

School of English, Film, Theatre, and Media Studies

ENGL 330: Modern Fiction: Colonial and Postcolonial Literature

First trimester, 2008

Course information and lecture programme

Course co-ordinator	James Meffan (email James.Meffan@vuw.ac.nz, room VZ903, phone 463 6807)
Lecturers	James Meffan Anna Jackson Tim Garlick
Lecture times	Monday and Tuesday, 11.00 – 11.50 am, New Kirk LT 301
Workshops	Weekly workshops will be held in place of tutorials. These will begin in the second week of term. They will be on Fridays, in the regular lecture theatre at the regular lecture time (i.e. 11.00 – 11.50 am, New Kirk LT 301). Attendance at 70% of workshops is a mandatory course requirement.
Texts	<i>ENGL 330 Class Notes</i> (Student Notes); Joseph Conrad, “Heart of Darkness” (in <i>Fictions of Empire</i>); Chinua Achebe, <i>Things Fall Apart</i> ; Jean Rhys, <i>Wide Sargasso Sea</i> ; Robert Louis Stevenson, “The Beach of Falesa” (in <i>Fictions of Empire</i>); Andrea Levy, <i>Small Island</i> ; David Malouf, <i>Remembering Babylon</i> ; J.M. Coetzee, <i>Foe</i> ; Hanif Kureishi, <i>The Buddha of Suburbia</i> .

Prerequisites

Modern Fiction: Colonial and Postcolonial Literature is a 24-point paper at ENGL 300 level, and will be of particular relevance to students with interests in 20th century fiction. Students interested in colonial history and postcolonial politics will also find this paper valuable.

The prerequisites for enrolment in ENGL 330 are 44 points from ENGL 201-299. Applications from other students will be considered, and should be referred to either the co-ordinator, or Associate Professor Peter Whiteford (Head of School).

Course Aims and Objectives

This course covers a range of twentieth century novels, reading them in relation to the historical events of modern colonialism through which European nations extended their imperial control over much of the world. The course will provide an introduction to some of the theoretical and critical issues relevant to postcolonial studies (and literary analysis in general) in twentieth century fiction. In addition to set novels, required reading includes selected non-fictional writing, in the form of postcolonial criticism and critical commentary on the novels. These readings are a crucial component of the course and are collected in the ENGL 330 Coursebook (Student Notes).

The paper aims to:

- a) provide an overview of literary representations of aspects of the colonial project through the twentieth century, by writers of European and non-European descent;
- b) provide an introduction to some of the theoretical and critical issues relevant to postcolonial study of twentieth century fiction;
- c) develop the skills of attentive reading through close analysis and discussion in relation to the set novels;
- d) develop the skills of theoretical analysis and discussion in relation to the set novels and selected non-fictional writings;
- e) build on students' knowledge and appreciation of literature and provide the critical and analytical tools necessary for a progression to graduate studies.

Students should therefore:

- a) become familiar with the thought, form, techniques and language of the set novels;
- b) gain an understanding of the general nature of twentieth century fiction in relation to the social, cultural and theoretical contexts to which it belongs;
- c) develop skills in alert and informed reading, and in the oral and written processes of literary discussion, especially in critical analysis and evaluation in the form of reading reports and an extended essay at a level appropriate to graduates majoring in English Literature.

Assessment

Assessment is by a combination of term work and final exam. Term work and final exam are each worth 50% of the final mark. Assessment has been structured to meet the aims and objectives of the paper and to ensure coverage of most of the novels and critical material on the paper. Both in-term and exam questions will develop and assess the ability to read literary and critical works specifically and competently. Assessment is weighted as follows: final examination (3 hours) 50%; six brief reading reports (worth 30% in total); and one compulsory in-term essay (20%).

Coursework (50%)

Reading Reports (see below for topics and due dates): there are six reading reports in total (all are compulsory) each worth 5% of your final mark. An essay of 2000 words is due on **Friday 16 May, 5pm**. This essay is worth 20% of your final mark.

The essay and reading reports should be handed in to the English department administration or emailed direct to james.meffan@vuw.ac.nz as an email attachment in MS Word format (.doc). If sending an electronic file please name the file as in the following examples: smith1.doc or smithessay.doc (i.e last name followed by report number or "essay", with no spaces).

Written work must conform to the standards and guidelines set out in **SEFT Guidelines for Students** and **SEFT Handbook for Students of English Literature** (available at the Student Notes Distribution Centre and on the SEFTMS website). Note that the MLA referencing style has been adopted as the single referencing standard for all work submitted in English (see attached update for details.)

Examination (50%)

The three-hour final examination is a **closed book exam**. In 2008 the exam will comprise two sections:

- a) Section One will ask you to write two essays, each on a different novel. You may not discuss novels already written on in term work. Each essay in this section will be worth 25% of the exam grade. There will be a choice of two questions on each of the novels studied on the course;
- b) Section Two will ask you to write a comparative essay on two novels in relation to one of a selection of several topics. You may not discuss texts discussed in Section One of the exam or in term work, except in passing. This essay will be worth 50% of the exam grade.

Extensions

You are expected to arrange an extension with the course co-ordinator **in advance** if for any reason you are not able to complete coursework by the due dates. The **final** deadline for any written work is **Friday 30 May**. No work will be accepted after this date.

Late work submitted without an extension will be counted as long as it is received by the final due date (30 May). You will, however, be penalised by a lowering of your grade (e.g. A to A-, B+ to B etc.), and comments on your work will be minimal.

Mandatory Course Requirements

You are required to attend lectures and workshops regularly; at least eight workshops should be attended. **All** written work must be completed and handed in, and the three-hour final examination must be completed at the end of the course. Failure to meet the mandatory requirements for this course will leave you with fail grade.

Workload

A paper in the novel inevitably entails considerable time spent reading (and re-reading) set texts. In addition to the reading of set novels you are also required to spend time reading the critical and theoretical writings set for the paper and attending lectures and workshops. University guidelines recommend an average of 16 hours work a week for a course at this level and of this duration. It is strongly recommended that you develop regular reading habits to ensure that you have read set fiction and critical writing before it is discussed in class.

General University policies and statutes

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the Victoria University Calendar or go to: www.vuw.ac.nz/policy.

For information on the following topics, see the corresponding Blackboard files:

- Academic Grievances
- Student and Staff Conduct
- Meeting the Needs of Students with Impairments
- Student Support.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means *no cheating*. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times. Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. The University defines plagiarism as follows:

The presentation of the work of another person or other persons as if it were one's own, whether intended or not. This includes published or unpublished work, material on the Internet and the work of other students or staff.

It is still plagiarism even if you re-structure the material or present it in your own style or words.

Note: It is however, perfectly acceptable to include the work of others as long as that is acknowledged by appropriate referencing.

Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria and is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct and may be penalized severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course
- suspension from the course or the University.

Find out more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it, on the University's website:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

Reading Reports

Reading reports are due on Fridays during term time. They can either be submitted as hard copy through the essay box on the 8th floor of von Zedlitz or in electronic form as an email attachment. Electronic submissions should be in MS Word format (.doc), and should be emailed directly to james.meffan@vuw.ac.nz. Please do not submit via Blackboard.

Detailed topics for reading reports will be made available on Blackboard well in advance of the report due date. Reports should not exceed 400 words as an absolute maximum, and should include a basic bibliography.

Week	Due date	Report Topic
Week 1	—	No report due
Week 2	7 March	Report 1: Colonialism and postcolonialism
Week 3	14 March	Report 2: Representation and endorsement
Week 4	—	No report due
Week 5	28 March	Report 3: Language
Week 6	4 April	Report 4: Feminism and postcolonialism
Week 7	11 April	Report 5: Cultural report
MID-TRIMESTER BREAK		
Week 8	2 May	Report 6: Culture and authenticity
Week 9	—	No report due
Week 10	16 May	Essay due (no report due)
Week 11	—	No report due
Week 12	—	No report due

Timetable

Lecture programme, 2008 ENGL 330 Modern Fiction: Colonial and Postcolonial Literature

Lectures: Monday and Tuesday, 11.00 – 11.50 am; New Kirk LT 301

Workshops: Friday, 11.00 – 11.50 am; New Kirk LT 301

Lecturers: James Meffan (JM); Anna Jackson (AJ); Tim Garlick (TG)

Week 1	Feb	25	Introduction: colonialism and postcolonialism	JM
		26	“Heart of Darkness”	JM
		29	No workshop	
Week 2	Mar	3	“Heart of Darkness”	JM
		4	Claiming a voice: writing back to empire	JM
		7	Workshop	
Week 3		10	<i>Things Fall Apart</i>	JM
		11	<i>Things Fall Apart</i>	JM
		14	Workshop	
Week 4		17	<i>Wide Sargasso Sea</i>	AJ
		18	<i>Wide Sargasso Sea</i>	AJ
Week 5			EASTER BREAK – 21– 25 MARCH	
		28	Workshop	
Week 6		31	Politics of identity, politics of difference	JM
	Apr	1	“The Beach of Falesa”	JM
		4	Workshop	
Week 7		7	<i>Small Island</i>	JM
		8	<i>Small Island</i>	JM
		11	Workshop	
			MID-TRIMESTER BREAK – 14 – 27 APRIL	
Week 8		28	<i>Remembering Babylon</i>	JM
		29	<i>Remembering Babylon</i>	JM
	May	2	Workshop	
Week 9		5	The politics of representation	JM
		6	<i>Robinson Crusoe</i> and <i>Foe</i>	JM
		9	Workshop	
Week 10		12	<i>Foe</i>	JM
		13	<i>Foe</i>	JM
		16	Workshop – Essay Due 5 pm	
Week 11		19	Culture and authenticity	JM
		20	<i>The Buddha of Suburbia</i>	JM
		23	Workshop	
Week 12		26	<i>The Buddha of Suburbia</i>	JM
		27	From global to local	TG
		30	Workshop: Exam preparation	

Referencing Update for Students of English

It has recently been decided that students of English should use one standard referencing system for all work produced for English courses: the MLA style.

Previously the document *Guidelines for SEFT Students* offered two alternative systems. Following the recent decision, English students are expected to use only the first of the two alternatives outlined. This is labelled in the *Guidelines* as “Notes included in the text (System A)”. The alternative system – “Footnotes or endnotes (System B)” – should no longer be used for written work in English.

MLA Style – the new standard for English

The system students are now required to use is generally known as the MLA style. This system is in wide use in the Humanities, and has been thoroughly documented. Full details of the MLA style are provided in *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (6th edition) and the *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing* (2nd edition), both of which are available in the library.

Purdue University Online Writing Lab (OWL) offers an excellent Internet resource on MLA style. It can be accessed at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/>.

What follows is a basic outline of MLA conventions.

MLA Style

This type of system is sometimes referred to as a “parenthetical style”. By this system, full bibliographical details of the text you have used are given only in the Works Cited list at the end of the document.

In the body of your essay, follow each quotation or reference with a note in parentheses giving just the author’s name and page number, like this: (Lanham 104). Note that there is no punctuation, and no use of p. or pp. for page(s). If it is perfectly clear from the context who is being quoted, you can just give the page number: “Lanham argues that...(104).”

If you have several works by a single author in your bibliography, avoid ambiguity by adding a short title (Lanham, “Astrophil” 104).

If you are discussing a poem or poems, give line numbers (11-12) rather than page numbers. In referring to a Shakespearean play, or any other play in acts and scenes, give act, scene, and line numbers, like this: (3.2.28-35). [This means Act Three, scene two, lines 28-35.]

In referring to a classic work or a novel which exists in several editions, it is helpful to the reader to give chapter as well as page references: “Nelly says that ‘from the very beginning, [Heathcliff] bred bad feeling in the house’” (Bronte 89; ch.6) (or (Bronte 89; 1.6) for an edition in volumes and chapters).

In referring to a film, the reference should provide director and year: “In *Way Down East* (D.W. Griffith, 1920) . . .”

Works Cited

Whereas a bibliography may contain works that were useful in the development of an essay, the Works Cited list required in MLA style identifies only those texts which have directly contributed to the production of your work, either in the form of direct quotation or paraphrase.

Works Cited entries follow very specific conventions. Be sure you use punctuation, italicisation and quotation marks exactly in line with the following examples.

Note that some guidelines specify the use of underlining instead of *italicisation*. For the purposes of bibliographic detail the two should be treated as equivalent. You can *either* underline book titles *or* italicise them. Whichever you choose you should use consistently.

(a) *For a book by a single author:*

Author's surname, first name. *Title of book*. Place of publication: publisher's name, year of publication.

E.g. Coetzee, J. M. *Foe*. London: Penguin, 1987.

(b) *For a book with an editor rather than an author:*

McLeod, Marion, and Bill Manhire, eds. *Some Other Country: New Zealand's Best Short Stories*. Wellington: Unwin, 1984.

(c) *For an edition of a "classic" author's work:*

Milton, John. *Paradise Lost*. 1667. Ed. Alastair Fowler. London: Longman, 1968.

(d) *For an article in a journal:*

Author's surname, first name. "Title of article." *Title of journal*, volume number (year): page numbers.

E.g. Hutcheon, Linda. "Colonialism and the Postcolonial Condition: Complexities Abounding." *PMLA* 110.1 (1995): 7-16.

(e) *For an article in an anthology:*

Attridge, Derek. "Literary Form and the Demands of Politics: Otherness in J. M. Coetzee's *Age of Iron*." *Aesthetics and Ideology*. Ed. George Levine. New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 1994. 198-213.

(f) *For ENGL Course Notes:*

ENGL 113 Course Notes. Victoria University of Wellington, 2007.

Note that specific articles in a book of Course Notes follow as for (e) above. E.g. Wordsworth, William. "Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*." 1802. *ENGL 113 Course Notes*. Victoria University of Wellington, 2007. 24-5.

(g) *For a web page:*

"Name of Page." *Name of Site*. Date of posting/revision. Date you accessed the site <URL [electronic address]>.

E.g. "Postcolonialism." *Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia*. 24 January 2008. 15 February 2008 < <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Postcolonialism>>.