The End of the Estate

Course Description

In 1942, the Anglo-Irish writer Elizabeth Bowen wrote of the vulnerable existence of homes as British cities and towns suffered air raids and bombings from Germany: “In so far as home is a material thing – a house – we must face it that this may be demolished at any time.” This course will consider how the material space of the home has been a central, and often troublesome, imaginative condition for English literature since 1800. The opulent space of the English country house, in particular, continues to express certain forms of cultural nostalgia, as we can see today in popular BBC television dramas and best-selling rewrites of Jane Austen’s novels. Indeed, the country house has never been simply a house, but rather, a reflection of national values and a symbol of British power globally.

Yet, the most inventive examples of modern English literature have often been suspicious of the space of the country house and the divisions of power and wealth it represents. In texts such as Charlotte Brontë’s Jane Eyre, we will consider how the gothic estate Thornfield Hall conceals the horrific history of English imperialism. Rebecca West’s novella The Return of the Soldier belies how the destruction of WWI seeps into the seemingly safe space of the homefront. Kazuo Ishiguro’s 2006 novel Never Let Me Go takes the country house genre into sci-fi/dystopian territory. In all three works, the reader will be prompted to question the divisions between the public and the private self, between the physical isolation of the country house and its central place within British power structures.

In addition to these three works, we will read short stories, poetry, essays, and plays that consider questions of property, power and political identity. We will primarily study periods and movements such as the rise of the Victorian novel, modernism, postmodernism and postcolonial literature. Key writers amongst these movements will include Virginia Woolf, T.S. Eliot, Flann O’Brien, Salman Rushdie, and Zadie Smith. Analytical papers, reading quizzes, in-class written responses, exams and in-class participation will comprise the major forms of assessment.
**Student Learning Objectives:**
Students who successfully complete this course will be able to demonstrate knowledge and skills in four Core Objectives defined by the Higher Education Coordinating Board of the State of Texas:

**Critical Thinking**
CT1. Generate and communicate ideas by combining, changing, or reapplying existing information. CT3. Analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information.

**Communication Skills**
CS1. Develop, interpret, and express ideas through written communication.

**Personal Responsibility:**
PR1. Evaluate choices and actions, and relate consequences to decision making.

**Social Responsibility:**
SR3. Engage in regional, national, and global communities.

**Major Course Requirements:**
Students will be assessed according to the following assignments:

- Attendance and Participation: 15%
- Homework Assignments, Quizzes, and In-Class Writing Responses (HQI): 20%
- Thought Papers: 20%
- Mid-Term Exam: 20%
- Final Exam: 25%

**Grade Ranges:**
A = Excellent; B = Good; C= Average; D = Passing F = Failing
A= 90-100; B = 80-89; C = 70-79; D = 60-69; F = 0-59

**Attendance:**
Attendance is crucial for passing the course. If a student misses more than three classes, their attendance/participation grade will drop by 2/3 of a letter grade. An excess of five absences will result in a failing grade for Attendance/Participation. If a student is more than fifteen minutes late for class or leaves more than five minutes before the end of class, they will be counted as absent. It is the student’s responsibility to contact the Professor in the event of an absence. Quizzes and in class writing assignments cannot be made up due to absence and will result in a grade of 0.

**Participation:**
Participation is absolutely essential for success in this course. In order for a student to receive an A in this category, students must contribute substantially to the discussion in every class meeting. These are the requirements for “substantial contribution” to discussion:

- Sharing comments and questions that refer to specific passages in the text that we have read for the day
- Listening to and building off of other students' contributions to class discussion so we can conduct a genuine conversation about the reading
- Engaging in considerate/constructive debate with your fellow students
- Fully participating in all group work and in-class writing assignments
- Bringing all the required reading materials to class; be sure to print off any material from Blackboard or bring them to class on an e-reader.

**Homework Assignments, Quizzes, and In-Class Writing Responses (HQI) (20%)**:

Quizzes, homework assignments and in-class writing responses will be given in-class throughout the course in order to assess students’ completion and comprehension of the assigned reading. The Professor does not divulge the number of HQIs that will be given over the course of the semester. **Quizzes, homework assignments and in-class writing responses missed due to absence or tardiness cannot be made up.** If a student leaves class early, any HQI completed in class will be discounted.

**Thought Papers (20%)**:

Students will produce two thought papers throughout the semester. Thought papers should be 3-4 pages in length and should engage primarily with one quoted passage from one text that we have read. A more detailed description of the assignment with suggested topics will be provided closer to the due date.

**Mid Term Exam (20%)**:

Students will take a mid-term exam consisting of multiple choice and short answer questions. A review will precede the exam.

**Final Exam (25%)**:

The final exam will also consist of multiple choice and short answer questions. A review will precede the exam.

**Required Texts:**


All other required readings are available on Blackboard (BB) under the Content folder. **You are required to bring the assigned reading for the day with you to class either by printing it out or bringing it on an e-reader, tablet or laptop.**

**Required Films:**


**Course Supplies:**

You will need access to the following materials for the course:

- A writing utensil and paper with you in class; you will often be required to turn in written assignments for this course, so be sure to have a pen/pencil and paper on hand
- A computer with Microsoft Word and a printer to write/print your papers
- A computer with reliable internet access and a current version of Adobe Acrobat reader for the pdfs on Blackboard

**Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism**

University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in the failure of the assignment. A second offense will result in the referral of the student for disciplinary sanctions to Academic Affairs and the possible failure of the course. For more information on plagiarism and academic misconduct, see the TAMU-CC student code of conduct. http://judicialaffairs.tamucc.edu/assets/Article%20III.pdf
Plagiarism is easily avoided. Always fully cite your source (the author, title, date/place of publication) in MLA style. Do not copy other works from the internet, Sparknotes, enotes or other reading guides, web sites that sell (usually horribly written) essays), books or articles and present that work in your papers and in your exam answers. That is plagiarism. If you are even in doubt about when to cite a source, please contact me at Cailin.Cowan-Kelly@tamucc.edu.

Dropping the Course
I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. Nov. 7, 2014 is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

Classroom Standards and Professional Behavior Guidelines
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, meetings with the professor during office hours etc.

Disruptive behavior that is prohibited during class and other instructional forums includes:

• Sleeping in class
• Arriving late to class
• Leaving class early
• Attending class without bringing the required reading
• Texting or talking on the phone in class
• Playing or listening to music during class
• Using a computer/tablet/phone during class for anything besides reading course material
• Eating in class
• Videotaping lectures or class discussions
• Talking over other students or the professor during class discussion
• Having side conversations with your neighbor during class discussion
• Using offensive or derogatory language in class discussion
Grade Appeals

Students who feel that they have not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in this class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, cla.tamucc.edu/students/studenSnfo.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean.

Academic Advisement

Academic advisors are available to assist students with course selection, degree plans, and other academic matters. Each college has an academic advising center, staffed by full-time, professional advisors. Students who have yet to declare a major are advised by the Academic Advising Transition Center. For more information please call (361) 825-5931 or log on to http://www.tamucc.edu/~aac

Disabilities Accommodations and Veterans

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116. If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816

Statement of Academic Continuity

In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

Communication

Students must regularly check Blackboard and their email account that is registered with S.A.I.L in order to receive updates pertaining to class.

Reading and Assignment Schedule
W Jan 21 Welcome/Introduction

M Jan 26 Zadie Smith, “Stuart” (BB) and “Take it Or Leave It” (BB); “A Guide to Reading Critically” (BB)

W Jan 28 Richard Price, “From A Discourse on the Love of Our Country” and “Edmund Burke, From Reflections on the Revolution in France” (BB); William Blake, “‘From The French Revolution’ and ‘America: A Prophecy’ (BB)


W Feb. 4 Jane Eyre; p. 1-79 (Ch. 1-10); to the line “…and a new life in the environs of Millcote”

M Feb 9 Jane Eyre; p. 80-130 (Ch.11-15); to the line “Too feverish to rest, I rose as soon as day dawned”

W Feb. 10 Jane Eyre p. 130-205 (Ch. 16-21); to the line “Neither of us had dropped a tear"

M Feb 16 Jane Eyre (p. 253-297; p. 358-385) (Ch 27-29; Ch. 36-38)

W Feb 18 Mary Seacole, “Wonderful Adventures of Mrs. Seacole in Many Lands” (BB); Joseph Chamberlain, “The True Conception of Empire” (BB)

M Feb 23 Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, “The Speckled Band” (BB)

Thought Paper 1 due

W Feb 25 James Joyce, “The Dead”


W Mar 4 Rebecca West, The Return of the Soldier
M Mar 9 Rebecca West, The Return of the Soldier
W Mar 11 Mid Term Exam
M Mar 16 Spring Break
W Mar 18 Spring Break
M Mar 23 Virginia Woolf, Mrs. Dalloway in Bond Street; “Modernist Manifestos”
W Mar 25 Reading Day
M Mar 30 Wilfred Owen and T.S. Eliot
W Apr 1 Elizabeth Bowen, “The Demon Lover” and “Hand in Glove” (BB)
M Apr 6 In-Class Discussion: The Third Man
W Apr 8 Philip Larkin Poetry
M Apr 13 Celia Fremlin, “A Case of Maximum Need” and Flann O’Brien, “Two in One”
Thought Paper 2 due
W Apr 15 Harold Pinter, The Dumb Waiter
M Apr 20 Salman Rushdie and Grace Nichols
W Apr 22 Never Let Me Go
M Apr 27 Never Let Me Go
W Apr 29 Never Let Me Go
M May 4 Diana Evans, “The Beginning”

Final Exam TBA