

HON329
The “Real” Westeros: Game of Thrones and Northern Ireland
Summer 2018
Credits: 3



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Catalog Description:

Prerequisite, acceptance to the University Honors Program, or consent of instructor. This course situates George R.R. Martin’s *Game of Thrones* in contemporary dialogues about, multiple perspectives of, and various theoretical approaches to the literary, the visual, the political, and the historical. We will examine Northern Ireland’s tumultuous history and how this history is used, distorted, and/or problematized by tourism involving *Game of Thrones* (both literary texts and the television adaptation).

Course Content:

In this course, we will read sections of George R.R. Martin’s series *Game of Thrones*, use specific scenes from the television series, and gain a greater understanding of Dark Tourism/ThanaTourism and Northern Irish historical and literary works as a way into broader conversations about contemporary cultural, political, and historical issues in Northern Ireland. Relying on these materials, we will particularly explore issues related to fantasy and history; the “Self” and the “Other”; representation and exploitation.

Major Topics Covered:

- I. Diverse experiences, definitions and expressions of culture and identity.
- II. The representation of trauma.
- III. Historiography and Fantasy.
- IV. (Dis)locating Westeros and the touristic experience.
- V. The “Self,” the “Other,” and the “in-between.”

Honors Program Learning Outcomes:

- Obtain a starting point for integrative exploration of the development of cultures and intellectual achievements through a variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives;
- Sharpen the ability to critically analyze and synthesize a broad range of knowledge through the study of primary texts and through engagement in active learning with fellow students, faculty, and texts (broadly understood);
- Understand how to apply more integrative and interdisciplinary forms of understanding in the advancement of knowledge and in addressing complex challenges shaping the world;
- Develop effective communication skills, specifically in the areas of written and oral exposition and analysis.

General Education Learning Outcomes:

In addition to the outcomes specified above, this course also satisfies the following General Education areas:

- **7AI (Artistic Inquiry):** Students compose critical or creative works that embody or analyze conceptually an artistic form at a baccalaureate/pre-professional level.
- **7SI (Social Inquiry):** Students explore processes by which human beings develop social and/or historical perspectives.

Required Texts:

Agee (ed.), Selections from *The New North: Contemporary Poetry from Northern Ireland*
Conroy, Selections from *Belfast Diary: War as a Way of Life*
Cosstick, *Belfast: Toward a City Without Walls*
Martin, *Game of Thrones*
Sharpley/Stone, *The Darker Side of Travel: The Theory and Practice of Dark Tourism*
Various handouts (provided for you and available on Blackboard)

Assignments:

- I. **Pre-Trip Readings:** Much of our goal in visiting the locations within Northern Ireland – the Belfast murals, *Game of Thrones* set locations, and various sites related to the history of the Troubles – involves understanding how (Northern) Irish identity has been imaginatively rendered or obscured for specific political, historical, and cultural purposes. We will prepare for our trip by reading specified selections about the history of Ireland, both in terms of the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland; we will read literary texts from authors who write about the difficulties of forging a national and cultural Northern Irish identity in the midst of political and historical trauma; and we will examine the recent increase in tourism in Northern Ireland (as a result of the filming of *Game of Thrones* in particular parts of the North). These preliminary readings and writing assignments must be completed before our mandatory pre-departure lectures/discussions.

- II. **Narrative Project (300 points):** While we are utilizing literary and historical texts to become acquainted with Northern Ireland and the issues at stake in terms of Irish identity, we will also be creating new paths (as tourists) that reflect our individual and collective experiences. On each day of our trip, then, be sure to record your impressions and relate these experiences to the readings we will have explored before departure. These journal entries will be reviewed and discussed throughout our travels and upon our return, your full narrative (which may include mixed media such as photographs, souvenirs, etc.) will be due and will be presented to the class as a whole (date and time to be determined).

- III. **Final Essay (500 points):** Each of you will complete a final academic essay (12-15 pages) based on a topic related to our readings and travels. This must follow MLA and other specific guidelines (to be discussed and distributed).

- IV. **Participation/Attendance (200 points):** Attendance will be taken at the beginning and the end of each day's activities. Students are expected to be ready for any course related departures at least 5 minutes before the planned time for that departure. Class activities missed because you arrived after the class has departed are the same as if you skipped those activities. **Any absence from planned activities and assignments will result in a drop in your final grade by one full letter grade.**

Requirements:

Readings	
Narrative Project	300 points
Final Essay	500 points
Participation	200 points

Grade Scale:

A	950-1000
A-	910-949
B+	880-909
B	840-879
B-	810-839
C+	780-809
C	740-779
C-	710-739
D+	680-709
D	640-679
D-	610-639
F	0-609

TOTAL

1000 points

Supplemental Bibliography:

Carroll, Clare and Patricia King. *Ireland and Postcolonial Theory*

Hooper, Glenn and Colin Graham. *Irish and Postcolonial Writing: History, Theory, Practice*

Howe, Stephen. *Ireland and Empire: Colonial Legacies in Irish History and Culture*

Kee, Robert. *Ireland: A History*

Kiberd, Declan. *Inventing Ireland*

Larrington, Carolyne. *Winter is Coming*

Lyons, F.S.L. *Ireland Since the Famine*

Instructional Methods: We will combine academic lectures and seminar discussions with travels to various sites within the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland for a total of (at least) 20 hours per week.

Students with Disabilities: In compliance with ADA guidelines, students who have any condition, either permanent or temporary, that might affect their ability to perform in this class are encouraged to inform the instructor at the beginning of the term. The University, through the Center for Academic Success, will work with the appropriate faculty member who is asked to provide the accommodations for a student in determining what accommodations are suitable based on the documentation and the individual student needs. The granting of any accommodation will not be retroactive and cannot jeopardize the academic standards or integrity of the course.

Academic Integrity: Chapman University is a community of scholars which emphasizes the mutual responsibility of all members to seek knowledge honestly and in good faith. Students are responsible for doing their own work, and academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated anywhere in the university.