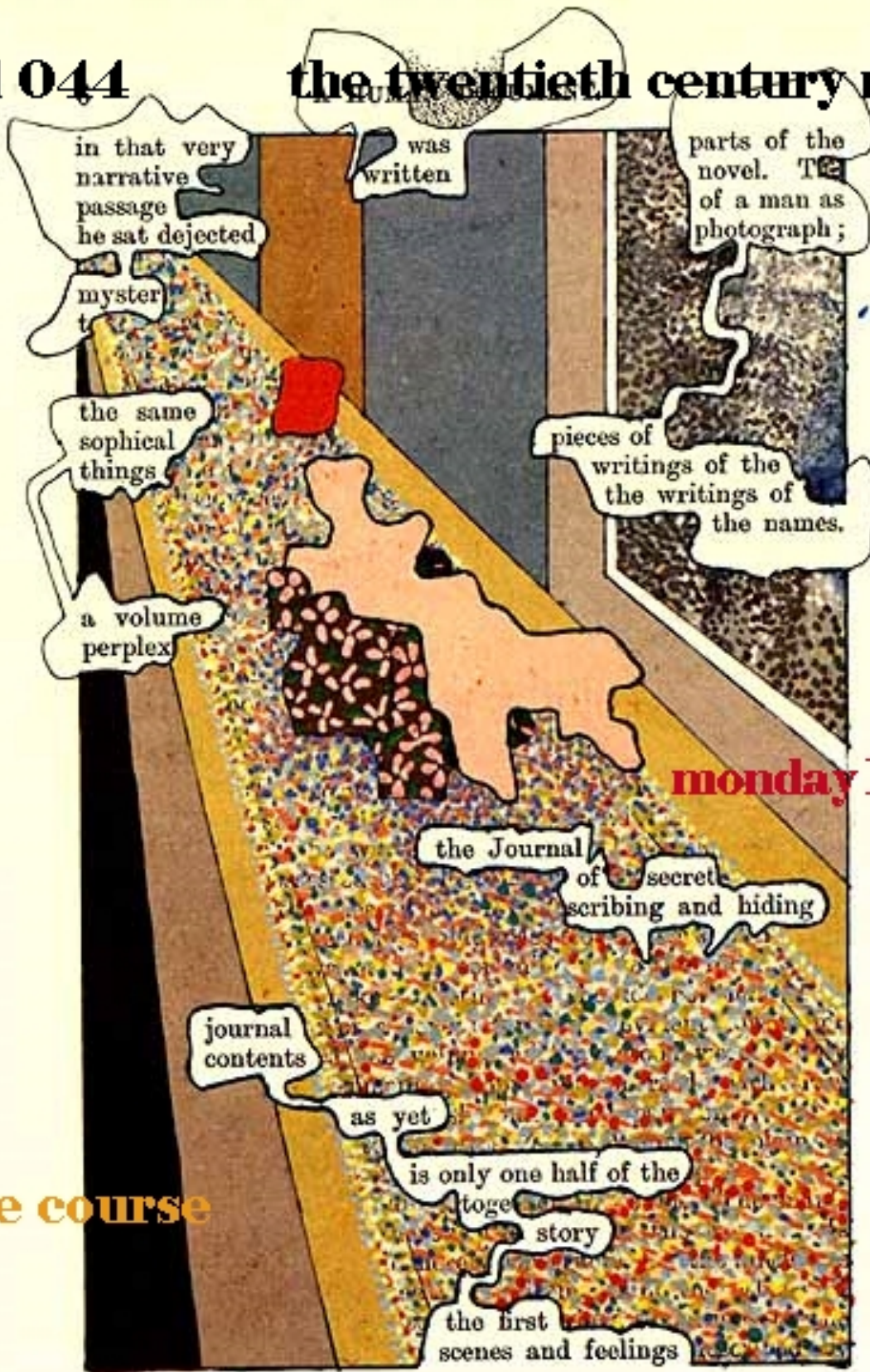


engl 044

the twentieth century novel



monday 1:15-4

a core course

taught by professor buurma

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turn over the page...

English 044: Core Course: The Twentieth-Century British Novel

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Office: LPAC 302
Office hours: M 12-1,4-5 T 11-12 and by appointment

Spring 2010
Mondays 1:15-4
LPAC 301



What happens to the trustworthy realist novel when it encounters the twentieth century? Does it ultimately die of too much experimentation? Does it become irrelevant in the face of what some refer to as the novelization of modern (or postmodern) experience? Or is it still a centrally important form? This core course asks key questions about the function of the novel at the present time by surveying the relatively recent history of the British novel. Beginning in the twentieth century and ending almost at the present moment, we will ask how changes in novelistic form exist in dynamic relation to changing ideas of history, memory, and modernity within social contexts in which ideas of gender, sexuality, race, and class also constantly shift. We will also examine how the novel continues to respond to and shape emergent twentieth-century media forms such as radio, film, and television.

Week I **Introduction: the history of the novel and the 20th century**
Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1914-1916)
January 18 Welcome and Introduction
Close Reading the Novel and Reading Criticism (handouts)
Portrait (entire)

Week II **Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse* (1927)**
January 25 *To the Lighthouse* (entire)
"Techniques for Rendering Consciousness in Narrative" (handout on Blackboard)
Bertrand Russell, "Vagueness"
"Mr Bennett and Mrs Brown"
Erich Auerbach, "The Brown Stocking," from *Mimesis*
No blog group 1

Week III **Evelyn Waugh, *Brideshead Revisited* (1945)**
February 1 *Brideshead* (entire)
Paul Fussell, from *The Great War and Modern Memory*
Barthes, "The Reality Effect"
No blog group 2

Week IV February 8	Kingsley Amis, <i>Lucky Jim</i> (1954) <i>Lucky Jim</i> (entire) George Orwell, "Inside the Whale" Critical reading tba No blog group 3
Week V February 15	Muriel Spark, <i>The Girls of Slender Means</i> (1963) <i>The Girls</i> (entire) Jean-Francois Lyotard, from <i>The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge</i> No blog group 4
Week VI February 22	B.S. Johnson, <i>Christie Malry's Own Double Entry</i> (1973) <i>Christie Malry</i> (entire) <i>Humument</i> (examine selected pages) critical reading tba No blog group 5
Week VII March 1	Midterm exam No one blogs
Week VIII March 8	Spring Break (read Rhys and Narayan) spring break
Week IX March 15	Jean Rhys, <i>Wide Sargasso Sea</i> (1966) R.K. Narayan, <i>A Painter of Signs</i> (1976) <i>Wide Sargasso Sea</i> (entire) and <i>A Painter of Signs</i> (entire) Gayatri Spivak, "Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism" (1985) No blog group 1
Week X March 22	Salman Rushdie, <i>Midnight's Children</i> (1981) <i>Midnight's Children</i> , 3-271 Rushdie, "Outside the Whale" Linda Hutcheon, "Historiographic Metafiction" No blog group 2
Week XI March 29	Salman Rushdie, <i>Midnight's Children</i> (1981) <i>Midnight's Children</i> , 272-533 Critical reading tba No blog group 3
Week XII April 5	Kazuo Ishiguro, <i>An Artist of the Floating World</i> (1986) or <i>A Pale View of the Hills</i> (1982) or <i>Never Let Me Go</i> (2005) (to be announced) Critical reading tba No blog group 4
Week XIII April 12	Christine Brooke-Rose, <i>Remake</i> (1996) Critical reading tba No blog group 5
Week XIV April 19	Hilary Mantel, <i>Beyond Black</i> (2006) or Andrea Levy, <i>Small Island</i> (2005) Critical reading tba All blog

Week XV
April 26

Hilary Mantel, *Beyond Black* (2006) or Andrea Levy, *Small Island* (2005)
Summing up and exam preparation

Final exam date TBA

Assignments

Blogging

The blog offers you a chance to begin thinking about and discussing the week's reading in advance of class. We will write several short blog posts over the course of the semester; some of them will respond to specific questions I set, others will be open topic. You may use a less formal style than you would for a paper, and I encourage you to experiment with your prose style, but sure that the (relative) informality of the writing doesn't lead you into sloppy, unfocused thinking or writing. These assignments are short – I recommend between 200-300 words (excluding any quotations you might want to incorporate) on average – so you need to be very clear about what you want to express in order to be able to express it efficiently and clearly. These posts are due by **midnight the Friday before class; by midnight Sunday before class you should have read the blog posts of the other members of your blog group and made substantial comments on two of them.** Note that you need not have completed all of the week's reading before posting!

Note that you will blog most weeks but not every week; the syllabus indicates dates that you need not blog.

You will be randomly assigned to one of five blog groups. During the first week of class I will send you an invitation to join the blog. Be sure to notify me via email this week if you would like to use an email address other than the one linked to your Swarthmore record. You can access your blog via the link from our Blackboard course menu. **After the first week, you are responsible for posting your blog entry on time; to get credit your entry must appear on the blog on time.** If technical problems occur do email me to notify me and turn in a blog post, but if this happens you are still responsible for posting the entry to the blog as soon as possible. You may skip one blog post without any penalty.

Privacy concerns: our blogs are posted on Blogspot and set to private; only you and your seven or so co-bloggers (along with me) can access your blog. If you like, for further privacy you may create a pseudonym in order to post; if you do this makes sure to use your first name to sign each post so that your co-bloggers can identify you.

I will read the blogs and occasionally offer comments of my own; I will also refer to the blogs during class discussion as relevant, and you should, too. The blogs are evaluated as a portfolio at the end of the semester; if you have questions about your blog performance I encourage you to check in with me about it. Half-way through the semester is usually a good time to do this.

Class Format

Format will vary, but in general we'll begin class with some background on the week's materials and highlighting of key issues that we may wish to discuss further. We'll then move into a close reading and group discussion mode – sometimes as a class, sometimes in workshop groups – until our break. We will return from break via our week's critical reading(s). Finally, in the last half-hour or so we will try to piece together broader conclusions and prepare for our next week of readings.

Midterm exam

This is a three-hour exam covering the first half of the semester; we will discuss specifics further in class.

Final exam

This is a three-hour cumulative exam covering the entire semester (but likely with a focus on the second half); we will discuss specifics further in class.

Policies and Advice

Grading

10% class participation (includes quizzes)

35% midterm exam

15% blog

40% final exam

[Additional paper option available for students majoring in English or a related field; discuss with me before spring break.]

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a very serious offence. It includes both the direct copying of the words of another person without crediting him or her and paraphrasing the ideas of another person without giving credit. If you have any questions about how to properly cite another person's work, please do not hesitate to ask me.

Attendance and due dates

Attendance is essential. Missing more than one class session will result in a lowered grade unless you have a valid excuse processed through the advising system or through Worth (in cases of illness). Late blog posts will both inconvenience your co-bloggers and cause your final blog grade to be lowered.

Books

The main books you will need to buy are:

James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916) Penguin ISBN-13: 978-0142437346

Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse* (1927) Harcourt ISBN-13: 9780156907392

Evelyn Waugh, *Brideshead Revisited* (1945) Back Bay ISBN-13: 978-0316042994

Kingsley Amis, *Lucky Jim* (1954) Penguin ISBN-13: 978-0140186307

Muriel Spark, *The Girls of Slender Means* (1963) New Directions, ISBN-13: 978-0811213790

B.S. Johnson, *Christie Malry's Own Double Entry* (1973) New Directions, ISBN-13: 978-0811209540

Jean Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966) Norton ISBN-13: 978-0393310481

R.K. Narayan, *The Painter of Signs* (1976) Penguin, ISBN-13: 978-0143039662

Salman Rushdie, *Midnight's Children* (1981) Random House, ISBN-13: 978-0812976533

Tom Phillips, *A Humument* (1980) (BUYING OPTIONAL) Thames and Hudson, 4th ed, ISBN-13: 978-0500285510

Christine Brooke-Rose, *Remake* (1996) Carcanet ISBN-13: 978 1 857542 22 6

I will finalize and order our last three books by the end of February; these are the possibilities, but you probably want to hold off on buying any of them.

Kazuo Ishiguro, *An Artist of the Floating World* (1986)

or

Kazuo Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go* (2005) Vintage, ISBN-13: 978-1400078776

Andea Levy, *Small Island* (2005) Picador, ISBN-13: 978-0312424671

or

Hilary Mantel, *Beyond Black* (2006) Picador, ISBN-13: 978-0312426057

The books are available (or in some cases will soon be available) at the bookstore. You are also welcome to buy the books online or at a different store. Be aware that you need to have **your own copy of the specific edition assigned** of each of the books listed above, so make sure that the ISBN numbers above match the ISBN numbers of the edition you order. **All other texts will be available on Blackboard. Please print out, read, mark up, and bring to class ALL of the texts assigned for each week.**