

**English 426: Modern English Literature Anthony Kemp**



Fall 2020

Tuesday, Thursday 12:30-1:50

Room: Zoom

Instructor: Anthony Kemp

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Office Hours: TBA

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**Course Description**

British and Anglo-American literature of the twentieth century, with particular emphasis on Decadence; Modernism; sexual, religious, and class transgression; world wars; retreat from empire; and return to myth. Major writers to be considered: W. B. Yeats, James Joyce, Radclyffe Hall, T. S. Eliot, Djuna Barnes, Wilfred Owen, Isaac Rosenberg, C. S. Lewis, W. H. Auden, John LeCarré, Ian McEwan. The goal of the course is that students will understand the authors and works studied in relation to the key cultural, intellectual, and aesthetic movements of the period: Romanticism, Decadence, Symbolism, Modernism.

## Learning Objectives

1. Reflect on what it means to be human through close study of human experience throughout time and across diverse cultures. In the period we will be studying writers, artists, philosophers thought that the very idea of the human was in jeopardy. All of the established certainties of the human seemingly no longer worked. People no longer *felt* them. The new century, the twentieth, was to be the century of inhumanity. What does it mean to be human after the world wars, after the extermination camps and the gulag? The writers we will be studying are each struggling to find new ways of being human. So should you.
2. Cultivate a critical appreciation for some of the most profound and innovative forms of human expression: romantic, symbolist, and modernist poetry, the modernist, experimental novel, fantasy literature and spy fiction, metafiction.
3. Understand and engage critically with the cultural and intellectual movements that these novels propose, examine, oppose. Thought, like matter, is clumpy. As matter tends to constellate into planets, stars, solar systems, galaxies, so ideas tend to constellate into movements. By the end of the course, students should understand the following intellectual and artist movements and concepts: Romanticism, Romantic Epiphany, Romantic Quest, Aestheticism, Decadence, Derangement of the Senses, Symbolism, Modernism, Anti-Semitism, Cosmopolitanism, Post-Modernism, and the literary genres in number two, above.
4. Learn to read and interpret actively and analytically, to think critically and creatively, and to write and speak persuasively. With this in mind, we will write two substantial long-form papers. I will give extensive written instructions on what works and what does not. The goal is to learn from the first paper, in order to improve your thinking and writing substantially in the writing of the second. Every student should budget at least one hour to go over your first paper with me.

## Required Reading

W. B. Yeats, *Yeats' Poetry, Drama and Prose*, Norton 0393974979  
James Joyce, *Dubliners*, Norton 0393978516  
Radclyffe Hall, *The Well of Loneliness*, Anchor 9780385416092  
T. S. Eliot, *The Wasteland*, Norton 0393974995  
Djuna Barnes, *Nightwood*, New Directions 9780811216715  
*Penguin Book of First World War Poetry*, Penguin 0141181907  
C. S. Lewis, *Till We Have Faces*, Harcourt 0156904365  
W. H. Auden, *Selected Poems*, Vintage 0307278085  
John LeCarré, *The Little Drummer Girl*, Penguin 0143119745  
Ian McEwan, *Atonement*, Anchor 038572179X

## Schedule

August

T 18: Introduction

Th 20: Yeats

T 25:

Th 27:

September

T 1: Joyce, *Dubliners*

Th 3:

T 8:  
Th 10: Hall, *The Well of Loneliness*  
T 15:  
Th 17: Eliot, *The Wasteland* (and much more)  
T 22:  
Th 24:  
T 29:  
October  
Th 1:  
T 6: Barnes, *Nightwood*  
Th 8:  
T 13: War Poetry  
Th 15:  
T 20: Lewis, *Till We Have Faces*  
Th 22:  
T 27: Auden  
November  
T 3:  
Th 5: LeCarré, *The Little Drummer Girl*  
T 10: McEwan, *Atonement*  
Th 12:  
Th 19: Final exam or summative class

### **Evaluation**

This syllabus is subject to revision, particularly in matters of schedule. The reading list will be supplemented by handouts. There will be two papers (5 pages minimum each; some students choose to write papers of 10-20 pages), and midterm and final examinations, each piece of written work accounting for 25% of the final grade. Papers should conform to the written instructions that will be provided to each student. Examinations are objective and test knowledge of the texts and of the concepts presented in class. Students need to attend every class meeting, unless excused by exceptional circumstances. No student may take early or omit the final examination.

### **Illustrations:**

Left: Diego Velázquez, *Portrait of Pope Innocent X*, 1650, Galleria Doria Pamphilj, Rome  
Right: Francis Bacon, *Study after Velázquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X*, 1953, Des Moines Art Center, Des Moines, Iowa

### **Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems**

Academic Conduct: Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” <https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

Support Systems: Student Counseling Services (SCS) - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.  
<https://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling/>

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1-800-273-8255 Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.  
<http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

Relationship & Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 - 24/7 on call Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp/>

Sexual Assault Resource Center For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: <http://sarc.usc.edu/>

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX compliance – (213) 740-5086 Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. <https://equity.usc.edu/>

Bias Assessment Response and Support Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response.  
<https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support/>

Student Support & Advocacy – (213) 821-4710 Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa/>

Diversity at USC – <https://diversity.usc.edu/> Tabs for Events, Programs and Training, Task Force (including representatives for each school), Chronology, Participate, Resources for Students