The Rise and Development of the Novel

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COURSE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

What is a novel? When, how and why did the novel emerge as a genre? How does it work? Whatever happened to it? How can we improve our understanding of novels? This course is designed to answer all these questions.

The course seeks to provide not just a historical outline of the process of rise and development of the novel but also a critical understanding of the texts involved and a theoretical framework for this understanding, that is, a set of key concepts that are essential for novel reading. In this sense, the course is both a history and a theory of the novel based on the analysis of specific novels written in English.

TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS

Course time will be devoted to lectures, class discussions (or seminars) and presentations, critical reading and critical writing. Lectures will provide basic information about the main trends, forms and authors in English novels and also the narrative topics and devices they epitomize (romance and realism, unreliability and omniscience, self-representation of consciousness...). Seminars will focus on the analysis and discussion of selected works and they will require the regular participation of the students (in the form of an oral presentation by one or two students preceding the discussion and then of every student’s contribution to this discussion). Both lectures and seminars will be held in English (a detailed schedule will be handed out on the first day of the course). Students will be expected to read the set texts (both primary and secondary sources) before class and, most important, be prepared to discuss them.

CONTENTS

Lectures:

A. The Rise of the Novel. A Star Is Born
B. Aspects of the Novel. Homo Sapiens and Homo Fictus
C. Evolution and ¿Death? Who is Sarah?
D. Genre Repertories. Trick or Treat

Readings:

A. Nathaniel Hawthorne. “Introductory to The Scarlet Sethter”
B. M. Forster. Aspects of the Novel / Stephen King. On Writing
C. Frank Norris. The Responsibilities of the Novelist and Other Literary Essays
D. John Fowles. The French Lieutenant’s Woman
E. Any Popular text Chosen by the Student
ASSESSMENT

Assessment will be based on regular seminar participation, oral presentation and one or several interviews on the course contents.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Coupland, Douglas. *Life Alter God*
Eagleton, Ferry. *Literary Theroy. An Introduction*
Fiedler, Leslie A. *Love and Death in the American Novel*
James, Henry. “The Art of Fiction”
Klinkowitz, Jerome. *Literary Disruptions*
Lynn, Steven. *Texts and Contexts: Writing About Literature with Critical Theory*
Roberts, Edgar V. *Writing Themes About Literature*
Schoker, Mark. *The World We Imagine*
Tanner, Tony. *City of Words*