

History 207B/307B

The Irish and the World

Autumn 2024

Tuesdays/Thursdays 1:30 PM - 2:50 PM

Building 200, Room 013



Being Irish, he had an abiding sense of tragedy, which sustained him through temporary periods of joy.

– (attributed to) W. B. Yeats

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Course Description

“When anyone asks me about the Irish character, I say look at the trees. Maimed, stark and misshapen, but ferociously tenacious.” The writer Edna O’Brien’s portrait of Irish life encapsulates a history shaped by colonialism, famine, forced migration, and enduring political struggle. This course explores the global story of Ireland, a small land of 4.8 million that since 1800 has produced a diaspora of some 10 million people worldwide. Colonized and colonizers, freedom fighters and slave-owners, the starving and the wealthy, pious and irreverent – the Irish reveal their past through historical records, poetry, short stories, novels, film, and television.

Learning Goals

1. Students will advance their capacity to engage in social inquiry, close reading, and critical thinking about the past and present and deepen their ability to think about how structures of power and difference operate in modern times.
2. They will gain an understanding of key themes in the history of modern Ireland viewed from a global perspective, including:
 - What it meant for the Irish to be colonized
 - How the Irish themselves became empire-builders
 - The emergence of Irish nationalisms
 - The experience of mass starvation and emigration
 - The creation of a diaspora – and the role of whiteness in defining how the Irish adapted to practices of racial exclusion and inclusion
 - The rise of sectarian violence between Catholics and Protestants
 - The revolutionary struggle for independence
 - The partition of Ireland and movements for and against (re)unification
 - Sectarian and community violence between loyalists and republicans
 - The changing place of Christianity and the churches in Irish culture
 - Controversies surrounding the emergence of a multiethnic and multireligious society
 - Immigration debates and experiences
 - Class conflict and global integration

Books to Acquire

The following books are available for purchase online and are on reserve at Green Library:

Edna O'Brien, *The Country Girls* (1960)

Vona Groarke, *Hereafter: The Telling Life of Ellen O'Hara* (2022)

The films may be viewed via various streaming services, and the remaining readings are on Canvas.

Course Schedule

Note: We reserve the right to add short readings or film viewings to the syllabus to supplement those below. We promise to give advanced warning.

Week 1: Introduction and Framings—September 24 and 26

Tuesday:

Introductions and welcome to the class!

Thursday:

Fintan O'Toole, *We Don't Know Ourselves* (2021), 1-5.

Week 2: The Colonized and the Colonizer—October 1 and 3 (Rosh Hashanah)

Tuesday:

Jane Ohlmeyer, "Introduction: Ireland in the Early Modern World," *The Cambridge History of Ireland*, vol. 2 (2017), 1-19.

"Laws in Ireland for the Suppression of Popery commonly known as the Penal Laws."

"Deposition of Ann Frere," 8/1/1644, 1641 Depositions, Trinity College Dublin, MS 830, fols 032r-033r.

Thursday:

Liam Hogan, Laura McAtackney and Matthew C. Reilly, "The Irish in the Anglo-Caribbean: servants or slaves?" *History Ireland* no. 2 (2016).

Laurence Fenton, "Clean Hands? Ireland, Slavery and the Slave-Trade," *History Ireland* 28, no. 5 (2020): 14–15.

Rory Carroll, "Trinity College reckons with slavery links as Ireland confronts collusion with empire," *The Guardian*, March 7, 2021.

Week 3: Famine and Migration—October 8 and 10

Tuesday:

Ciara Boylan, "Famine," in *The Princeton History of Modern Ireland*, 403-419.

Robert Scally, *The End of Hidden Ireland*, 1-8, 159-183, 217-229.

Lady Jane Wilde 'Speranza', "*The Famine Year*" (1847)

Thursday:

Enda Delaney, "Diaspora," in *The Princeton History of Modern Ireland*, 490-505.

Week 4: The Irish Abroad—October 15 and 17

Tuesday:

Jill C. Bender, "Ireland and Empire," in *The Princeton History of Modern Ireland*, 343-357.

Thursday:

Vona Groarke, *Hereafter*.

Week 5: Nationhood—October 22 and 24

Tuesday:

The Declaration, Resolutions: And Constitution, of the Societies of United Irishmen (1791)

Daniel O'Connell on Justice for Ireland (1836)

The Ulster Covenant and Declaration (1912)

Proclamation of the Irish Republic (1916)

Tom Kettle, "To My Daughter Betty, the Gift of God" (1916) read by Cian Siggins

Thursday:

Film: *The Wind That Shakes the Barley* (2006)

Week 6: The Irish and the Dead—October 29 and 31

Tuesday: Green Library visit.

Thursday: James Joyce, *Dubliners* (“The Sisters,” “Araby,” “Counterparts,” “Grace,” and “The Dead”).

Week 7: Transformations - November 7

Thursday

O’Brien, *The Country Girls*

Week 8: The Irish and the World—November 12

Tuesday:

Fintan O’Toole, *We Don’t Know Ourselves* (2021), chpt. 4

Film: *Brooklyn* (2015)

Week 9: The Troubles--November 19 and 21

Tuesday:

Marc Mulholland, “Political Violence,” in *The Princeton History of Modern Ireland*, 382-401.

Thursday:

The Miami Showband Massacre (2019)

Thanksgiving week**Week 10: From ‘The Troubles’ to The Celtic Tiger – December 3 and 5**

Tuesday:

Amanda Haynes, Sindy Joyce, and Jennifer Schweppe, “The Significance of the Declaration of Ethnic Minority Status for Irish Travellers,” *Nationalities Papers* 49, no. 2 (2021): 270–88.

Emma Dabiri, “‘Race, It Would Appear, Complicates Things’: An Irish Immigration Story,” *Here Magazine* (n.d.).

Thursday:

Derry Girls, Season 1, Episode 3 (2018)

Film: *Kneecap* (2024)

Assignments

Reading and Discussion (40% of final grade): The single most important element of this class is reading and discussion. While there will be some lectures, this class is essentially a reading course in which you are expected to read (or view, in the case of films or photographs) all the material and participate in lively and informed discussions of the major themes raised each week. Your final grade will strongly reflect your class participation. The goal is *quality*, not necessarily quantity of commentary. Feel free to raise issues that strike you as interesting, curious, problematic, or even absurd. Reading all the assignments carefully will help you point to specific references or examples to illustrate and support your claims. We aim to create a class environment that is inclusive and supportive of a variety of perspectives and voices. So, if you are a generally shy person who needs some assistance to be encouraged to speak, let us know – we can accommodate that.

Written assignment (30% of final grade): Students will write one paper (5-7 pages for 4 units and 8-10 for 5 units) devoted to the analysis of a primary sources chosen in consultation with the instructors. These may include novels, short stories, poems, speeches, posters, photographs, or other artifacts. Please submit your paper in Microsoft Word by email to daughton@stanford.edu and rcrews@stanford.edu between November 12 and December 12. Where practical, please also include a copy of your primary source.

Presentation (30% of final grade): All students will be expected to make an individual presentation on a subject chosen from a list provided by the instructors. These themes run the gamut from art to politics, so choose one that is of interest. The 10-minute presentation should be concise and professionally delivered to the class, preferably with supporting images and other relevant visual materials.

Class Guidelines

Attendance is mandatory. Please be in touch via email as soon as possible to excuse absences in case of illness, injury, or significant personal situation--or if challenges arise that may affect your ability to attend and/or participate. Students are permitted one unexcused absence. Each additional absence will lower one's final grade by one letter.

The Honor Code

Honor Code violations are a serious offense, even when committed unintentionally or out of ignorance. Academic integrity is one of the pillars of scholarship; without it, honest, open, and vigorous exchanges are not possible. Please read and get to know the University's [honor code](#) and well as its regulations regarding plagiarism.

Please note that the use of generative AI sources of any kind is not permitted in the drafting or composition of any assignment for this class.

Students with Documented Disabilities

Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). Professional staff will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty dated in the current quarter in which the request is being made. Students should contact the OAE as soon as possible since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk (phone: 723-1066, <http://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/oea>).