

Modernist Magazines and Digital Humanities

ENG 79.6

<http://macaulay.cuny.edu/seminars/material-modernism>

M-Th – 11:50-1:35, New Ingersoll 232

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Office Hours: Boylan 2311, Tues. 11:00-11:45, before/after class, or by appointment.

Bulletin Description

Study in a genre, theme, or movement in Modernism with emphasis on intensive writing, critical analysis, and research methodologies. Topic is selected by the instructor. Course description may be obtained in the department office before registration.

Prerequisite: English 2 or 2.7; English 52; one of the following: English 51, one advanced elective in the major field, or permission of the chairperson.

Abstract

This course will explore the fervent magazine culture that spawned literary modernism in early 20th Century Britain and America. Attention will be paid to reading methods of the periodical genre — i.e. how to interpret poems and essays that appear alongside graphical elements such as advertisements and drawings — with an eye toward recontextualizing the experimental literature that became a defining feature of the 20th Century. Recent digital archiving initiatives such as the Modernist Journals Project (<http://modjourn.org>) will form a substantial component of our primary reading. Students will also be introduced to the emerging field of digital humanities through collaborative work performed on our course website. We will use contemporary Web 2.0 tools to map and visualize such discourses as race, gender, empire, and aesthetics, exploring how the technology integrates with and enhances our research and critical methods.

Course Website & Timeline

Our course website is not only an information hub but the place where collaborative work will happen. You will perform several research-oriented assignments in small groups, the results of which will be posted to the website. In that way, you will make it an archive of scholarship and research ideas for this emerging branch of modernist studies. The website also displays an interactive timeline of discourses in magazines, to which you will contribute. The timeline will be a resource for you as you complete your own writing assignments, and can also serve as a resource for other scholars of modernist magazines. In that way, we will talk about the intellectual operations involved both in building this kind of resource and in using it in for our own scholarly writing.

There might be an occasional reading response assignment on the website, but you are encouraged to write blog posts, to contribute links, and to add or edit content at any time. Remember, it's your site, so think about how your work affects the overall product, and make the most of it!

The Modernist Journals Project

The Modernist Journals Project—<http://modjourn.org>—will be our primary source. Be sure to familiarize yourself with the entire site. The magazines can be found by clicking on the “Journals” link in the main navigation.

Required Texts

Most readings are in the course packet, available at Far Better Copy (43 Hillel Pl.) for \$15.50. There might also be one or two more readings assigned from online sources.

Grading

Class Participation	15%
Blog Posts	20%
Projects	30%
Final Project	35%

Attendance

Since we have only 13 meetings, each one counts. More than two absences will result in a failing grade for the course.

Week 1: Modernism, Magazines, Digital Humanities

M 6/1

How should we read magazines? Introduction to the Modernist Journals Project (<http://modjourn.org>) and literary modernism.

T 6/2

Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane, “Preface” and “Movements, Magazines, and Manifestos: The Succession from Naturalism.”

Spend some time “thumbing through” or searching *The New Age* and *Blast* at the MJP. Come prepared to talk about how you moved around in the magazines, to share some general impressions, and to indicate one interesting example (note the issue and page #) to share onscreen in class.

W 6/3

Computer Lab—meet in the West End Building (W.E.B.) lobby, at normal class time.

* Located behind Roosevelt Hall and the tennis courts, alongside the athletic field

We will learn how to edit the course website & timeline by means of a hands-on activity. Before this meeting, spend an hour or two looking around in any of the magazines that catch your interest and note 2 or 3 things that you think are worth sharing (a poem, graphic, advertisement, essay—whatever). Make sure to take down the magazine title, item title, item author, item date and page number. You will spend the lab time entering this information into the course timeline, and then we'll talk about what you've put up. If there's time, you can work on your blog posts that are due tomorrow.

Th 6/4

Sean Latham, “*New Age Scholarship: The Work of Criticism in the Age of Digital Reproduction*”; Sean Latham and Robert Scholes, “The Rise of Periodical Studies.”

Due: Project #1 — Blog post (2+ paragraphs) about the thing(s) you posted to the timeline in yesterday's lab workshop.

Week 2: Topics of Early Modernism, 1900-1914

*The Blue Review, Dana, The English Review, The New Age, Poetry, Rhythm, *The 1910 Collection*

M 6/8

George Bornstein, “How to read a page: modernism and material textuality.”

Look through the magazines in the list above (only between the years 1900-1914) for examples of what Bornstein calls bibliographic coding. *Be prepared to talk* about one instance of it in class.

T 6/9

Due: Blog post (1-2 paragraphs) about an interesting instance of bibliographic coding in your assigned magazine, with some analysis; tag your post with "Bibliographic Coding" (without the quotation marks) and comment on at least one other post.

W 6/10

Computer Lab (meet in Library Room 384): work in small groups on Project #2.

Th 6/11

Due: Project #2 — Timeline entries and collaborative blog post (5+ paragraphs) on 1 magazine, several topics. In-class roundup & general discussion.

Field trip! Presentation in the Special Collections Archive, 1:00 - 1:35.

Week 3: 1914-1915, *Blast* & Commodity Culture

M 6/15 — NO CLASS — but you do have homework!

Due: Blog post (2+ paragraphs, tag as “Timelining” without the quotes) reflecting on what you learned from using the timeline tool to write your collaborative assignment. (I will read and comment on these from afar.)

T 6/16 — NO CLASS — but work on Project #3

W 6/17 — NO CLASS — but work on Project #3

Th 6/18

Mark Morrisson, “Marketing British Modernism: The *Freewoman*, the *Egoist*, and Counterpublic Spheres.”

Read through *Blast* 1 & 2.

Due: Blog post (2-3 paragraphs) on how commercial typographic or rhetorical styles are employed in a magazine other than *Blast*.

Week 4: 1914-1919, The Great War & Modernist Discourses

Blast, The New Age, The Owl, Poetry, Scribner's, Wheels

M 6/22

Paul Peppis, "Surrounded by a multitude of other Blasts': Vorticism and the Great War."

T 6/23

Due: Blog post (2+ paragraphs) on WWI in your magazine and its relationship to other topics that seem relevant (like empire, nationalism, race, gender). If the war seems to be absent, why is that significant in your magazine? (i.e. in relation to the literary content)

W 6/24

Computer Lab (meet in Library Room 384): Timeline entries on WWI in your magazine.

Th 6/25

Due: Project #3 — Timeline entries and blog post (6+ paragraphs) on one theme in all magazines from the list above, as they touch on WWI.

Week 5: 1920+

Coterie, The New Age, The Owl, Poetry, The Tyro, Wheels

M 6/29

Raymond Williams, "When Was Modernism?"

T 6/30

Visit with Cliff Wulfman, founding member of the MJP and architect of its search engine.

Michel Foucault, "What is an Author?"; Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author."

W 7/1

Computer Lab (meet in Library Room 384): Timeline entries for 1920-22.

Th 7/2

Jerome McGann, "How to Read a Book."

Due: Project #4 — Individual timeline entries and blog post (+/- 5 paragraphs) on a post-war topic.

Final papers (5-7 pp.) due Tues. 7/7