

English 220
Major British Writers to 1785
Fall 2005
T-Th, 9:30-10:50
Hoover 104

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Course goals and objectives:

The very ambitious purpose of this partially team-taught course (and of the two-semester sequence to which it belongs) is to introduce you to the major themes and writers in English literature from its beginnings (in the seventh century) until about 1700. In the second semester of the sequence, you will become acquainted with the entire second half of the story: British *and American* Literature from about 1700 to the present.

Obviously a course of this type has to be *extremely* selective in terms of the works covered. If you look at your Norton Anthology (the single text for this course, and one of the two texts required for English 221), you will see that we could have included a number of additional writers; as full as this syllabus is, we've had to leave out a wealth of wonderful material.

What you *will* get this semester, however, is a look at a millennium of terrific literature (mostly poetry, for historical reasons) *in sequence* and, insofar as time allows, *in context*.

Before we started offering and requiring this course, many of our students complained that they had read many wonderful texts (and had learned to read them well)--but that they still lacked that all-important and empowering sense of "what came after what" and "who inspired or influenced whom." This two-semester course is our attempt to address those questions--while giving you a sense of the major themes and movements in British and American literary history.

We realize that a six- or eight-semester course would be even better. And you may become frustrated at how little time we'll be able to spend on each writer (even the most important), and at how few of their works we'll actually be able to go over carefully in class.

No one, I assure you(!), will be more frustrated than your professors. We *love* this stuff! We'd like to give (as Andrew Marvell says on page 677) "an age at least to every part" of this course. But we, like Marvell, "hear time's wingèd chariot hurrying near"--and we want, in twenty-six very short weeks, to give you some sense of the "flow" of English and American literature, the big picture.

This is what we hope: we hope (1) that you'll enjoy the empowering sense of knowing what comes after what; and (2) that, at the same time, you'll get so excited about some of these writers that you'll go on to study them in more depth--an opportunity you'll find in all the department's 300-level courses. Like the Medieval material? Check out Wendy Furman-Adams' Literature of Medieval Europe or Sean Morris' British Literature, 700-1500--and/or sign on for a full semester of Chaucer or Dante. Like the Renaissance? Check out Bill Geiger's Literature of Renaissance England--along with Shakespeare, Shakespeare in Love, or Shakespeare and his Contemporaries. Like Milton? We've *got* Milton. And we've also got a special course dedicated to English Literature, 1640-1789, where you can *really* explore Dryden, Philips, and Pope; their predecessors (like Marvell) and their successors (whom you'll encounter in English 221). The same will be true for all the writers you'll meet, briefly and in context, next semester.

Then, once you've done some more study in depth (in courses that we hope you'll will have chosen more deliberately because *this* course gave you an idea of what each was about) there will be a chance to go *deeper still*: by choosing a senior seminar in an area you've come to know well. (Mary Wroth, Aemilia Lanyer, and Katherine Philips, for instance, reappear alongside their male and female contemporaries in a seminar, rooted in feminist theory, called "Writing Renaissance Women." But the study-in-depth that course provides requires quite a lot of background--starting here and now.)

Another big plus of this course, we think, is that it will introduce you to us as a department. Every year at our big party for graduating seniors, we find that almost no student has taken a class with every one of us. We feel that this is our loss and yours too. So, although Wendy Furman-Adams is the convening and chief instructor in English 220 this semester (with Charles Adams taking over in the Spring 221), you'll also hear lectures by Sean Morris, Bill Geiger, dAve pAddy, and Tony Barnstone. By the end of this year, you most likely will have seen each of us teach at least once--another way, perhaps, of guiding your choices in the future.

A Word from David Laine, our Illustrious Preceptor:

These classes are a great field guide to what you'll be taking over the next few years. If you're willing to keep up in them and put in the work, they can be a rewarding experience that will help you find exactly where your interests lie, so you can tell what classes will most interest you. When I took English 220-221, I found myself drawn in directions I didn't expect in the least, gravitating especially to the romantic and religious poetry of the Renaissance (if they had a class on Donne and Herbert, you'd better believe I'd take it), which has subsequently led me in even more diverse directions (especially towards some great thinkers of old, such as St. Augustine and Boethius). As somebody who saw practically no point to poetry, and who long held that philosophy was a crock, these revelations came as a bit of a shock, but that's what you can expect in a class that goes into such a wide variety of periods and genres that you may never have considered, or even known existed.

These courses are also a great way to experience the awesome majesty that is the English faculty here at Whittier--from the bubbly, gung-ho cheerfulness of Wendy to the silly fun of Sean (and, dare I say, to the singularly unique experience that is dAve pAddy). You can find out whose teaching style you enjoy the most, and whose classes you may therefore want to give special consideration--even if the classes themselves may not sound initially interesting. I know that

I've been pleasantly surprised with a few classes I took on the authority of the professor's name alone.

Finally, these courses are just a good way to meet the people whom you'll probably be sharing a lot of classes with. It's better to find people now that you can connect with in the department for late-night study sessions; 2:00-a.m.-the-night-before-a-paper-is-due encouragement and support (although, of course, none of you will wait until the night before a paper is due); and the subsequent obligatory 3:00 a.m. Molcasalsa runs, than to wait and do that once you've frittered away half of your college career.

Since I can't think of anything else to say, let me leave you with a little bit of advice from Benjamin Franklin: "Never do tomorrow what you can possibly put off until even later." At least, I *think* that's how it went.

Required Text:

M.H. Abrams, et. al., eds. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature: The Major Authors*, 8th Edition (New York: Norton, 2006).

(Note: This book--in combination with an American Literature volume in the spring--will carry you through the entire year's sequence. You will also be responsible for several fat sheaves of hand-outs--punched for storage in a loose-leaf binder.)

Required Work:

(1) Prompt and regular attendance at all class sessions. If you must miss a class, you should get class notes from another student and include them in your notebook with proper acknowledgment. (Roll will be taken, and final grades dropped one step--e.g. from a B to a C--for each absence after the first two. Thus six absences will be regarded as grounds for failure of the course.)

This includes attendance at at least one event (ideally more than that!) in our Second Annual Whittier College Writers Festival. Although all the writers we will study in the first half of this course are by definition long dead, literature is a living art--and majors and minors (of all people) should take advantage of opportunities to meet some of our leading living writers. Christopher Buckley, Maxine Hong Kingston, Gerald Stern (and others)--these are writers you *will* be encountering, soon if not in English 221. Encounter them on October 2-4. (Details to follow.)

(2) Reading assignments to be completed *before* the dates for which they are assigned (i.e. in time for class discussion--although this course may feature more lecture than some other courses).

(3) A reading and class journal in which you keep notes and generate questions on each day's readings, as well as take notes on each day's lecture and discussion. This journal will be due at the end of the course, and will include a response to a Festival writer of your choice, which will also be typed and handed in earlier. (See schedule below.)

(4) Three papers (ranging in length from about five pages to about ten), each on a period/theme covered during the course.

(5) A midterm exam--identification and essay.

(6) A comprehensive final exam--identification and essay.

Note: Late work will be accepted, but will be marked down one half grade for each class day after the due date. Under extraordinary circumstances, I will consider an extension without penalty-- provided that I am consulted in advance and that the circumstances seem serious enough to warrant such an extension.

Grading Factors:

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| 1. Attendance, preparation, and notebook | 20 |
| 2. Midterm exam | 15 |
| 3. Papers | 40 |
| 4. Final exam | <u>25</u> |
| | 100% |

Note: All work must be turned in, and of a passing quality (even if it is turned in so late as to have fallen--theoretically--to an F), in order to result in a passing grade in the course.

Grading Options:

1. A - F
2. Credit/No Credit (non-majors only)

Manuscript Style:

Papers are to be typed double-space in a 12-point font (this syllabus is typed in 12-point Times), and printed on a laser-quality printer. They should be handed in on separate sheets of 8 1/2 X 11 bond paper, stapled in the upper left-hand corner. Margins should be one inch; paragraphs are to be indented five spaces. Spaces should not be skipped between paragraphs. Any notes or bibliography you may want to use must follow the *MLA Handbook*, copies of which are available in both the library and the bookstore. (The style is also described on pp. 207-213 in your *Random House Handbook*.)

Always keep hard-copies of all your work. Documents can get lost--both from my desk and from your disk, whether hard, floppy, or c.d. Should this occur, I will expect you to be able to produce a copy *immediately*; otherwise, I will be forced to count the paper as late, beginning with the original due date. (See above for general policy on late papers.)

Note: Electronically submitted work will not be accepted. It is your responsibility to leave enough time to submit a clean hard copy for evaluation.

Academic Honesty:

Plagiarism occurs whenever the true author of a piece of prose, of an idea, or of a line of thought is not the person who claims to be the author. Plagiarism can occur in varying degrees, and will be penalized--in this class as in all others at the College--in proportion to its severity. Papers in which plagiarism is sufficiently serious will receive an F, and student's name will be turned in to the Dean of Students. A repeated act of plagiarism will result in an automatic F in the entire course, in addition to any action taken by the Office of Student Life (which can include suspension from the College). A number of such serious sanctions have been imposed in recent years.

A particularly common and egregious form of plagiarism is the down-loading of materials from various websites. Please be aware that faculty have the tools to identify any work unfairly borrowed from the web--as well as other sources.

If you are in doubt about the need for documentation of borrowed material, please feel free to consult me or any other professor on campus. Also be sure that you have mastered the material in the 2005-2007 *College Catalog*, 29-33. Ignorance of this material will not be regarded as an excuse.

ADA Policy:

If you have any disabling condition that may require some special arrangements in order to meet course requirements, please begin by contacting the Office of Disability Services in CAS (Science 105, extension 4825). I will be happy to provide any accommodations regarded by the Director as appropriate, but am not in a position to offer such accommodations independently. Short of actual accommodations, however, please feel welcome to talk with me about anything I can do to help you succeed in the course.

The Final Exam:

The final examination will be given only at the published time (Friday, Dec. 15, 8:00 to 10:00 a.m.), so plan your departure for winter break accordingly. Plane tickets purchased by students not consulting the schedule (or not informing their families of the schedule) will not be accepted as an excuse for missing (or rescheduling) the exam. If you should find yourself scheduled for three final exams on a single day, you are (as the *Catalog* notes) entitled to request an adjustment from your professors.

The Schedule (subject to change as necessary):

Sept. 7 Introduction to the course: A sense of the period; Medieval allegory; Caedmon's Hymn (ca. 658-680).

I. The English Middle Ages (to 1485): From Epic to Romance (and Fabliau).

A. Anglo-Saxon England (to 1066): The Old English Epic Hero.

12 Introduction, Norton 1-23. *Beowulf* (ca. 750), 26-97.

14 *Beowulf*.

19 *Beowulf*.

B. Middle English Literature (1350-1485): Knights and Nuns, Lovers and Churls.

21 Geoffrey Chaucer (1343-1400), *The Canterbury Tales* (1387-89)--General Prologue, 165-91.

26 *The Canterbury Tales*--Prologue and Miller's Prologue and Tale, 191-207.

28 *The Canterbury Tales*--The Miller's Tale (continued).

II. The Renaissance in England (1485-1660):

A. The Sixteenth Century: Renaissance Humanism and the Petrarchan Love Sonnet.

[Note: Whittier College Writers Festival, Monday, October 2-Wednesday, October 4, 5:00-9:00 p.m.]

Oct. 3 The Sixteenth Century and the Rise of Modern English: Introduction, 319-47. The Birth of the Sonnet: Francesco Petrarch (1304-1375); Wyatt (1503-1542), and Surrey (1517-1547), 348-54. First paper due (Medieval Literature).

5 Sonnet Cycles in English: Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586), *Astrophil and Stella* (Sonnets 1, 31, 52, 71, and "Leave me O Love"), 449-55; and Edmund Spenser (1552-1599), *Amoretti* (Sonnets 1, 67, 75, 79), 434-437.

10 Elizabethan Epic-Romance as Christian Allegory: Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, Introduction and Book I, Cantos 1-4, 365-397.

12 *Faerie Queene*, Book I, Cantos 5-12, 397-423.

17 Redefinitions of the Sonnet: Shakespeare (1564-1616), Sonnets 18, 20, 29, 30, 33, 55, 73, 94, 116, 129, 130, 138, 146, and 147, Norton 493-509; and Lady Mary Wroth (1587-1651?), Sonnets 1, 16, 40, 68, and 77, Norton 650-54.

19 The Uses and Abuses of Pastoral: Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593), 458-60; Sir Walter Raleigh (1552-1618), 447-49.

24 Midterm Exam (covering all material through Shakespeare).

B. The Early Seventeenth Century (1603-1640): "Metaphysicals" and "Cavaliers."

26 Introduction to the Period, 575-599. Men and Women Poets in Dialogue (1): "Metaphysicals": John Donne (1572-1631), "The Good Morrow," "The Sun Rising," "A Valediction forbidding Mourning," "The Ecstasy," 599-614; Holy Sonnets 10 and 14, Norton 600-24; and Katherine Philips (1632-1664), "To My Dearest Lucasia," 672-75, plus additional selections.

31 Men and Women Poets in Dialogue (2): "Cavaliers": Ben Jonson (1572-1637), "On My First Daughter," "On My First Son," "To Penshurst," "Queen and Huntress," "Still to be Neat," Norton 638-48; Katherine Philips, "On the Death of My First and Dearest Child," 675 (plus additional selections); and Aemilia Lanyer (1569-1645), "The Description of Cooke-ham," 630; 633-38.

Nov. 2 Later "Metaphysicals" and "The Tribe of Ben": George Herbert (1593-1633), "Easter Wings," "The Collar," and "Love," 659-65; Robert Herrick (1591-1674), 665-70; and Andrew Marvell (1621-1678), "To His Coy Mistress," 675-78. Second paper due (Earlier and later Renaissance).

C. The Later Seventeenth Century (1640-1660): Milton and the Revolutionary Epic.

7 John Milton (1608-1674), Introduction, 693-96; Sonnets, 721-23; Invocations to *Paradise Lost*, Book 3, ll. 1-55 (Norton 765-66) and Book 7, ll. 1-39 (801-802).

9 Milton, *Paradise Lost* (1)--Satan's Anti-epic: Books 1 and 2, Norton 723-65.

14 *Paradise Lost* (2)--God the Son's True Epic and the Pastoral of Eden: Books 3, 4, 5, 6, and 8, Norton 765-801; 802-811.

16 *Paradise Lost* (3)--The Fall and Expulsion from Eden: Books 9-12, Norton 811-52.

III. The Restoration and the Eighteenth Century (1660-1785): Lyrical, Satirical, Critical.

21 Introduction to the Period, 853-78. John Dryden (1631-1700), "On the Death of Mr. Oldham," "A Song for St. Cecilia's Day," Norton 879-80; 910-13; and Epic as Satire: "Mac Flecknoe," Norton 904-910.

23 **Thanksgiving.**

28 "Mac Flecknoe" and Alexander Pope (1688-1744), 1120-23; Miniature Epic: *The Rape of the Lock*, Norton 1136-55.

30 Lyric, Satiric, and Philosophical: Samuel Johnson (1709-1784), 1210-1212; "On the Death of Dr. Robert Levet," 1220-21; "The Vanity of Human Wishes," 1212-1220.

Dec. 5 Johnson and the Philosophical Tale: *Rasselas*, Norton 1221-1284.

7 Last Day of Classes: Review of the Course. Third paper due (Milton and the Epic).

11 Reading Day.

Dec. 15 (Friday) Comprehensive final exam (8:00-10:00 a.m.).

Spring 2002

Feb. 7 Introduction to the course.

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Mar. 5

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March 23-31 Spring Break.

Apr. 2

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May 2

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