

English

Anglo-American Literature and the Twentieth Century City

Brescia University College

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This seminar will consider twentieth-century English and American literature encounter with modernity through the vibrancy and variety of the city. Literary tropes established in the nineteenth century are altered and adapted to the changing urban environment, but continuities abound and such tropes mediate our experience of "the city". We will read several texts (Simmel, le Corbusier, de Certeau, and others) that discuss aspects of the city both in its imagined form, its planning, and in its lived experience alongside literature, mostly fiction but some poetry and film as well, that will inform our understanding of how urban space is represented, mediated, and experienced in the twentieth-century.

A tentative reading list offers some sense of the possibilities for the course, though the actual list will depend on the availability of certain books.

Drieser, *Sister Carrie*

Conrad, *The Secret Agent*

Lewis, *Babbitt*

Dos Passos, *Manhattan Transfer*

Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*

Eliot, *The Waste Land* and other poems

Greene, *It's a Battlefield*

Le Carre, *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold*/ or Greene, *The Third Man*

Ackroyd, *Hawksmoor*

Doctorow, *The Waterworks*

Lang, *Metropolis*/ Scott, *Blade Runner*

Objectives:

Students will utilize and develop their critical thinking. They will deepen their understanding of the period's literature, compare British and American texts, and become familiar with less familiar texts. Oral and written communication will be practiced and improved through presentations, class discussions, reflective pieces, and a research essay.

Competencies:

Communication (level 4); Critical thinking (level 4); Inquiry and Analysis (level 4); Problem solving (level 3); Self Awareness and Development (level 3)

Assignments:

Presentation 35%

Essay 35%

Four short reflective pieces 20%

Attendance and participation 10%