

Junior Tutorial: English 98r
Teresa Trout
Spring 2017

Post-Downton Abbey:
The Dying Generation of the English Country House

Tutorial Description:

Downton Abbey's timeline ends in 1925, just as the institution of the English country house is going under. Julian Fellowes, the show's creator, declines to follow *Downton*'s inevitable decline—but, as we will see, he stops just shy of the real fun. Over the next twenty-five years, authors dance on the grave of the decorousness that was epitomized in the English country house. With a strange mixture of nostalgia and irreverence, these novelists let their houses be sold off, burnt down, and crumble into decay—but not before the literary heirs of Jane Austen use them to stage the sexual, social, and political revolutions of their contemporary moment at their maximum shock value. We will see how the post-Edwardian nostalgia for country society, forever ruined by World War I, becomes a tragic giddiness following World War II. The texts run the gamut of “highbrow” to popular fiction as we consider the enduring appeal of this very particular setting across time, media, and genre. Please note that familiarity with *Downton Abbey* is **not** a prerequisite for this course, but there will be spoilers!

Tutorial Goals:

General Goals:

To introduce the discipline and practice of English literary studies at an upper-division level, and to write 18-22 pp research paper in preparation for an honors thesis. You will be able to:

- Design a research question
- Develop a critical bibliography around that question, including diverse methods and viewpoints
- Put secondary criticism in conversation with your own ideas and with other criticism
- Write with greater clarity and precision

Course-Specific Goals:

This tutorial introduces students to the late-modernist and intermodernist periods, but situates the country house novel in a literary tradition stretching back in time to the seventeenth-century country house poem and forward in time to McEwan's 2001 country house novel. You will be able to:

- Describe country house novels in relation to their historical contingencies
- Describe country house novels in relation to their literary contingencies
- Explain the transition from, or interaction between, the late-modernist and intermodernist periods, and the ways that intermodernism opens up our field of inquiry to middlebrow, lowbrow, or “popular” forms of entertainment such as films and television series

- Critique the conflicting impulses within the country house novel in the mid-twentieth century—elitism vs egalitarianism, progressivism vs nostalgia, experimentation vs tradition—and explain how these binaries are complicated by shifts in interwar and postwar culture, politics, and economics

Assignments:

Short Paper (Week of February 13, 15%): A short paper that close reads one of the primary readings

Prospectus & Annotated Bibliography (Week of March 20, 10%): two-page prospectus of the project before you begin working on it. An annotated bibliography of 8-10 sources should accompany the prospectus. The bibliography should reproduce in a few sentences the main argument of the work you intend to make use of. It should also include, in a few sentences, how you plan on engaging with the thesis of the work you have summarized

Final Paper (Reading Period, 40%): An 18-22 page paper on a major literary work *not* read in this class

Conference Presentation (5%): a 5-minute paper on your research

Participation & Preparation (10%): A small seminar like this one thrives only when you have read and thought about the texts before we've met. It is essential that each seminar member is a fully engaged and active participant in our discussion *each week*.

Minor Assignments:

- Response Paper #1 (Week of January 30 5%): What expectations does *Emma* establish for the country house novel?
- Response Paper #2 (Week of April 3, 5%): Compare Taylor's and Waugh's approaches to country house nostalgia.
- Presentation #1 (Week of _____, 5%): Choose a film or television series and discuss in a five-minute presentation how it assumes knowledge of, interacts with, subverts, or complicates the country house tradition. (Students will volunteer to present on different weeks—**please mark your week on your syllabus.**)
- Presentation #2 (Week of _____, 5%): A five-minute presentation summarizing the methods and conclusions of a critical article read for that week. (Students will volunteer to present on different weeks—**please mark your week on your syllabus.**)

Required Texts:

Jane Austen, *Emma* (Penguin Classics)

E.M. Forster, *Howards End* (Vintage Classics)

Virginia Woolf, *Orlando* (Harvest)

Elizabeth Bowen, *The Last September* (Anchor)

Stella Gibbons, *Cold Comfort Farm* (Penguin)

Ivy Compton-Burnett, *A House and Its Head* (NYRB)
Evelyn Waugh, *Brideshead Revisited* (Back Bay Books)
Elizabeth Taylor, *Palladian* (Virago)
Mervyn Peake, *Titus Groan* (Overlook)
C.S. Lewis, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* (HarperCollins)
Ian McEwan, *Atonement* (Anchor)

For the Week of:

Jan 23: *Introduction*; (1/17 Study Card Day)

January 30: *The “Beginning” of the Country House Novel*

Primary: Jane Austen, *Emma* (1815)

Ben Jonson, “To Penshurst” (1616), available on Poetry Foundation website

Secondary: Deidre Lynch, “Homes and Haunts: Austen's and Mitford's English Idylls,” *PMLA*, Vol. 115, No. 5 (Oct., 2000), pp. 1103-1108

Assignment Due: Short Response #1 (1 page) What expectations does *Emma* establish for the country house novel?

February 6: *The “End” of the Country House Novel*

Primary: E.M. Forster, *Howards End*

Secondary: Clara Tuite, “Decadent Austen Entails,” *Janeites: Austen's Disciples and Devotees*, ed. Deidre Lynch, Princeton University Press, 2000

David Cannadine, “The Decline and Dispersal of Territorial Wealth,” in *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy*

February 13: *High Modernism and the Literary Tradition—Gender Politics*

Primary: Virginia Woolf, *Orlando* (1928)

Aemilia Lanyer, “The Description of Cooke-Ham” (1611), available on Poetry Foundation website

Secondary: Jeanette Winterson, “Shape shifter: the joyous transgressions of Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*,” *The New Statesman*, 2013

Assignment Due: 5-7 Page Close Reading of *Emma*, *Howards End*, or *Orlando*

February 20; (Mon 2/20 President's Day)

[Library Week]

Movie Screening: *Downton Abbey*, Season 6 Episode 6, time and location TBD

February 27: *High Modernism and the Literary Tradition—Political Ideologies*

Primary: Elizabeth Bowen, *The Last September* (1929)

Andrew Marvell, "Upon Appleton House, to my Lord Fairfax" (1651), available on Luminarium website

Secondary: Lukács, "Narrate or Describe"

Derek Hand, "Elizabeth Bowen's *The Last September* and the Art of Betrayal," in *A History of the Irish Novel*, Interchapter 5, pp. 182-188, 2011 (Optional)

March 6: *Intermodernism and the Feminine Middlebrow I—Comedy*

Primary: Stella Gibbons, *Cold Comfort Farm* (1932)

Secondary: Kristen Bluemel, "Introduction," *Intermodernism: Literary Culture in Mid-Twentieth-Century Britain*, Edinburgh University Press, 2009

Movie Screening: *Gosford Park* (2001), time and location TBD

March 13:

SPRING BREAK

March 20: *Intermodernism and the Feminine Middlebrow II—Melodrama*

Primary: Ivy Compton-Burnett, *A House and Its Head* (1935)

Secondary: John Bowen and Ivy Compton-Burnett, "An Interview with Ivy Compton-Burnett," *BBC Home Programme*, September 17, 1960," in *Twentieth Century Literature*, Vol. 25., No. 2, 1979

Alison Light, "The demon in the house: the novels of I. Compton-Burnett," in *Forever England: Femininity, Literature, and Conservatism Between the Wars*, 1991

Assignment Due: Prospectus and Annotated Bibliography

Movie Screening: *Rebecca* by Alfred Hitchcock (1940), time and location TBD

March 27: *Nostalgia and the Rise of Heritage Culture*

Primary: Evelyn Waugh, *Brideshead Revisited* (1945)

Secondary: Ben Cowell, "Monuments for the Nation," in *The Heritage Obsession: The Battle for England's Past*

Nicola Humble, "The Re-Formation of Middle Class Identities" in *The Feminine Middlebrow Novel, 1920s to 1950s: class, domesticity, and bohemianism*, 2004

April 3: *Reluctant Nostalgia and Decadent Heritage*

Primary: Elizabeth Taylor, *Palladian* (1946)

Secondary: Mary Joannou, 'England's Jane': The Legacy of Jane Austen in the Fiction of Barbara Pym, Dodie Smith, and Elizabeth Taylor," in *Uses of Austen: Jane's Afterlives*

Assignment Due: Short Response #2 (1-2 pages) comparing Taylor's and Waugh's approaches to country house nostalgia

Movie Screening: *Pride and Prejudice* (1940), time and location TBD

April 10: *Country House Fantasy*—Gothic

Primary: Mervyn Peake, *Titus Groan* (1946)

Secondary: Anthony Vidler, “Unhomely Houses,” in *The Architectural Uncanny*, 1992
Tanya Gardiner-Scott, “Mervyn Peake: The Relativity of Perception,” *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts*, 1988

April 17: *Country House Fantasy*—Escapist

Primary: C. S. Lewis, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* (1950)

Secondary: Marina MacKay, “Anti-State Fantasy and the Fiction of the 1940s,” in *Literature & History*, Volume 24, Number 2 (2015)

April 24: *The Dying Generation’s Afterlife* (term ends the Wed. 4/26)

Primary: Ian McEwan, *Atonement* (2001)

Additional Primary Reading (Recommended):

Henry James, *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881), *The Spoils of Poynton* (1896)

Ford Madox Ford, *The Good Soldier* (1915), *Parade’s End* (1924-8)

DH Lawrence, *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* (1928)

Julia Strachey, *Cheerful Weather for the Wedding* (1932)

Daphne Du Maurier, *Rebecca* (1938)

Stella Gibbons, *Nightingale Wood* (1938)

Virginia Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway*, *Between the Acts* (1941)

Evelyn Waugh, *Brideshead Revisited* (1945)

Henry Green, *Loving* (1945)

Philip Larkin, *A Girl in Winter* (1946)

Dodie Smith, *I Capture the Castle* (1948)

Bowen, *The Heat of the Day* (1948), *A World of Love* (1954)

Taylor, *Angel* (1957)

Agatha Christie, *Three Little Pigs* (1942), *Nemesis* (1971)

Daphne du Maurier, *Rebecca* (1938)

Ishiguro, *Remains of the Day* (1989)

Alan Hollinghurst, *The Stranger’s Child* (2011)

Additional Secondary Reading (Recommended):

Armstrong, Nancy, *Desire and Domestic Fiction : A Political History of the Novel*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1987.

Bachelard, Gaston, and John R. Stilgoe, *The Poetics of Space*, Trans. Maria Jolas, Reprint

- Edition, Boston: Beacon Press, 1994.
- Kristen Bluemel, ed., *Intermodernism: Literary Culture in Mid-Twentieth-Century Britain*, Edinburgh University Press, 2009.
- Bowlby, Rachel, *Feminist Destinations and Further Essays on Virginia Woolf*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997.
- David Cannadine, *Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990.
- Mike Crang, "Placing Jane Austen, Displacing England," *Jane Austen and Co.: Remaking the Past in Contemporary Culture*, ed. Suzanne R. Pucci, James Thompson, State University of New York Press, 2003.
- Deane, Seamus, *Celtic Revivals: Essays in Modern Irish Literature, 1880-1980*, New Ed edition, London: Faber and Faber, 1987.
- De Certeau, Michel, "Spatial Stories." *The Practice of Everyday Life*, Trans. Steven F. Rendall, Third Edition Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2011.
- Jed Esty, *A Shrinking Island: Modernism and National Culture in England*, Princeton University Press, 2003.
- Favret, Mary A., "A Home for Art: Painting, Poetry, and Domestic Interiors," *At the Limits of Romanticism: Essays in Cultural, Feminist, and Materialist Criticism*, ed. Mary A. Favret and Nicola J. Watson, Indiana University Press, 1994.
- Genet, Jacqueline, *The Big House in Ireland: Reality and Representation*, illustrated edition, Dingle, Co. Kerry, Ireland : Savage, Md: Brandon / Mount Eagle Publications Ltd, 1991.
- Gill, Richard, *Happy Rural Seat; the English Country House and the Literary Imagination*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1972.
- Mark Girouard, *Life in the English Country House: A Social and Architectural History*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994.
- Girouard, Mark, *Town and Country*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992.
- Harris, Alexandra, *Romantic Moderns : English Writers, Artists and the Imagination from Virginia Woolf to John Piper*, London: Thames & Hudson, 2010.
- Jameson, Frederic, "The Realist Floor-Plan," *On Signs*. ed. Blonsky, Marshall, JHU Press, 1985.
- Kreilkamp, Vera, *The Anglo-Irish Novel and the Big House*, Syracuse University Press, 1998.
- Lefebvre, Henri, *The Production of Space*, 1 edition, Malden, Mass.: Wiley-Blackwell, 1992.
- Light, Alison, *Forever England : Femininity, Literature, and Conservatism between the Wars*, 1991: Print.
- Logan, Thad, *The Victorian Parlour*, Cambridge, UK; *Cambridge Studies in Nineteenth-Century Literature and Culture*, 30, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- MacKay, Marina, *Modernism and World War II*, Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- McDiarmid, Lucy, *Poets and the Peacock Dinner: The Literary History of a Meal*, New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- McKeon, Michael, *The Secret History of Domesticity : Public, Private, and the Division of Knowledge*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005.
- Rosner, Victoria, *Modernism and the Architecture of Private Life*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2005.
- Summerson, John, *Heavenly Mansions: and Other Essays on Architecture*, W. W. Norton and Company, 1949.
- Taylor, D. J., *After the War: Novel and English Society Since 1945*, London: Flamingo, 1994.

Tristram, Philippa, *Living Space in Fact and Fiction*, London, New York: Routledge, 1989.
Vidler, Anthony, *The Architectural Uncanny : Essays in the Modern Unhomely*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992.

Williams, Raymond, *The Country and the City*. Nottingham, England: Spokesman Books, 2011.

The Fine Print

Academic Honesty: Plagiarism is the use of another person's ideas or writing without giving them proper credit. Consequences of plagiarism can range from failure on the paper to dismissal from the course to even more serious actions. You are responsible for familiarizing yourself with Harvard FAS's Honor Code: "*Members of the Harvard College community commit themselves to producing academic work of integrity – that is, work that adheres to the scholarly and intellectual standards of accurate attribution of sources, appropriate collection and use of data, and transparent acknowledgement of the contribution of others to their ideas, discoveries, interpretations, and conclusions. Cheating on exams or problem sets, plagiarizing or misrepresenting the ideas or language of someone else as one's own, falsifying data, or any other instance of academic dishonesty violates the standards of our community, as well as the standards of the wider world of learning and affairs.*"

Collaboration: You are absolutely encouraged to talk with other students about the course and its readings, and to read each others' work. In individual assignments (which may include midterm or term papers, short writing assignments, homework or reading questions and responses, or take-home exams), academic collaboration and external sources should be always cited.

Attendance: Your attendance in tutorial is vital to your own success as well as to the success of the class as a whole; so is your attendance in Junior Tutorial General Meetings and at other required events. I will allow each student a "free" tutorial absence to be used in case of sickness, travel, etc: no explanation necessary. Missing more than one class will decrease your participation grade, and excessive absence could result in failing the course. Also, being late really disrupts the work we're doing together: 2 lates = 1 absence. If you have attenuating circumstances, you must communicate with me in a timely manner so that we can discuss how to deal with it.

Due Dates & Late Grades: Unless otherwise specified, assignments are due by 11:59pm on the date listed in the schedule. Late assignments will be docked 1/3 letter grade per day late, except for the final paper, which must be turned in before the due date. Students failing to turn in a final paper, or turning it in late without an official excuse, will fail the tutorial. If, well in advance of an assignment, you expect you will need an extension, please talk with me.

Email: I'll use our course listserv to distribute important info throughout the semester—from emailing you handouts to adjusting assignments and deadlines. You are responsible for checking your email on a daily basis. If you have a question that you need to ask me by email, be sure to give me at least 24 hours, or you may not get a response until it's too late. Also, please let me know if you'd like to use a non-Harvard email address.

Accommodations for students with disabilities: "*Students needing academic adjustments or*

*accommodations because of a documented disability must present their Faculty Letter from the Accessible Education Office (AEO) and speak with the professor by the end of the second week of the term, **February 3**. Failure to do so may result in the Course Head's inability to respond in a timely manner. All discussions will remain confidential, although Faculty are invited to contact AEO to discuss appropriate implementation.”*