

First Year Program (FYPR 111-01)
Sinn Féin and Self: Creating Community in Ireland
College of the Holy Cross, Fall 2003
T/TH 9:30-10:45 am, Beaven 124

Instructor: Paige Reynolds
Office Hours: Fenwick 230, M 2:30-3:30, T/R 11-12 or by appointment
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Course Texts: Maria Edgeworth, *Castle Rackrent* (Penguin Classic)
The Irish Famine, eds. Peter Gray and Sarah Burns (Harry Abrams)
Bram Stoker, *Dracula* (Penguin Classic)
J. M. Synge, *The Aran Islands* (Penguin Classic)
Modern Irish Drama, ed. John Harrington (Norton)
James Joyce, *Dubliners* (Viking Critical)

Common Texts: Plato, *Apology and Crito* (Pocket); Bellah, “Habits of the Heart” (web)
Willa Cather, *O, Pioneers!* (Vintage Classic)
Friedrich Dürrenmatt, *The Visit*; Thornton Wilder, *Our Town* (film)

Reference Texts: Diane Hacker, *Writer’s Reference*, 5th ed. (Bedford)
Senia Pašeta, *A Very Short Introduction to Modern Ireland* (Oxford UP)

Course Objectives: In a world marked by tension between individual and community, how then shall we live? During the year, we’ll examine this question through the lens of Irish literature and culture from 1800 to the present. We’ll also engage with texts read along with other FYP sections, texts that may not seem directly related to our course material. But in fact this shared reading – along with the additional presentations and activities we’ll attend – encourage us to explore our local concerns in the course from more diverse perspectives and to ask richer questions about our theme.

In the fall semester, we’ll read selected Irish poetry, fiction, and drama in tandem with cartoons, political manifestos, films, and other materials – all of which depict the messy relationship between individual and community in Ireland between the 1800 Act of Union and the 1937 Constitution. While many of us now recognize “Sinn Féin” as the political arm of the Irish Republican Army, in fact this term – which translates roughly into English as “ourselves” - was an early rallying cry for those seeking to unite the diverse Irish community in the interest of independence from England. Like the inventors of this slogan, many Irish writers of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries struggled to understand what might transform wildly different individuals into a cohesive Irish community. In their books, as in life, we can readily identify ways that religion, ethnicity, and family ties could bind people to each other. But what on earth might blood-sucking vampires, widespread hunger, bald-faced lying, and drunken parties have to do with building community?

Course Work:

Class participation and intellectual journal (20%): This is a small seminar in which everyone is expected to participate actively. That means you need to come to class having read the material closely and prepared to join in discussion. The intellectual journal that you keep will help in this endeavor. Frequently, I’ll provide questions to guide your journal writing, but other times you’ll be on your own, free to discuss an FYP event you’ve attended or a larger question related to our theme. This journal is not a diary in the mode either of a daily event calendar or an intimate account of your personal life. Rather, it is an intellectual journal that allows you reflect informally on reading, special events, class discussions or anything else directly connected to our course work or theme. Be as creative as you like: sketches, cartoons or articles from the newspaper, song lyrics, postcards, relevant images from websites – all of these materials would be welcome additions to (though not replacements for) your writings. The journal can be handwritten or typed, your choice. And while I will collect and grade these journals, grammar and spelling are not a consideration. Creativity in thought and depth of analysis are, however.

Critical Papers (10%, 20%, 20%): This year, we'll work to hone your writing skills, focusing in particular on learning to build, support, and sustain an argument in written analysis. To exercise those skills, you will be required to write three short critical papers this semester. Unlike your intellectual journal, these papers will be typed, double-spaced, stylistically and grammatically correct, and follow MLA guidelines. We will discuss the expectations for the papers in class prior to the due date.

Theatre Review (10%): As a class, we will attend a production in Boston at the Sungan Theatre. You will need to write a review of this production. And again, we'll discuss how this should be done when the task looms closer on the horizon.

Final Exam (20%): This cumulative exam will ask you to integrate your fall semester readings from the course with the common texts and concerns from FYP.

Basic Ground Rules:

- Required events are just that, required. So be there.
- Plan to meet with me during office hours during this semester. Also, please feel free to talk with me about reading or writing during office hours.
- Be prepared for a few changes in the syllabus, if we see that class needs demand those changes.
- Don't plagiarize. If you're confused about what constitutes plagiarism, see Hacker 82-85 or ask me questions.

Reading and Assignment Schedule:

R 9/4 Course Introduction; Heaney, "The Other Side"

T 9/9 Plato, Apology

R 9/11 Plato, Crito; Bellah, "Habits of the Heart"

T 9/16 Edgeworth, Rackrent (61-84)
Pašeta, ch. 1

R 9/18 Edgeworth, Rackrent (85-138)

T 9/23 Edgeworth, Rackrent
Pašeta, ch. 2

R 9/25 The Irish Famine (1-128)

T 9/30 The Irish Famine (documents, 130-end)
Pašeta, ch. 3

W 10/1 *Paper One Due*

R 10/2 Stoker, Dracula (chs. 1-9)

F 10/3 *Montreal Trip*

T 10/7 Stoker, Dracula (chs. 10-18)

R 10/9 Stoker, Dracula (chs. 19-end)

T 10/14 Columbus Day Break

R 10/16 Cather, O Pioneers! (1-106)

T 10/21 Cather, *O Pioneers!* (107-end)

R 10/23 Synge, *Aran Islands* (chs. 1-2)

T 10/28 Synge, *Aran Islands* (chs. 3-4)

R 10/30 Yeats and Gregory, *Cathleen ni Houlihan* (MID 3-11); *The Dramatic Movement* (MID 377-398, 406-408)

T 11/4 Synge, *Playboy of the Western World*
Pašeta, ch. 4

R 11/13 Synge, *Playboy of the Western World*

F 11/15 Paper Two Due

T 11/18 Durrenmatt, *The Visit*; Gregory, *Spreading the News* (MID 40-53)

R 11/20 Wilder, *Our Town*; Synge, *Riders to the Sea* (MID 63-72)

T 11/25 Joyce, *Dubliners* (9-69; "Sisters" to "Boarding House")

R 11/27 Thanksgiving Break

T 12/2 Joyce, *Dubliners* (70-174; "Counterparts" to "Grace")

R 12/4 Joyce, *Dubliners* (175-224; "The Dead")

F 12/5 Paper Three Due

T 12/9 O'Casey, *Plough and the Stars*; *Proclamation of Republic of Ireland*
Pašeta, ch. 5

W 12/10 Study Period begins

TBA Final Exam