

Dr. Shari Goldberg
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Office: Keiper 304
Office hours: W 2:30-4:30, and by appointment

English 470, Fall 2016
Thursdays, 1:30-4:20
Brooks College 102

Henry James and the Story of the Mind

Course description

In 1881, Henry James created literary history with *The Portrait of a Lady*: it was the first novel to contain an entire chapter in which nothing happens—except that the main character, Isabel Archer, *thinks*. This course will look backward and forward from this moment in James's career to examine how his representations of mind and body develop and evolve. We'll be guided by James's cast of adventuring ladies—from the American flirt in Venice, Daisy Miller, to the righteous ghost-seeing governess of *The Turn of the Screw*, to the two women sharing one lover in *The Golden Bowl*—as we study psychology and narrative from the 1870s to the 1910s.

Learning goals

The 400-level seminar represents the culmination of the English major's coursework. Accordingly, we will aim for confidence and competence in your:

- familiarity with the evolution of James's career and prose styles
- ability to parse and discuss the nuances of imaginative writing
- ability to research historical and cultural contexts and to employ these interpretively
- skills of close reading, textual analysis, and written argumentation
- development of a set of concerns to pursue and track throughout the semester.

Required materials

Daisy Miller (Dover, ISBN 9780486287737)

The Portrait of a Lady (Norton Critical Edition, ISBN 9780393966466)

The Bostonians (Oxford World's Classics, ISBN 9780199539147)

The Turn of the Screw (Norton Critical Edition, ISBN 9780393959048)

The Golden Bowl (Penguin, ISBN 9780141441276)

Designated notebook and/or laptop, for in-class writing

Recommended text

David McWhirter, ed., *Henry James in Context* (Cambridge, ISBN 9781107456853)

Core expectations

1. Come to each class session prepared to thoughtfully discuss the assigned text. Being prepared means: you have read carefully by annotating the text (annotations include underlining, margin remarks, and/or written notes), you have thought about questions the text raises or you would like to raise about it, and you have composed a generous and serious mindset. Bring your book to every class; if we are reading a handout via Canvas, bring a printed, annotated copy.
2. Use writing and presentation assignments as opportunities to refine your understanding of the texts we read. As we work toward seminar papers, be diligent about collecting ideas that interest you and registering the forms academic arguments take. Make an appointment at the writing center or come to my office hours to develop your analysis.
3. Act respectfully toward me, toward your classmates, and toward our readings. Do not come to class late; do not use your phone during class; do not interrupt. Do listen attentively; do try to figure out what is valuable in what you hear and read; do bring concerns or confusions to the table. Do your own work and do it on time.
4. Visit me, during office hours, if you have questions about texts, discussions, assignments, grades, or policies.

Evaluation criteria

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|--------------------|-----|------------------|-----|
| Contribution | 20% | In-class writing | 15% |
| Group presentation | 20% | Seminar paper | 25% |
| Quotation diary | 20% | | |

Policies

Attendance: I expect you to attend all class sessions. More than one absence will result in your semester grade being lowered (three points per additional session missed). In case of family emergency or serious illness, bring me a note from the Office of the Dean of the College. When you are absent, it is your responsibility to contact a classmate to find out what you missed.

Technology: In general, books, papers, and pens or pencils will be our preferred technologies. Laptops will be permitted for certain, announced writing activities.

Accommodations: Bring me documentation from the Office of Disability Services within the first two weeks of the semester if you need extra time or other support to complete the work of the course.

Academic Citation: Assignments containing plagiarism will be sent to the Office of the Dean of the College and may result in failure of the course.

Communication: Feel free to email me with questions or concerns. You may expect a reply within 24 hours on weekdays and 48 on weekends. I will post announcements and handouts on Canvas.

Schedule of readings* and assignments, due on the date listed

*Texts marked with a [C] may be found in Canvas.

- 9/1 Introduction: from Daisy to Maggie, in prose and biography
- 9/8 *Daisy Miller*
From *Henry James in Context*: "Nineteenth-century America"; "Cosmopolitanism"; "Manners"; "Travel and Tourism" [C]
- 9/15 *The Portrait of a Lady*, chapters 1-19
Group presentation 1: Marriage in the 19th-century. Starting point: *Henry James in Context*, "Courtship, marriage, family" [C]
- 9/22 *The Portrait of a Lady*, chapters 20-42
- 9/29 *The Portrait of a Lady*, chapters 43-55
J. Hillis Miller, "The Story of a Kiss: Isabel's Decisions in *The Portrait of a Lady*" [C]
- 10/6 *The Bostonians*, chapters 1-23
Group presentation 2: Mesmerism and hypnosis. Starting point: *Henry James in Context*, "Psychology" [C]
- 10/13 *The Bostonians*, chapters 24-42
- 10/20 Films: *Portrait of a Lady* (dir. Jane Campion) and *The Bostonians* (dir. James Ivory)
Record scenes as quotations, at least one for each film.
- 10/27 Lawrence Raw, *Adapting Henry James to the Screen*, chapters 9 and 12 [C]
Locate and read a scholarly article on one of the films; record quotations for it and come ready to discuss the argument.
- 11/3 *The Turn of the Screw*
Group presentation 3: Spiritualism. Starting points: in the Norton Edition of *Turn*, HJ letter to Sargeant Perry, p. 97; and "Psychical Research and 'The Turn of the Screw,' pp. 135-138

- 11/10 **Paper proposals due**; informal presentations and discussion of same
- 11/17 *The Golden Bowl*, through book 2, chapter 6 (pp. 1-199)
Group presentation 4: Class. Starting point: *Henry James in Context*,
"Money and class" [C]
- [Thanksgiving break]
- 12/1 *The Golden Bowl*, book 2, chapter 6-book 4, chapter 6 (pp. 200-408)
- 12/8 *The Golden Bowl*, complete (pp. 409-580)
Sharon Cameron, "Thinking Speaking: *The Golden Bowl* and the Production
of Meaning" [C]
- 12/16 **Final paper due** in my office at 10:00 am.

Throw-the-book-across-the-room clause

Many eminent readers have experienced frustration with James's later prose. For some, this frustration becomes so severe that they stop reading and throw the offending text across the room. I recognize that, making your way through a semester's worth of texts, you may become similarly exasperated. Accordingly, for *one session*, you may throw your James across the room—that is, not complete the assigned *primary text* reading. Instead, you must write a 1,000-word explanation of exactly what about the writing you found insurmountable. Include at least one quotation as well as illustrative examples; analyze thoroughly. Humor is acceptable, but your goal should be to account in detail for the text's difficulty. Be prepared to turn in a hard copy of this paper and discuss it with your classmates. (The written assignment will count toward your contribution and quotation diary grades.)