

ENGL 480: ALCOHOL IN/AND MODERNIST FICTION

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Right: Liquor being poured into New York City's sewers during Prohibition (Source).



Course description:

Modernist literature is soaked with booze, as were many of its most prominent authors. But what does the history of alcohol's production, marketing, and consumption have to do with the history of modernist literary techniques? What might the modernists' obsession with alcohol tell us about the socio-historical contexts in which they were writing? In this course, we will soberly attempt to answer such questions while reading some famous modernist texts, such as James Joyce's *Dubliners* and Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*, as well as less-frequently studied works, such as Djuna Barnes's *Nightwood* and Jean Rhys's *Good Morning, Midnight*. Throughout, we will also discuss modernist representations of alcohol and alcoholic consumption in relation to an intoxicating array of subjects, including war, the modern city, the emergence of the New Woman, cults of masculinity, prohibition, the romanticization of drinking culture, Jazz, and the Roaring Twenties.

Proposed assignments:

- Short Assignments (20%)
- Class Presentation (20%)
- Research Essay (30%)
- Final Exam (20%)
- Participation (10%)

Proposed reading list:

- Selections from James Joyce, *Dubliners* (1914)
- Ernest Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises* (1926)
- Djuna Barnes, *Nightwood* (1936)
- Jean Rhys, *Good Morning, Midnight* (1939)
- Malcolm Lowry, *Under the Volcano* (1947)
- Other texts, including short stories by F. Scott Fitzgerald and Dawn Powell, will be made available through our course website