Sophister Module Description Template 2019-20

Full Name: Literature, Culture, and Identity in England, 1945-1973

Short Name:

Lecturer Name and Email Address: Dr Rosie Lavan, lavanro@tcd.ie

ECTS Weighting: 10

Semester Taught: Hilary 2020

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this module, students will have the ability to:

1. Analyse and compare diverse literary engagements with, and representations of, England and Englishness in the mid-twentieth century

2. Identify and discuss the ways in which historical, political, and social contexts inform the texts studied

3. Evaluate a range of theoretical and critical arguments in this area, and challenge, extend, or synthesise them

4. Propose and justify their own readings of these texts, and the relationship between text and context in this period

5. Reflect on the issues raised by this module, and apply insights and methodologies developed here elsewhere in their study

Learning Aims

Since the United Kingdom voted by a slim majority to leave the European Union in 2016, old conversations about national identity in Britain, and in England specifically, have been prompted and renewed. This module examines a range of texts – essays, fiction, autobiography, drama, and poetry – written in or about England in the mid-twentieth century between the end of the Second World War in 1945 and Britain’s entry to the European Economic Community in 1973. It examines how issues of national identity have been observed, explored, and expressed by authors who have viewed England from different perspectives and varying distances, and how the idea of England has intersected with racial, class, gender, and sexual identities. It considers the effect of two world wars, the decline of the British Empire, and major social reforms, as they are registered in personal and collective terms in these texts. In addition to the core texts, the module will introduce students to relevant sources in the film, music, and art of the period, and draw on seminal critical discussion of these issues, from the 1940s to the present day.

Content:

Week 1: Introduction

Week 2: George Orwell, selected essays (1940s)
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Week 4: Elizabeth Taylor, *A Game of Hide and Seek* (1951)

Week 5: Sam Selvon, *The Lonely Londoners* (1956)


*Week 7: Reading Week*

Week 8: England on Film


Week 11: Angela Carter, selected essays (1970s)

Week 12: Conclusion

Assessment Details:

- Type of Assessment (Continuous and/or Exam): Continuous
- Number of Components: Three: Commentary, due week 6 (2000 words) (30%); Final portfolio, to comprise response to material covered in week 8 (1000 words) (20%), and final essay (3000 words) (50%)
- Word Count of Component(s): 2000; 1000; 3000
- Percentage Value of Component(s): 30%; 20%; 50%

Preliminary Reading List if Available:


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