

ENGL 8386, Topics in Postcolonial Studies: Ireland
Thursday 5:30-8:30, Roy Cullen 114
Professor Margot Backus, mbackus@uh.edu
Office Hours by appointment
Spring, 2013

Reading List:

Sarah McKibben, *Endangered Masculinities* (neg.)
Maria Edgeworth, *Castle Rackrent*
J.M. Synge, *The Playboy of the Western World*
Lucy McDiarmid, *The Irish Art of Controversy*
Padraic O'Conaire, *Exile*
George Bernard Shaw, *John Bull's Other Island*
Sean O'Casey, *The Plough and the Stars*
Patrick Mullen, *The Poor Bugger's Tool* (neg.)
Brian Friel, *Translations*
Tana French, *The Likeness*
Jamie O'Neill, *At Swim, Two Boys*
Anne Enright, *The Gathering*

Week 1 – Th Jan 17

Introduction

Introduction to the class, covering the syllabus, the policy statement, and an overview of key publications, conferences and debates in the emergence of postcolonial perspectives within Irish studies.

Assigned Reading: Sarah McKibben, *Endangered Masculinities in Irish Poetry and Lament for Art O'Leary*, by Eibhlin Dubh Ni Conaill.

Week 2 – Th Jan 24

Colonial Onset and Early Modern Irish Poetry

Assigned Reading: (packet) *Empire*, Hardt and Negri, Preface and Part II, Backus, *The Gothic Family Romance*, Chapters 1 and 3.

Week 3 – Th Jan 31

Ireland in the Context of British Imperial Expansion

Assigned Reading: Maria Edgeworth, *Castle Rackrent*. (packet): Irish language poetry in translation by Aoghan O'Rathaille, excerpt, Brian Merriman, *The Midnight Court*. Excerpt, Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*

Week 4 – Th Feb 7
The Eighteenth Century

Assigned Reading: (packet) Walter Benjamin, “The Storyteller,” and W. B. Yeats and Lady Gregory, “Kathleen ni Houlihan.” excerpts from writings of Lady Gregory, Angela Bourke article.

Week 5 –Th Feb 14
The Nineteenth Century

Assigned Reading: (packet), excerpts: Joseph Valente, *The Myth of Manliness in Irish Nationalist Culture*, G.B. Shaw, *John Bull’s Other Island*, selected James Joyce writings.
View: J.M. Synge, *The Playboy of the Western World*

Week 6 – Th Feb 21
The Turn of the Twentieth Century

Assigned Reading, Lucy McDiarmid, *The Irish Art of Controversy*, Padraic O’Conaire, *Exile*, (packet), Yeats, Selected poems, Backus articles, Representations of Poor Children, Yeats’s “Easter, 1916.”
View: *Strumpet City*

Week 7 – Th Feb 28
Irish Modernism and Political Movements: Nationalism, Trade Unionism, Anticolonialism, Socialist-Syndicalism

Assigned Reading: Sean O’Casey, *The Plough and the Stars*, (packet), essays by James Connolly and Frantz Fanon
View: *The Wind that Shakes the Barley*

Week 8 — Th March 7
Anti-colonial Resistance

Assigned Reading: Roddy Doyle, *A Star Called Henry*.
View: Derry Film and Video Collective’s *Mother Ireland*.

Week 9 – March 11-16
SPRING BREAK

Week 10 – Th March 21
Partition and the Irish Free State

Assigned Reading: Patrick Mullen, *The Poor Bugger's Tool: Irish Modernism, Queer Labor and Colonial History*. (packet), poems by Bobby Sands and Rita Ann Higgins, excerpts, Joseph Cleary's *Literature, Partition and the Nation State*.

View: *Butcher Boy*

Week 10 – Th March 28
DeValera and the Irish Republic

Assigned Reading: Brian Friel, *Translations*. (packet), excerpts, Diarmaid Ferriter's *DeValera*, James Smith's *Ireland's Architecture of Containment*.

View: *Bloody Sunday*

Week 11 – Th April 4
The Civil Rights Movement, Bloody Sunday, and Mass Imprisonment

Assigned Reading: Jamie O'Neill, *At Swim, Two Boys*. (packet), excerpts, Henry Glassie's *Passing the Time at Ballymenone*. David Lloyd, "Nationalisms Against the State."

View: *The Boxer*

Week 12 – Th April 11
Ceasefire

Assigned Reading: Anne Enright, *The Gathering*

View: *Hush a Bye Baby*

Week 13 – Th April 18
Rethinking the Irish Past: The Celtic Tiger

Assigned Reading: Tana French, *The Likeness*

View: *The Velvet Goldmine*

Week 14 – Th April 25
Rethinking the Irish Past: The Post-Celtic Tiger
View: *Opus Gei*