

Covert Plots: Secrecy and Espionage in Twentieth Century British Literature

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ENL 4273, Section 41F7
Classroom: TUR 2322
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9:30am - 10:45am

Course Description, Objectives, and Outcomes

The twentieth century was an era of heightened international tensions, global warfare, and the rise of the modern totalitarian state. As such, British literature came to embody elements of a reconnaissance culture, both in *what* authors chose to represent and *how* they chose to do so. Looming threats of domestic terrorism, global warfare, anti-colonial resistance, cold war tensions, and the rise of post-war surveillance culture inspired authors throughout the twentieth century to use espionage and secrecy as literary tactics to comprehend the changing landscapes of the British Empire. Likewise, authoritarian politics beginning at the turn of the century forced stigmatized authors (be they queer, Jewish, Irish, etc.) to adopt covert plots as ways of navigating physical and literary spaces.

This course surveys some of Britain's most influential fiction from the twentieth century, focusing on key developments in literary secrecy and espionage. This course also considers what Cedric Watts calls covert plots, elements of a work of fiction concealed from readership. It introduces students to British literature from the twentieth century. While the body of literature during this period is vast, engaging with these authors will allow us to attend to some of the major formal, philosophical, political, cultural, and aesthetic aspects of the literary cannon and analyze how they contribute to English literary and cultural evolution.

The primary aims of the course are 1) to study critically a wide range of authors and their work, 2) to outline the historical events, cultural productions, political climates, and literary forces from which they emerge, and 3) to sharpen how we read and critically respond to literary texts. We will practice close readings of texts and, when possible, investigate their historical contexts. Additionally, we will discuss the use and development of literary criticism and theory and actively execute various theoretical and critical approaches to literary analysis.

Students will develop critical reading skills of both literary texts and literary criticism. In clear, academic-level prose, students will be expected to make substantiated arguments about the texts they have read, their place in literary history, their broader historical contexts, and the critical scholarship written about literary texts. They will be expected to conduct formal research on literature, using secondary sources to support their arguments.

Required Texts

The following texts are required in their appropriate editions. Texts not listed here will be provided to students via Canvas or otherwise available online.

1. *Kim*. Rudyard Kipling. ISBN: 9780141442372.
2. *The Riddle of the Sands*. Erskine Childers. ISBN: 9780143106326.
3. *The Secret Agent*. Joseph Conrad. ISBN: 9780141441580.
4. *Mrs. Dalloway*. Virginia Woolf. ISBN: 0156628708.
5. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. James Joyce. ISBN: 0486280500.
6. *The Third Man*. Grahame Greene. ISBN: 0140286829.
7. *From Russia With Love*. Ian Fleming. ISBN: 9781612185477.
8. *Translations*. Brian Friel. ISBN: 0571117422.
9. *The Black Album*. Hanif Kureishi. ISBN: 0684825406.

Assignments and Grade Breakdown

Assignments and participation equal a 1,000-point total. Students will be provided with more specific instructions for these assignments in class and on Canvas - below are just brief summaries of what to expect. This course is 16 weeks of material compressed into 6. Be mindful of the accelerated pace and dedicate sufficient time to readings and assignments.

Response Papers (2-3 pages, 200 points total)

Throughout the semester, students are expected to write and submit 4 response papers (2-3 pages each) to a reading of their choice. Response papers are to be submitted prior to the class period in which we will discuss the reading. **No two response papers can discuss the same reading.**

Midterm and Final (300 points total)

At the end of week 3 and week 6, students will be given a brief, 8-10 question midterm and final exam. The exams require identification and explanation of significant passages or texts.

Essay Prospectus/Annotated Bibliography (100 points)

This assignment contains both a formal prospectus for students' Researched Critical Essay and an annotated bibliography of at least 5 scholarly peer-reviewed sources.

Researched Critical Essay (8-10 pages, 300 points)

This essay will be a sustained, formally researched critical analysis in which students will make an original argument about one or more texts using 5 or more scholarly, peer-reviewed sources.

Attendance and Participation (100 points)

Daily and engaged participation is a priority in this course. All students should participate every day in some fashion by offering points of view, raising questions, asking for clarification, attending office hours, and/or writing when it is required. **Attendance is mandatory.**

Grading Scale

A	4.0	93-100	930-1000	C	2.0	73-76	730-769
A-	3.67	90-92	900-929	C-	1.67	70-72	700-729
B+	3.33	87-89	870-899	D+	1.33	67-69	670-699
B	3.0	83-86	830-869	D	1.0	63-66	630-669
B-	2.67	80-82	800-829	D-	0.67	60-62	600-629
c+	2.33	77-79	770-799	E	0.00	0-59	0-599

A: Student fulfills all required aspects of assignment and work shows superior levels of originality, creativity, and critical insight.

B: Student fulfills all required aspects of assignment to adequate degree. Work in this range needs revision.

C: Student fails to complete all required aspects of assignment. Work is incomplete in content. Work in this range needs significant revision.

D: Student neglects basic requirements of the assignment.

E: Student fails to complete assignment.

General Classroom Policies

Attendance and Absences:

Students are allotted 3 absences without penalty. Each subsequent absence lowers the student's overall course grade by one half-letter grade. After 6 absences, the student fails the course. Absences involving court-mandated events, such as jury duty or court testimony, military service, and university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, and religious holidays are excused, but you must notify me of your absence prior to the date you will miss.

An absence on a double-block day counts as 2 absences.

Comportment:

Students at the university level are expected to understand and follow basic principles of classroom behavior. Unruly and/or disrespectful behavior in class will not be tolerated, nor will lesser transgressions such as cell phone use, web-browsing, sleeping, talking above others, etc. Be considerate of diverse identities within and outside of the classroom by treating your colleagues with respect.

Assignment Submission:

Assignments are to be submitted online via Canvas. All assignments must be submitted in MLA format and marked with word count at the very end of the document. **Assignments that do not fulfill these requirements will not be graded.** For an up-to-date reference on MLA style, visit the Purdue Online Writing Lab or see me in office hours. Late work will be accepted under my discretion, and will receive a full-letter grade deduction for every day the assignment is late.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the Student Honor Code. The Honor Code prohibits and defines plagiarism as follows:

A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes (but is not limited to):

1) Quoting oral or written materials, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.

2) Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially similar to a document or assignment not authored by the student.

(University of Florida, Student Honor Code, 15 Aug. 2007

<<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/honorcode.php>>)

University of Florida students are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the entire Student Honor Code.

Statement on Disability:

The Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office provides information and support regarding accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information, see:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

Statement on Harassment:

UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/sexual/>

Statement on Student Honor Code:

All students must abide by the Student Honor Code. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/uqrad/current/advising/info/student--honor--code.aspx>

Schedule of Classes and Assignments

Complete readings and assignments before class on the day they are listed.

Week One:

Monday, June 27 - Course introduction
Tuesday, June 28 - *Kim*; **drop/add ends**
Wednesday, June 29 - *Kim*
Thursday, June 30 - *Kim*
Friday, July 1 - *Kim*; **response paper 1 due**

Week Two:

Monday, July 4 - *The Riddle of the Sands*; **Holiday (No Class)**
Tuesday, July 5 - *The Riddle of the Sands*
Wednesday, July 6 - *The Riddle of the Sands*
Thursday, July 7 - *The Secret Agent*
Friday, July 8 - *The Secret Agent*; **response paper 2 due**

Week Three:

Monday, July 11 - *The Secret Agent*
Tuesday, July 12 - *Mrs. Dalloway*
Wednesday, July 13 - *Mrs. Dalloway*
Thursday, July 14 - *Mrs. Dalloway*
Friday, July 15 - **midterm exam**

Week Four:

Monday, July 18 - *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*
Tuesday, July 19 - *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*
Wednesday, July 20 - *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*
Thursday, July 21 - *The Third Man*
Friday, July 22 - *The Third Man*; **response paper 3 due**

Week Five:

Monday, July 25 - *The Third Man*; **essay prospectus/annotated bib. due**
Tuesday, July 26 - *From Russia With Love*
Wednesday, July 27 - *From Russia With Love*
Thursday, July 28 - *From Russia With Love*
Friday, July 29 - *Translations*; **response paper 4 due**

Week Six:

Monday, August 1 - **researched critical essay due**
Tuesday, August 2 - *The Black Album*
Wednesday, August 3 - *The Black Album*
Thursday, August 4 - *The Black Album*
Friday, August 5 - **final exam**