

ENGL 295: Literary Revolutions

Spring 2020

English Department St. John Fisher College

Dr. Scott O'Neil

Office: Kearney 321

Office Hours: Thursday 5-6pm (in Cyber) and Friday 1:30-2:30pm (in Kearney 321)

E-mail: soncil@sjfc.edu

Class Information: Tuesday/Thursday, 1:40 to 3:00 pm, Basil Hall 119

Required Texts:

-*Dracula* by Bram Stoker

-*White Teeth* by Zadie Smith

Course Description:

In this course, we will engage with a survey of British literature from the Victorian era through to the present day. This survey will explore that literature within its historical context, aiming to establish connections between various writers, genres, and eras. This course is designed to give you a sense of literary history, an understanding of important texts, and a grasp of how British literature and its readers have developed over the last 200 years. Some of the major themes we will explore include issues of empire, Industrialization, class, race, gender, the impact of war, and modes of textual production. You will be required to read carefully and to write critically. The course will combine lecture and discussion.

Assignments/Grading:

20% -Attendance/Participation (incl Blackboard Dynamic Notes)

20% -4 short responses

25% -Midterm Exam

10% -Paper pitches

25% -Exploratory Paper

Attendance

So much of any discussion-based class is reliant upon your presence. Please only miss class when absolutely necessary, and communicate with me when that happens.

Reading and Participation/Blackboard Dynamic Notes

The reading for each day is listed below on the syllabus next to the appropriate dates; please read, annotate, and think about the reading far enough in advance to participate on or before the participation deadlines. I would encourage you to be as specific as possible in your participation (page numbers, external links, etc). You will also keep a running "dynamic notes" thread in the

discussion board throughout the semester.

Short Responses

Short responses should be about one full typed page in length. Responses might expand on a class discussion; they might branch off and consider questions we did not have time to consider in class; they might consider a key image or passage that shapes your view of the work as a whole. Each response should focus on specific passages (or in some cases, one work) read for the course.

Because these responses are fairly short, you are not expected to fully develop and defend a complex thesis. This is your chance to further explore something that confused you or intrigued you about the reading in question – in a focused way. A good short response will lead to an interesting discussion in class. You will write four of these short responses over the course of the semester. There are no set due dates for these responses, however you can only submit one short response in any given week, and two of the four must be completed *before* the midterm.

Paper Pitches

At about the mid-point of the semester, I will ask you to submit and then workshop two pitches for potential papers. More information on this assignment will be forthcoming.

Paper

The paper in this class will ask you to explore several texts that were *not* included in the seminar. More information on this will be forthcoming.

SJFC ADA Policy: In compliance with St. John Fisher College policy and applicable laws, appropriate academic accommodations are available to students with disabilities. All requests for accommodations must be supported by appropriate documentation/diagnosis and determined reasonable by St. John Fisher College. Students with documented disabilities (physical, learning, psychological) who may need academic accommodations are advised to refer to the Student Accessibility Services Website (<https://www.sjfc.edu/student-life/student-accessibility-services/>). Questions should be directed to the Coordinator of Accessibility Services in the Accessibility Services Office and Test Center, Kearney 300 (585.385.5252). Late notification will delay requested accommodations.

Statement on Academic Integrity: All students, regardless of level or school, are responsible for following the St. John Fisher College Academic Integrity Policy in addition to any other individual school's or program's academic expectations and/or professional standards. Every student is expected to demonstrate academic integrity in all academic pursuits at all times. If a student suspects that another student has violated the Academic Integrity Policy, he or she should contact the instructor for that course and provide support for that suspicion. Any finding of responsibility and associated sanctions for a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy is retained per the College

records policy. All students are expected to be familiar with the details of the Academic Integrity Policy (available via <https://www.sjfc.edu/policies/academic-integrity/>).

Policies

Contacting Your Instructor

I will be delighted to discuss your suggestions, ideas, and concerns about this course with you. You should feel free to drop by during my office hours. If those times are inconvenient, please e-mail me. I'm happy to make other arrangements. Please e-mail me in advance if you need to cancel an appointment.

The best way to contact me is via e-mail. However, I am not permanently attached to my computer (and I have a flip phone. Seriously). **I do not generally check my e-mail between 10 PM and 10 AM.**¹ Please plan your electronic communications accordingly.

Written Work

All writing assignments should be typed and double spaced with one-inch margins. Please use 12-point Times New Roman font. All writing will be handed in electronically via email; **All assignments must be in .doc or .docx format, or I will not be able to open them.**

Course Schedule

- 1/14 **T:** Welcome—Syllabus, some background on the last 200 years. What are stories? How are they told? Why are they important?
- 1/16 **R:** Please read “The Victorian Age” (on Blackboard). We will use the information in that introduction to help us practice literary analysis in class.
- 1/21 **T:** Please read the intro material and the work of Elizabeth Barrett Browning (on Blackboard). Also, “A Man’s Requirements.”
- 1/23 **R:** Please read the biographical essay on Alfred Lord Tennyson on *The Camelot Project* (link on Blackboard). Also read “The Lady of Shalott” from Tennyson’s *Idylls of the King* (link on Blackboard). Finally, select another of Tennyson’s Idylls (your choice) to read. Medievalisms. Digital Humanities.
- 1/28 **T:** Please read chapters 1-12 of Charles Dickens’s *David Copperfield* (on Blackboard). Serialization. Poverty and class. Portrayal of women.

¹ This is a lie, but you shouldn’t really expect a response that late at night. ☺

1/30 **R:** Please read chapters 13-22 of *David Copperfield* (on Blackboard)—Miss Mowcher and Disability Theory.

2/4 **T:** Matthew Arnold/more Tennyson/Robert Browning

2/6 **R:** Oscar Wilde/Importance of Being Earnest (incl. film clips—possible guest speaker).

2/11 **T:** Please read Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's "The Speckled Band" (on Blackboard). Sherlock Holmes, short fiction, detective fiction, emergent fandom.

2/13 **R:** Please read Henry James's "The Real Thing" (on Blackboard). Please also read the pieces by Rudyard Kipling (on Blackboard). Racism. Narratives of national identity. Trans-Atlanticism. Biographical manipulation.

2/18 **T:** Please read the first section of Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. Epistolary novels. Gothic tradition.

2/20: **R:** Please read the second section of *Dracula*. "New women" and the contrast w/*Copperfield*.

2/25 **T:** Please read the final section of *Dracula*. Crumbling of empire

2/27 **R:** MIDTERM (~1830 to 1900)

MARCH 1-8: SPRING BREAK

3/10 **T:** Paper Pitch Day

3/12 **R:** Thomas Hardy

3/17 **T:** Poetry of War, Yeats, and Irish independence (bring in songs)

3/19 **R:** Modernist Manifestos

3/24 **T:** Virginia Woolf

3/26 **R:** T.S. Elliot—Prufrock, The Waste Land

3/31 **T:** D. H. Lawrence—"Odour of Chrysanthemums" and "The Rocking-Horse Winner."

4/2 **R:** Jean Rhys/*Jane Eyre*/the Mad Woman in the Attic—Metafiction.

4/7 **T:** Selections from Busby anthology

APRIL 8-12: EASTER BREAK

4/14 **T:** Zadie Smith's *White Teeth* (first section)

4/16 **R: NO CLASS: SAA**

4/21 **T:** Zadie Smith's *White Teeth* (second section)

4/23 **R:** Zadie Smith's *White Teeth* (third section)

Last Day to hand in Short Responses

Final Paper due date TBD