

Eng. 272 – Modern Literature
Modern Love: Alienation and Deviance

Prof. Gwen Bergner * Tue./Thur. 1:00-2:15 * Spring 2014

239 Colson

Office Hours: T/Th 11:30-12:30, 2:30-3:30, and by appt.

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This course explores how British and American literature from the first decades of the 20th century represents love, sex, desire, and gender. Modern literature responded to events of the early 20th century such as urbanization, secularization, and WWI; to technological developments such as the telegraph and transcontinental railroad; and to the intellectual work of Marx and Freud. These events, technologies, and ideas worked to decenter what had previously been considered universal truths of meaning and identity.

“Modernist” writers responded to this social upheaval with stylistic innovations that emphasize the fragmentary and non-linear processes of perception over stable reality. Their main characters are often alienated within an emotionally stark social landscape. This course will ask what love has to do with these innovations of form and content.

To help us contextualize this issue, we’ll examine contemporary political, scientific, and social developments on sexuality. In the early 20th century, Margaret Sanger advocated the legalization of birth control and started the organization that eventually became Planned Parenthood; Havelock Ellis published *Sexual Inversion*, the first medical textbook on homosexuality; Freud’s psychoanalytic writings claimed that children had “polymorphously perverse” sexual impulses; anthropologists such as Bronislaw Malinowski and Margaret Mead provided cross-cultural comparisons of sexual mores; and the eugenics movement thrived. These writings contained and disciplined sexuality, on the one hand, while expanding sexual norms, on the other.

Primary Texts

F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby*

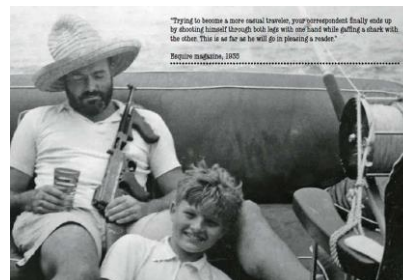
Ernest Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises*

Nella Larsen, *Quicksand*

Claude McKay, *Home to Harlem*

Virginia Woolf, *Orlando*

Borderline, dir. Kenneth MacPherson (film)



All other required readings and assignment guidelines are available through eCampus.

English Program Goals--Upon completing a BA in English, a student should be able to:

- Interpret texts within diverse literary, cultural, and historical contexts.
 - Identify genre conventions and analyzes their effects.
 - Identify and analyzes effects of complexity or ambiguity.
 - Locate texts in social / economic / political / literary history.
 - Connect texts to other literary or cultural texts.
- Demonstrate general knowledge of the social and structural aspects of the English language.
- Demonstrate a range of contextually effective writing strategies.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Define terms of analysis related to Modernist literature and related themes of gender, sexology, primitivism, and the Harlem Renaissance.
- Place Modernist literature in a context of cultural and literary history.
- Perform close readings of passages from literature and scenes from film.
- Construct unified, coherent, and supported written paragraphs of textual analysis.

Course Work	Points
Discussion Questions (10 assignments @ 5 points each)	50
Exam #1 (incl. rough draft; Mar. 6)	50
Exam #2 (incl. rough draft; Apr. 24)	50
Total	150 pts.

Grade Scale

A	135-150 pts.	C	105-119 pts.	F	< 90 pts.
B	120-134 pts.	D	90-104 pts.		

You must complete all assignments and attend class regularly for a passing grade.

Participation and In-class Work

This class is discussion-based; therefore, learning depends on the quality of discussion and students bear a responsibility to the class community to participate meaningfully. To this end, you must bring the assigned readings to each class, including books and eCampus readings, and come prepared for in-class work, including workshops, exam preps, and group work.

Discussion Questions

On ten occasions during the semester, you will bring to class two questions on the day's reading. If you are absent on a DQ due date, you must bring in a full analytic paragraph *on the reading for the day you missed* the next day that you are in class.

Tests #1 and #2

Test #1 will cover definitions, terms, themes, and concepts about Modernism and the Harlem Renaissance covered in class lectures/discussions and introduced in eCampus readings. You might be asked questions about literary style and genre, cultural context, and course terms of analysis. You'll be asked to put your answers in proper and coherent

paragraph form with thesis, development, quotation, and citation. Test #2 will follow a similar format but will cover only information introduced since Test #1. It will not be a cumulative exam.

Additional assignment guidelines and grading criteria will be provided on eCampus.

Policies

Attendance and Late Policy

Consistent class attendance helps students succeed academically and enriches our class dynamics. Therefore, attendance is required. You are granted four (4) absences without penalty. Use these for school trips, illness, family emergencies, etc. You do not need to clear these absences with me. For each additional absence (no matter the reason), you will lose three (3) points of your course total. More than seven (7) absences triggers an automatic F for the class. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to contact a classmate to find out what happened in class, if there is an assignment for the next class, and whether changes were made to the syllabus or assignment schedule. You are responsible for all assignments, graded and ungraded, due in the next class. If you have an emergency or serious health problem during the semester, please contact the Office of Student Life in E. Moore Hall (293-5611). The Dean of Student Life will communicate with me and authorize arrangements for you.

At the beginning of each class, we will discuss upcoming assignments, due dates, and questions on graded work. Therefore, it is important that you arrive to class on time. Please anticipate traffic and parking difficulties. Everyone has an emergency now and then, so you get two (2) late arrivals without penalty. After that, any **late arrival costs you 1 point from your course total and counts as half an absence**. If you enter class late, make sure after class that I have marked you present.

Submission of Assignments:

1. Due at the beginning of class on the date specified.
2. Typed in 12 point font, double-spaced, one-inch margins; pages numbered and stapled.
3. Keep a folder of all graded course work and electronic backup of all assignments.

Late Work

No late work will be accepted unless you make prior arrangements with me.

E-Mail

Please check your MIX e-mail account at least once between class meetings.

eCampus Readings, Assignment Guidelines, and Supplementary Course Materials

You must have access to eCampus materials **in class**, in either electronic or hard copy format. One point per ten points of value will be deducted from assignments for failure to bring materials such as readings and assignment guidelines to class.

Academic Integrity Statement

The integrity of the classes offered by any academic institution solidifies the foundation of its mission and cannot be sacrificed to expediency, ignorance, or blatant fraud. Therefore, I will enforce rigorous standards of academic integrity in all aspects and assignments of this course. For the detailed policy of West Virginia University regarding the definitions of acts considered to fall under academic dishonesty and possible ensuing sanctions, please see the Student Conduct Code http://studentlife.wvu.edu/office_of_student_conduct/student_conduct_code. Should you have any questions about possibly improper research citations or references, or any other activity that may be interpreted as an attempt at academic dishonesty, please see me before the assignment is due to discuss the matter.

Inclusivity Statement

The West Virginia University community is committed to creating and fostering a positive learning and working environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion. If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me and make appropriate arrangements with the Office of Accessibility Services (293-6700). For more information on West Virginia University's diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, please see <http://diversity.wvu.edu>.

Syllabus (subject to change, if necessary)—readings and assignments due on day listed.

Week 1	Th, Jan. 9	Introduction View Paintings on eC
Week 2	T, Jan. 14	Linda Wagner Martin, "The Question of Modernism" (eC) T.S. Eliot, "The Wasteland" (eC) Robert Frost, "Snowy Evening" (eC)
	Th, Jan. 16	Ernest Hemingway, <i>The Sun Also Rises</i> (Ch. I-VIII, pp.11-86) DQ #1
Week 3	T, Jan. 21	Hemingway (Ch. IX-XV, pp.87-173)
	Th, Jan. 23	Hemingway (to end)
Week 4	T, Jan. 28	F. Scott Fitzgerald, <i>The Great Gatsby</i> (Ch. I-III, pp.1-59)
	Th, Jan. 30	Fitzgerald (Ch. IV-VI, pp.61-111) DQ#2
Week 5	T, Feb. 4	Fitzgerald (to end)
	Th, Feb. 6	Marianna Torgovnick, from <i>Gone Primitive</i> (eC) Alain Locke, "The New Negro" (eC) DQ #3

- Week 6** T, Feb. 11 Claude McKay, *Home to Harlem* (First Part, pp.1-119)
Th, Feb. 13 McKay (Second Part, pp.123-275)
DQ#4
- Week 7** T, Feb. 18 McKay (Third Part, to end)
Th, Feb. 20 Nella Larsen, *Quicksand* (Ch. 1-12, pp.1-61)
DQ #5
- Week 8** T, Feb. 25 Larsen, *Quicksand* (to end)
Th, Feb. 27 Discuss Larsen and Exam Prep
- Week 9** T, Mar. 4 **Due: Rough Draft Exam #1**
Th, Mar. 6 **Due: Exam #1**
- Spring Break!**
- Week 10** T, Mar. 18 *Borderline* (film, 63 min.)
Th, Mar. 20 Susan McCabe, “Borderline Modernism: Paul Robeson and the
Femme Fatale” (eC)
DQ #6
- Week 11** T, Mar. 25 David Halperin, “Is There a History of Sexuality?” (eC)
DQ #7
Th, Mar. 27 Martha Vicinus, “‘They Wonder to Which Sex I Belong’: The
Historical Roots of the Modern Lesbian Identity” (eC)
DQ #8
- Week 12** T, Apr. 1 Virginia Woolf, *Orlando* (Ch. 1-2)
Th, Apr. 3 Woolf (Ch. 3-4)
DQ #9
- Week 13** T, Apr. 8 Brenda Helt, “Passionate Debates on ‘Odious Subjects’:
Bisexuality and Woolf’s Opposition to Theories of
Androgyny and Sexual Identity” (eC)
DQ#10
Th, Apr. 10 Woolf (Ch. 5-6)
- Week 14** T, Apr. 15 Exam Review
Th, Apr. 17 **Due: Rough Draft Exam #2**
- Week 15** T, Apr. 22 Exam Workshop
Th, Apr. 24 **Due: Exam #2** (covers only material since Exam #1)

Grading Criteria (specific assignment guidelines available on eCampus)

A (90-100)--Excellent work; the assignment presents an uncommonly cogent analysis of its subject. It advances the reader's understanding by making new and useful connections, by perceptively sorting out and refocusing the relevant issues, by reframing the context in which the subject is to be understood. At all points, the central idea is advanced by valid logic, factual evidence, reliable authority, and plausible observation. The assignment has been completed in a timely manner. Written work requires no substantive or stylistic revision.

B (80-89)--Good work; the central idea is well-focused, adequately supported, and on the whole persuasive. Most issues crucial to the central idea have been addressed and their implications followed up, but the analysis is partially incomplete, evidence is weak, or there are problems with organization. The assignment has been completed on time. Written work might require sharpening a transition, tightening a passage or two, adding some needed explanation, or making a passage more substantial. The errors in quotation are few and none reflects a failure to understand the conventions of formatting. The occasional errors in grammar, punctuation, or spelling appear to be minor lapses rather than a lack of understanding or concern. Papers have been carefully proofread.

C (70-79)--Average work; the assignment shows effort, but the analysis is incomplete, lacks appropriate evidence, or needs greater organization. The central idea is apparent, but a significant implication or assumption remains unexamined. Assignment needs more thought as well as rewriting. Paragraphs may need greater unity, coherence, or development. Transitions may need strengthening. The argument may need development and/or reorganization. Quotations may be abruptly introduced and/or their significance left unexplained. Although there are some errors of documentation, the writer seems to understand the conventions of quoting. The errors in grammar and punctuation are not so many as to distract from the argument. Word choice is sometimes inappropriate, clichéd, or vague. May not have been carefully copy-edited or completed on time.

D (60-69)--Less than average; the assignment has not been completed on time. It shows a significant lack of effort and a lack of engagement with the material and course work. Written assignments lack analysis, evidence, and organization; extensive revisions are necessary for substance and style.

F (<60)--Inadequate work, does not meet the requirements of the assignment. Assignments show a significant lack of effort and a lack of engagement with the material and course work. Such work lacks analysis, evidence, and organization; engagement with the course materials is necessary before revisions are even possible.