier writers had, in a sense, prepared the groundwork for an emergent modernist ethos. To cite just one example, "Dover Beach" was first published in 1867 but is generally assumed to have been written as early as 1851. In this widely known poem, the Victorian writer Matthew Arnold (1822-88) conveys what has often been recognized as a distinctly modernist sensibility. Arnold's speaker evokes a sense of near-despair in a world where the old Victorian certainties are starting to come apart at the seams. Indeed, we can detect a clear line of development from Arnold's mid-Victorian cry of anguish - as the isolated inhabitant of a "darkling plain" - to William Butler Yeats' conviction, so eloquently expressed in "The Second Coming" (1920), that, for moderns exposed to the anarchy of revolution and the chaos of global warfare: "Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold."

What, then, is the spirit of modernism which characterizes so much British literature written in the last decade of the nineteenth century and during the first three decades of the twentieth century? According to Peter Faulkner,

Modernism is part of the historical process by which the arts have dissociated themselves from nineteenth-century assumptions, which had come in the course of time to seem like dead conventions. These assumptions about literary forms were closely related to a particular relationship between the writer and his readers - on the whole a stable relationship in which the writer could assume a community of attitudes, a shared sense of reality.

Modernism. New York: Methuen, 1977, p. 1.

Following the "breaking-up . . . of the nineteenth-century consensus" (Faulkner 14) during the last decade of Queen Victoria's reign (1837-1901), a widespread dislocation of values occurred, with far-reaching implications for the changing nature, forms, and aesthetics of British literature.

As we cannot hope to understand the literature of any given period without contextualizing specific works of literature, we shall devote some time exploring the political, social, cultural, and historical background of late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century Britain.

The lectures and seminar discussions, however, will focus primarily on textual analysis.

TENTATIVE OUTLINE OF COURSE:
FALL TERM 1996:

Whenever necessary, background readings will be assigned from the Kermode and Hollander anthology, supplemented by brief handouts or relevant library materials. With some possible variations, we shall cover works in the order indicated:

Sept. Introduction: What is Modernism?

How does early Modernism differ from Victorianism?

To what extent do the early modern writers such as Thomas Hardy and Samuel Butler represent a complete break from the values, social norms, aesthetic principles, and ethos of mid-Victorian Britain?

Why is it vital to go as far back as the 1890s to understand the roots of twentieth-century modernism?

Thomas Hardy: Late Victorian or Early Modernist?
Hardy as a Fiction Writer and as a Poet.
Poems Selected From the twenty Hardy poems anthologized in Kermode and Hollander's Modern British Literature.

Hardy's Tess of the D'Urbervilles and the "ache of modernism."

Oct. Samuel Butler: The Way of All Flesh (1903):
Butler's Posthumous Novel -
A bitter polemic against
the Victorian ethos?
Or "one of the intellectual watersheds
between the Victorian age and the
twentieth century" (Richard Hoggart,
Introduction to Penguin edition, p. 7).

Selected Edwardian and Georgian poetry
anthologized in Kermode and Hollander.

Nov. Joseph Conrad's Heart of Darkness (1902),
Kermode and Hollander anthology, p. 108:
Kurtz' existentialist vision of
"the horror, the horror" of
the human condition.

Essayists and the Spirit of Modernism.

Dec. The Impact of World War I on the Evolution
of British Literature: The War Poets.

WINTER TERM, 1997:

During the second term we shall probably examine the following works in the order indicated.

- Jan. D.H. Lawrence: Sons and Lovers (1913),
"Why the Novel Matters." (1936),
Selected D.H. Lawrence poems and other short works
Anthologized by Kermode & Hollander, including
Pornography and Obscenity.
- Feb. James Joyce: A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man
(1914-15).

Joyce's Modernist Aesthetics:
The Cult of the Fiction Writer and
The Novel as an Art Form.

Joyce's "Araby" and "The Dead," excerpts
from Dubliners (1914).

Other short story or prose selections by J. Joyce.
- March. E.M. Forster: "What I Believe," Anthology, p. 623.
"Two Cheers for Democracy" (1951) and other essays.

Anti-Colonialism, or Sunset on the Raj:
From Conrad's Belgian Congo to British India.
George Orwell's "Shooting an Elephant" (1950)
and "A Hanging."

Forster's A Passage to India (1924).
- T.S. Eliot: "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (1915)
The Waste Land (1922) as a Manifesto of Modernism.
- April. T.S. Eliot Continued.
- *** REVIEW OF COURSE AND PREPARATION FOR FINAL EXAM.