

ULYSSES WEEKLY

An immersive online course

Access to numerous lectures available online
with live discussions over Zoom Thursdays, 6:00-7:30 PM ET

Instructor: Robert Berry

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Required Texts: James Joyce, *Ulysses: The Corrected Text* (Viking, ed. Gabler et al.)
Don Gifford and Robert Seidman, *Ulysses Annotated* (U of CA Press)

DESCRIPTION

One hundred years later and people are still reading, and talking about, James Joyce's ULYSSES. From Samuel Beckett to Michael Chabon, from Jackson Pollack to Sean Scully, from Orson Welles to Spike Jonze and from Bob Dylan to Patti Smith few single works of literature have had the same inspiring effect on so many artists of different disciplines, making it one of the most widely read and discussed works of fiction written in the English language.

ULYSSES Weekly is an immersive course offered intended for first-time or returning readers of the novel. The instructor, Robert Berry, has been teaching *ULYSSES* for years at the University of Pennsylvania and here at the Rosenbach Museum & Library where he has created a unique hybrid course for online learning. Running from just after Joyce's birthday right up to Bloomsday, students will have access to many short lectures which reveal some of the novel's mysteries and its continuing attraction to so many readers. Students may view or listen to these pre-recorded lectures at their own convenience. Participants will also have the opportunity to read at the Rosenbach's Bloomsday Festival on June 16, 2024.

The course will also include our live weekly conversations on Zoom, where we will discuss the challenges of the novel one episode at a time. This will give students the chance to take guided instruction from professor Berry beyond the short lectures. These discussions will also be recorded and available to students who might not be able to make the weekly meetings.

The Rosenbach Museum & Library is home of one of the great Joyce collections in the world, including the most complete manuscript of *Ulysses* in existence. Included in this course will be both an in-person and an online presentation of our Joyce materials.

GOALS

Students in this class will be exposed to the intricacies, enigmas and hilarities of James Joyce's best-known work *ULYSSES* in time for Bloomsday, June 16th, when the novel is celebrated worldwide. By working together we may gain a deeper understanding of one of Western literature's most inspiring achievements and the impact it might have in our lives and our own creative process today.

Secondary readings (provided online) and class discussions (or occasional diversions) may dip into Joyce's earlier and later works, but that isn't a necessary part of the study. The main goal will be that we read this novel together and unravel some (though certainly not all) of its many mysteries.

Each week students will find numerous short lectures in text, audio and video format to aid them in their way through the novel. There will be links to other online resources for understanding the novel as well as for events going on during its Bloomsday celebrations. We will be taking up the challenge here at a good speed, so these short lectures are meant to serve as aids for the many mysteries that often baffle first-time readers.

Students will also be invited to live weekly Zoom conferences each Thursday from 6:00-7:30 PM ET. As we hope to have people joining us from a number of different time zones, attendance for this will vary, but the chats will be recorded and available on the site the next day.

ASSIGNMENTS

This is a non-accredited course in which the idea of assignments feels a bit ridiculous. But reading and engaging with this work over an eighteen week period can be fairly daunting, so there are really just two requirements:

-Purchase both the books listed above. It really is important to have the annotations.

-Talk to one another. Fast though our pace might seem, never be afraid to slow it down with a question or an observation. If we're to make this journey as a group then everyone's frustrations and joys with the novel (and there will be many of both for each of you) matter to us all.

Students will also find a great number of additional readings and lectures offered via Google Classroom for those wishing to go deeper into the Joycean waters. These additional readings are meant to supplement the novel and showcase the enjoyment (or bafflement) felt by generations of readers. They are not to be seen as a requirement but as an aid, or a dessert even, to your diet of weekly Joyce.

READING ASSIGNMENTS

2/15 First meeting; “a toe-drag at the shoreline”

*While the regular Zoom calls begin at 6:00PM ET, the instructor will open the call fifteen minutes early to help with any log-in issues. Students who will be joining this first night are encouraged to log-in early so class can start on time. This will give us all a chance to get to know one another.

- Introductions to one another and to the course
- Why is the novel more fun to read in groups?
- Introductions to Joyce and the novel’s history
- A discussion of the methods and internal struggles found in “Telemachus”

*Please read Episode I “Telemachus”, pages 3-19 (using the Gifford/Seidmann as needed). There are seven short lectures and other support materials for this section which will be available to students.

2/22 Second meeting; “diving in while you can still see the bottom”

- Who’s saying what and how can you tell?
- A discussion of themes and details from the “Nestor” and “Proteus” episodes
- The ghost story
- The point where the book is most likely to become a plantstand
- Just what is going on with Stephen Dedalus and why should we care?

*Please read Episodes II and III, “Nestor” and “Proteus”, pages 20-42 (using the Gifford/Seidmann as needed). There are five short lectures and other support materials for this section which will be available to students.

2/29 Third meeting; “getting our bearings and feeling the tide”

- The big Roman numeral II
- Welcome Mr Bloom
- A healthy and sometimes unhealthy love of detail
- Discussions of style and subtext in “Calypso” and “Lotus Eaters”
- How far to take the Homer

*Please read Episodes IV and V, “Calypso”, and “Lotus Eaters”, pages 45-71 (using the Gifford/Seidmann as needed). There are four short lectures and other support materials for this section which will be available to students.

3/7 Fourth meeting; “a quickening tide of conversations and opinions”

- The Everyman and the Outsider
- Again with the anti-Semitism
- The inventiveness of Bloom
- The shifting alignment of the narrator
- Who is Stephen, who is Bloom, who is Joyce and who are we?

*Please read Episodes VI, “Hades”, pages 72-94 (using the Gifford/Seidmann as needed). There are three short lectures and other support materials for this section which will be available to students.

3/14 Fifth meeting; “the waters become choppy”

- The big shift in style
- A chorus of narrators and the Arranger behind them
- The “Parable of the Plums” and other befuddlements
- The Avatar Model and “Who is he when He’s at Home?”
- Joyce’s Clockwork city

*Please read Episode VII, “Aeolus”, pages 96-122 (using the Gifford/Seidmann as needed). There are six short lectures and other support materials for this section which will be available to students.

3/21 Sixth meeting; “the moon affects the tides which affects us all”

- Discussions of the major changes in method and the new revelations of character within the “Aeolus” and “Lestrygonians” episodes
- Close reading, the value of listening, and taking from it what you can
- How memory is awakened

*Please read Episode VII, “Lestrygonians”, pages 124 -150 (using the Gifford/Seidmann as needed). There are three short lectures and other support materials for this section which will be available to students.

3/28 Seventh meeting; “cautionary tales from the drowning man”

- An examination of the Hamlet Theory, “Paternity as a Legal Fiction”, the consubstantial essence, and just what is eating Stephen Dedalus
- How the “cracked lookingglass” cracks further in “Scylla and Charybdis”

*Please read Episodes IX, “Scylla and Charybdis”, pages 151-179 (using the Gifford/Seidmann as needed). There are three short lectures and other support materials for this section which will be available to students.

4/4 Eighth meeting; “seeing the pattern of the waves cannot save us from the riptides”

- The “Clockwork City” of Joyce’s Dublin revealed
- The minor characters take center stage during the intermission
- Some difficult bits of interiority
- Using the microcosm of “Wandering Rocks” for world-building and story enrichment

*Please read Episode X, “The Wandering Rocks”, pages 180 -208 (using the Gifford/Seidmann as needed). There are three short lectures and other support materials for this section which will be available to students.

4/11 Ninth meeting; “the mournful call of seabirds to sailors”

- The very puzzling and very revealing preamble
- The song of Sirens
- Mr Bloom investigates, but steers clear of the rocks
- Dublin men in bars and the women who serve them-Little time for Irish history and a greater interest in girls’ magazines
- A cominglingly of thoughts on Shakespeare
- Irish history and modern lyricism renders as a fart joke

*Please read Episode XI, “Sirens”, pages 210 -239 (using the Gifford/Seidmann as needed). There are three short lectures and other support materials for this section which will be available to students.

4/18 Tenth meeting; “trusting the stories of fisherfolk”

- The “Nameless One” and just what he’s doing there
- Some thoughts on the status of Irish republicanism
- Who knows what about whom and who thinks what about Bloom?
- The significance of a biscuit tin

*Please read Episode XII, “Cyclops”, pages 240-283 (using the Gifford/Seidmann as needed). There are three short lectures and other support materials for this section which will be available to students.

4/25 Eleventh meeting; “those lovely seaside girls”

- The male gaze and the feminine subject
- “The Lamplighter” and what does it show us?
- The fireworks and who is watching
- And so Bloom thinks again

*Please read Episodes XIII, “Nausicaa”, pages 284 -313 (using the Gifford/Seidmann as needed). There are three short lectures and other support materials for this section which will be available to students.

5/2 Twelfth meeting; “a storm of styles to drown us”

- ”Hoopsa, boya, hoopsa, hoopsa!”
- The notion of formalized and phallogocentric conversations projected over the birth cycle
- Stephen and Bloom are drawn into new roles
- Just why is “Oxen of the Sun” so damn hard to read?

*Please read Episode XIV, “Oxen of the Sun”, page 314- 349 (using the Gifford/Seidmann as needed). There are two short lectures and other support materials for this section which will be available to students.

5/9 Thirteenth meeting; “visions had while drowning, part one”

- The unstageable play
- The manic director
- The captive audience
- Discussion of the wild structure and hallucinogenic nature of “Circe”
- Politics of state and of homelife

*Please read the opening section of Episode XV, “Circe”, page 350- 429 (using the Gifford/Seidmann as needed). There are three short lectures and other support materials for this section which will be available to students.

5/16 Fourteenth meeting; “visions had while drowning, part two”

- Politics of gender
- Politics of D/S and “just who’s on top?”
- The ghost story of Stephen Dedalus and the resolution through Rudy
- “History is the nightmare”, “a shout in the street” and what Stephen’s scuffle represents

*Please read the second section of Episode XV, “Circe”, page 430- 497 (using the Gifford/Seidmann as needed). There are three short lectures and other support materials for this section which will be available to students.

5/23 Fifteenth meeting; “the sighting of new land”

- Those big Roman numerals again
- The “Nostos”
- The easy parody and mistaken identity in “Eumaeus”
- Authorial voice gets its last, but rather silly, opportunity for drama
- “To the marriage of two minds”

*Please read Episode XVI, “Eumaeus”, page 501- 542 (using the Gifford/Seidmann as needed). There are two short lectures and other support materials for this section which will be available to students.

5/30 Sixteenth meeting; “kissing the ground of that far distant shore”

- The catechism model of “Ithaca”
- Does this method of objectivity give us any of our own?
- Bloom’s budget of Bloom’s day
- The dreamlife of a country gentleman
- “Womb? Weary?”
- The significance of the big black dot

*Please read Episode XVII, “Ithaca”, page 544- 607 (using the Gifford/Seidmann as needed). There are two short lectures and other support materials for this section which will be available to students.

6/6 Seventeenth meeting; “faith is the ground we walk on”

- The number eight, the infinity symbol Nora Barnacle
- The objectified given voice (through the objectifier)
- How Molly rises above all that has been said
- The frank sexuality of Molly Bloom as a liberating force for women
- The final post by the author

*Please read Episode XVIII, “Penelope”, page 608 - 644 (using the Gifford/Seidmann as needed). There are two short lectures and other support materials for this section which will be available to students.

6/13 Eighteenth (and final) meeting; “a meeting on different shores”

We seldom finish talking about the novel once we’ve finished reading it. This final class will focus on the impact of *ULYSSES* on other artists and will include guests from around the world talking about their experiences with Joyce fans.

6/16 The Rosenbach’s Bloomsday Festival, live on Delancey Place

Every year, the world celebrates Bloomsday on June 16, the day that James Joyce’s *Ulysses* is set in 1904. Nowhere celebrates quite like the Rosenbach, home of Joyce’s manuscript. Bloomsday is a day-long public reading held on Delancey Place with musical performances that bring the epic novel to life. Students of this course have the opportunity to read at our Bloomsday Festival.

None of these other texts are required, or even necessary, for your first foray into Joycean waters but many of them sit on my own shelf and I’ve suggested them for students in past classes.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Morris Beja, *James Joyce: A Literary Life* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1992)
- Peter Costello, *James Joyce: The Years of Growth 1882-1915* (New York: Pantheon, 1992)
- Richard Ellmann, *James Joyce* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982)
- Brenda Maddox, *Nora: The Real Life of Molly Bloom* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1988)

Guides

Harry Blamires, *The New Bloomsday Book: A Guide Through 'Ulysses'* (London: Routledge, 1996)

Laura Heffernan, *Sparknotes Guide to James Joyce's 'Ulysses'* (Spark Publishing, 2007)

Declan Kiberd, *'Ulysses' and Us: The Art of Everyday Life in Joyce's Masterpiece* (Norton, 2009)

Margot Norris, ed., *A Companion to James Joyce's 'Ulysses'* (Palgrave Macmillan, 1998)

General Monographs & Essay Collections

Derek Attridge, ed., *James Joyce's 'Ulysses': A Casebook* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004)

Frank Budgen, *James Joyce and the Making of 'Ulysses'* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989)

Richard Ellmann, *Ulysses on the Liffey* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986)

Stuart Gilbert, *James Joyce's 'Ulysses': A Study* (New York: Vintage, 1955)

Clive Hart and David Hayman, eds., *James Joyce's 'Ulysses': Critical Essays* (Berkeley: Univ. of Calif. Press, 1977)

Hugh Kenner, *'Ulysses'* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987)