

Sophister Module Description Template 2021-22

Full Name: A Sense of Ireland: Representing Ireland in post-war Britain

Short Name: A Sense of Ireland

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

ECTS Weighting: 10

Semester Taught: MT

Year: SS

Module Content:

1. Introduction
2. Henry Green, *Loving* (1945)
3. Elizabeth Bowen, *A World of Love* (1954)
4. William Trevor, *The Boarding House* (1964)
5. Brendan Behan, *The Hostage* (1958)
6. Tom Murphy, *A Whistle in the Dark* (1961)
7. Reading Week
8. Edna O'Brien, selected writings (1960s-2010s)
9. Mary Holland and Polly Devlin, selected journalism (1960s-1970s)
10. Conor Cruise O'Brien, selected writings (1970s-80s)
11. J. M. O'Neill, *Duffy is Dead* (1987)
12. Conclusions

Learning Outcomes:

On successful completion of these course, students should be able to:

1. Analyse and compare diverse literary engagements with, and representations of Ireland, the Irish, and Irish identity in Britain in the mid-late 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:

In 1980, the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London staged *A Sense of Ireland*, a major festival of Irish arts which encompassed literature, theatre, film, music, visual arts, and current affairs analysis. At a time when Anglo-Irish political relations were at high tension, as the Troubles in Northern Ireland continued to exert new pressures, this underexplored cultural undertaking presented diverse and nuanced pictures of Ireland and the Irish in Britain. This module uses the festival as a vantage point on other versions of these pictures, by writers from both sides of the Irish Sea, during the second half of the twentieth century, a period which covers such definitive 'national' experiences as the Second World War and its aftermath in Britain, Ireland's emergence and modernization as a Republic, the triangulating crisis of the Troubles, and the economic and emotional reality of mass emigration. The module will consider fiction, drama, and journalism, as well as music, film and the visual arts, to explore cultural reflections of and responses to this evolving relationship between neighbours which, in this post-Brexit era, is undergoing profound change again.

Assessment Details:

- Type of Assessment: Continuous
- Research Exercise due week 6 (2000 words): 30%
- Essay due at the end of term (4000 words) 70%
- Number of Components: Two
- Word Count of Component(s): 2000 and 4000
- Percentage Value of Component(s): 30%; 70%

Preliminary Reading List:

Primary Texts

Behan, Brendan, *The Hostage* (London: Methuen Drama, 2014).

Bowen, Elizabeth, *A World of Love* (London: Vintage, 2017).

Green, Henry, *Loving* (London: Vintage, 2001).

Murphy, Tom, *A Whistle in the Dark* (London: Methuen Drama, 1989): NB the full text of the play is available online via the DramaOnline database, through the TCD Library.

O'Neill, J. M., *Duffy is Dead* (London: Sceptre, 1988): NB this novel is now out of print, but second-hand versions are available online.

Trevor, William, *The Boarding House* (London: Penguin, 2014).

*All other primary texts, including extracts from the festival catalogue for *A Sense of Ireland*, will be made available as pdfs on Blackboard.*

Recommended Secondary Reading

Biagini, Eugenio F., and Mary Daly eds, *The Cambridge Social History of Modern Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

Brown, Terence, *Ireland: A Social and Cultural History 1922-2002* (London: HarperPerennial, 2010).

Corcoran, Neil, *Elizabeth Bowen: The Enforced Return* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

Delaney, Paul, and Michael Parker eds., *William Trevor: Revaluations* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), see especially the essays by George O'Brien and C. L. Innes.

Dunne, Catherine, *An Unconsidered People: The Irish in London* (Dublin: New Island, 2013).

Greene, Nicholas, *The Theatre of Tom Murphy: Playwright Adventurer* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017).

Harte, Liam, *The Literature of the Irish in Britain: Autobiography and Memoir, 1725-2001* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2009).

McCourt, John ed., *Reading Brendan Behan* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2019).

Mooney, Sinéad, 'Edna O'Brien', in Heather Ingman and Cliona Ó Gallchoir eds., *The Cambridge History of Modern Irish Women's Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 244-59.

Shepley, Nick, *Henry Green: Class, Style, and the Everyday* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

Wills, Clair, *The Best are Leaving: Emigration and Post-War Irish Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

—, *Lovers and Strangers: An Immigrant History of Post-War Britain* (London:

Penguin, 2017).

Please note:

- **Curricular information is subject to change.**
- **Information is displayed only for guidance purposes, relates to the current academic year only and is subject to change.**