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Hours: 9:30-11 M, W and by appt.

M, TH 1:30
EC 300
Fall 2008

English 399: Forster's England

Required Texts:

E. M. Forster, Abinger Harvest (Harcourt)
-----, Aspects of the Novel (Harcourt)
-----, Howards End, ed. Paul Armstrong (Norton)
-----, The Longest Journey (Penguin)
-----, The Life to Come and Other Stories (Norton)
-----, Maurice (Norton)
-----, A Passage to India (Everyman)
-----, A Room with a View (Penguin)
-----, Selected Stories, ed. David Leavitt (Penguin)
-----, Two Cheers for Democracy (Harcourt)
-----, Where Angels Fear to Tread (Penguin)

Recommended:

David Bradshaw, ed. The Cambridge Companion to E. M. Forster (Cambridge)
Peter Childs, ed., Routledge Literary Sourcebook on A Passage to India (Routledge)

Course Objectives:

D. H. Lawrence called E. M. Forster "the last Englishman." During his long life (1879-1970), Forster saw the world he lived in utterly transformed, from the growth of the Victorian suburbs to Indian independence, from women's suffrage to the surveillance state. We will explore this seminal period in British culture by reading all of Forster's published writing, from the social satire Where Angels Fear to Tread (1905) to the colonial classic A Passage to India (1924), from pungent political essays in Two Cheers for Democracy (1952) to his homosexual novel Maurice (published just after his death.) Readings will also include chapters from my soon-to-be-published biography of Forster.

Forster's complex life and his provocative position in relation to his time make him an ideal example for cultural inquiry. The course will anchor itself in ideas you first visited in English 220. We will explore what it means to be a modern writer, how publication history intersects with biography, how politics shapes Forster's narratives and his aesthetic, how to educate culture through literary texts (and the perils of doing so), and how Forster's reception has changed over time.

But this is not merely a course about content. It is designed to develop your research and analytical skills toward the work you will undertake in your 403-4 senior sequence. I will not ask you for a standard “research paper” in this class. Instead, the writing assignments will focus on modes of inquiry: how to find and summarize critical debates; how to use interdisciplinary primary sources; how to plumb the depths of Waidner-Spahr’s resources. Every student—including auditors-- will be responsible for explaining aspects of Forster and his world to the class. [See “Speaking,” below.] The final project for the course will be collaborative and interdisciplinary: an exhibit which you will conceive, write, and mount in Waidner-Spahr Library.

You’ll notice that the reading list is loosely- defined. Do not be fooled: there is tons of work to do here. But you will have both the responsibility and the opportunity to shape our inquiry of these texts—including the supplementary reading. Bring your education and your interests to bear. I will serve as resource and guide, but it’s your class to shape and energize. I hope to include a field trip to see a literary exhibit in our class this semester.

Course Requirements:

Speaking:

Each class will begin with five minutes of “what don’t you know” “What do you need to know” questions. These will form the basis of the 4-minute explanations each student present several times during the term. These, along with the quality of your contribution to class discussions, your level of preparation for class, and your contributions to Blackboard, will comprise 20% of your grade

Writing:

Each student will write a critical review paper 20%, an annotated bibliography (20%) and a short research paper (6-8 pp.) connecting an idea in three Forster texts (20%). All three paper topics must be approved by me before they are undertaken. No exceptions.

The remaining 20% of your grade will comprise your portfolio of contributions towards the exhibit in Waidner-Spahr—the catalogue copy, and a reflection on how your contributions relate to the whole. Each student will complete an evaluation of other students’ contributions to the collective project at the end of the term, as part of the evaluative process. You must complete all your explanations, and all your written work to pass the class. Late papers will lose a full letter grade per day.

Our library liaison will be Ms. Christine Bombaro. She can be reached at bombaroc@dickinson.edu

In compliance with the Dickinson College policy and equal access laws, I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that may be recommended for students with disabilities. Such requests are to be made during the first three weeks of the semester. Students are required to register with Academic Resource Services, located on the first floor of Biddle House (contact x 1080 or waybranjd@dickinson.edu) to verify their eligibility for appropriate accommodations.

Students are encouraged to come see me during office hours to discuss their progress in the course. If you have any questions, e-mail me, or stop by my office.

Primary Text/Question:

Aug. 25 Introduction and Class Logistics; Moffat” “A Queer Moment” [handout]

28 Where Angels Fear to Tread

Explanation: _____

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Sept. 1 Where Angels Fear to Tread ; Moffat “A Minority, Not a Solitary” (BB)

Explanation: _____

4 The Longest Journey; Moffat, “Kings and Apostles” (BB)

Explanation: _____

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8 The Longest Journey

Explanation: _____

11 Forster’s Narratives [**critical review paper due**]

Explanation: _____

By this time, all students must have gone to see “Gordon Parks: Crossroads” Exhibit at the Trout Gallery.

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15 A Room with a View

Explanation: _____

Sept. 18 A Room with a View

Explanation: _____

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22 Sexuality –Selected Readings and Moffat “Start with the Fact That” (BB)

25 Howards End

Explanation: _____

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29 Howards End

Explanation: _____

Oct. 2 Howards End

Explanation: _____

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6 Maurice

9 Maurice and Moffat: “Ordinary Affectionate Men” (BB) [**Annotated Bibliography Due**]

Explanation: _____

Fall Pause

16 12 noon: Class will meet for lunch in HUB side room with Guest Lecturer: Prof. Earenfight: Mounting an Exhibition—no class at 1:30

- Oct. 20 A Passage to India
Explanation: _____
- 23 A Passage to India
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- Oct. 27 Class meeting without me: preliminary planning for exhibit; Moffat: “The Spark,
The Darkness on the Walk” ; “Do Not Forget Your Ever Friend” (BB)
30 A Passage to India
Explanation: _____
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- Nov. 3 Politics—Selected Readings; Moffat, “The Last Englishman” (BB)
6 Two Cheers for Democracy
Explanation: _____
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- 10 Two Cheers for Democracy
Explanation: _____
- 13 Christine Bombaro: Finding Resources for the Exhibit and Research Paper
Meet in Waidner Spahr Library at the Mermaid
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- 17 Aspects of the Novel **Research Paper due**
Explanation: _____
- 20 The Life to Come and Other Stories ; Moffat: “Parting with Respectability” and
“A Great Unrecorded History” (BB)
Explanation: _____

Nov. 24 The Life to Come and Other Stories; Moffat: “Toms and Dicks” (BB)

Explanation: _____

Thanksgiving Break

Dec. 1 Exhibition Issues

4 Exhibition Opening and Reception; **individual portfolios due**