Daughters, Mothers, and Sisters: Women Who Shaped the Irish Diaspora in America
FYSEM-UA 719
Linda Dowling Almeida
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Tuesday 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Glucksman Ireland House Room 101
Office Hours: Tuesday: 10 to 11 a.m., 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. and by appointment
Fall 2019

Texts:
The Parish and The Hill, Mary Doyle Curran
Long Day’s Journey into Night, Eugene O’Neill

Course Synopsis:
Any successful immigrant community relies on its men and women to survive and thrive. Since the late 1800s Irish female immigrants have been an undeniable and atypical force in the rise of the Irish in America from servant class to elite. Travelling alone without male protection young Irish women found work and oversaw the social mobility of their families from the home, in the classroom, and within the community. This interdisciplinary course will look at the experience of female Irish immigrants and their descendants over the last 125 years. Using fiction, historical sources, personal testimony, and film we will consider the conventional and unique factors that characterize the Irish-American female experience and that contribute to their influence on this ethnic community and the country.

Course Objective:
The objective of this course is two-fold:
1. This course will introduce students to the Irish experience in America, beginning with the community’s peak immigration period in the late nineteenth century. The aim is to have students understand the unique and important place of this ethnic group in America and will focus on the role of women in the community to cement the population within the American culture and to position it for growth and success over several generations. Irish women will be examined through the lens of their roles in the domestic and public spheres and how their Irish heritage informed their work and outlook on life.
2. In addition to the historical content about the Irish experience, the course seeks to improve student research, analytical and writing skills as it pertains to examining primary sources, historical documents, and artistic representation using the Irish record to achieve those goals.

Course Requirements:
We meet once a week, attendance is mandatory and will be considered in the determination of final grades, along with class participation, the readings, and writing assignments that stem from the class readings and discussion. A final, longer paper will be based on the students’ research relying on primary sources. Work is assigned on a weekly basis and is outlined in the syllabus distributed at the start of the semester. The syllabus is also available on-line throughout the semester as are most readings, special assignments, and announcements for the class.
All books are available at the bookstore, but feel free to use library loans or purchase the texts elsewhere. All other articles/readings will be found online in NYU Classes.

All class submissions must be typed, double-spaced and meet the page/word count assigned for each project. Submissions will be graded on content, writing clarity, strength of argument, evidence and narrative cohesion.

Disability Disclosure Statement: Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. The Moses Center website is www.nyu.edu/csd. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

Grade Distribution and Due Dates:
Essay #1 – 15%, September 24 (3 pages – 750 words)
Essay #2 – 15%, October 18 (5 pages – 1,250 words)
Essay #3 – 20%, November 15 (5 pages – 1,250 words)
Final Project Proposal – 5% November 19 (1-2 pages)
Final Project – 35%, December 10 (10 pages – 2,500 words)
Attendance and Participation – 10%

Week 1
September 3
Introduction

In-Class Discussion:
What is objective of the course?
Discuss semester projects, expectations.
Review History of Irish in America 1845-1900
Changing economics in US and Ireland/logistics of immigration, transportation, and banking
Read Mary Anne Sadlier’s Bessy Conway: The Irish Girl in America
Refer to “Mrs. Sadlier and Father Quigley,” The Irish Voice in America: 250 Years of Irish American Fiction, Charles Fanning
Review Records of Emigrant Savings Bank

Read for September 10:

Recommended:
Week 2
September 10
Demographics of the Irish in America

In-Class Activity:

1. Discussion: Who are the Irish in America: A Review of the Demographics
   Review experience of late 19th Century Irish and Irish Americans in US
2. Visit to State Street to look at late 19th Century immigration landmarks

Read for September 17:
Annie O’Donnell selected letters on line (pp. 36-38, 43-45, 49-50, 90-92)
“Ubiquitous Bridget: Irish Immigrant Women in Domestic Service
in America, 1840–1930,” MIA, pp. 332-353
Aife Murray, “Miss Margaret’s Emily Dickinson,” Signs, Vol. 24, No. 3 (Spring 1999), 697-732
Kerby A. Miler with David N. Doyle and Patricia Kelleher, “For Love and Liberty: Iriswomen, Emigration,
Domesticity in Ireland and America, 1815-1920” in Ireland and Irish America: Culture, Class,
Transatlantic Migration (Dublin: Field Day, 2008), pp. 300-326
Filio Marineli, “Mary Mallon (1869-1938) and the history of typhoid fever,” Annals of Gastroenterology,
132-134

Written Assignment for September 17: Prepare two prompts to initiate discussion in class. Submit to
Professor Almeida September 16.

Written Assignment for September 24
Essay #1: 750 words, double-spaced, 12 point type
Prompt: Discuss the primary reasons that young women left Ireland in the late 1800s. Cite your sources.
Using letters, our trip, and readings, identify the biggest challenges they faced on arrival in the United
States.

Week 3
September 17
Domestic Service

In-Class Discussion:
Review off-site visit
Examine Annie O’Donnell’s life in the context of Margaret Lynch Brennan’s essay.
Review domestic service pros and cons
Cartoon Caricatures
Typhoid Mary
Impact on future generations

Read for September 24:
Janet Nolan, Servants of the Poor, 133 pages (selected excerpts to be assigned.)
Irish, pp. 234-251, 630-634 (notes)
Suggested:

**Week 4**

**September 24**

**The Next Generation**

*How the daughters of domestic servants begin the upward socioeconomic climb of the Irish in America.*

Submit:

**Essay#1**

**In-Class Discussion:**
Discuss assigned readings

**Read for October 1:**
Suggested:

**Written Assignment for October 18:**
Essay #2: 1,250 words, double spaced, 12 point type
Prompt:
Examine selected pages of the Emigrant Savings Ledger provided by Professor Almeida. Identify five to ten women who arrived in the United States in the same six month period. Write an account of what their experience was likely to be based on their residence, occupation and contemporary events in the period. For evidence, examine newspapers of the period, refer to our readings and other sources, to create a contextual account of these immigrants’ lives in America.

**Week 5**

**October 1**

**Nuns in the late 19th Century/Early 20th Century**

**In-Class Discussion:**
The role of nuns in the community in the late 19th century and early 20th century
  1. Protofeminist professionals
  2. Impact on the community in the classroom and in healthcare: St. Vincent’s, Foundling Hospital

**Read for October 15:**
Maeve Brennan, “View from the Kitchen,” *New Yorker*, November 14, 1953, pp. 40-45
Kathy McLeod, *Jackie’s Girl*, excerpts 30 pages
Suggested Reading:
Daniel Hartigan memoir, pp. 1-30

**Written Assignment for October 14:**
Submit two prompts electronically to Professor Almeida based on the week’s reading assignments.

**Final Essay Assignment for December 10:** 2,500 words
Prompt:
Your final paper must address some aspect of the Irish-American female experience between 1885 and 2000.
Since we are dealing with fact and fiction you can incorporate novels, films, plays into your study, but they must be examined in light of the reality the fiction references.
You can examine an event, such as the Easter Rising, an institution such as the Catholic Church, a profession such as teaching, or compare generations such as, domestic workers in the 1880s vs domestic workers in the 1950s. You can compare films or books on the broad topics and time periods, ie immigration in the 1920s vs the 1980s.
You must include significant primary sources in your research. If you are stuck on an idea or just are interested in an area, but don't know how to formulate it into a paper topic, let me know and I can help you crystalize your thoughts.

**Draft of proposal for Final Topic Paper Proposal due October 15**
Consider topics for final project. Submit proposal draft to Professor Almeida for approval by October 15 and before 10/22 trip to library.

**Final Proposal** for Final Essay Assignment due November 19

**Week 6**
**October 8**
*Post-War Women in Ireland and the US*

**In Class Discussion:**
Discuss final paper and possible topics
The post-war period in Ireland and the US
What is changed, what has stayed the same
Screen Irish American documentary
Compare Maeve Brennan’s domestics to Annie O’Donnell letters
Read for October 22:
Leo J. Harris, “A Woman Merchant of the Northwest and her Young-Quinlan Company, “ Hennepin History, Spring/Summer 2016, pp. 5-29
Fortune Magazine, July 1935, “Women in Business: III: Sixteen Exceptions to the prove the Rule that Woman’s Place is not the Executive’s Chair, “pp. 81-91

Week 7
October 15
NO CLASS

Submit:
1. First draft of proposal for final project due October 15. Submit electronically.
2. Essay #2 – Submit electronically by October 18

Written Assignment:
Essay #3 Due: November 15
Prompt: Read two of the short stories assigned by Professor Almeida from Cabbage and Bones: An Anthology of Irish American Women’s Fiction. Both stories can be found on the class website. How do these authors address the Irish American experience in their work? How well do they reflect the communities we have examined to date in class? Can you compare their work to any of the other authors we have discussed so far this semester?

Read for October 29:
The Parish and the Hill, Mary Doyle Curran (221 pages)

Week 8
October 22
Irish Women in A “Man’s Job”
Bobst Visit

In-Class Activity:
1. Screen Sleuthing Mary Shanley
   Discuss Elizabeth Quinlan
2. Visit to Library
   Introduction to library services and search engines.
   Begin to research final paper topic.

Read for October 29:
The Parish and the Hill, Mary Doyle Curran (221 pages)
Week 9  
October 29  
Irish American women in their own words

In-Class Discussion:
Discuss The Parish and The Hill

Read For November 5:
Tom Shelley, “Twentieth Century American Catholicism and Irish Americans,” MIA, pp. 574-609 on line.
Suggested:

Written Assignment for November 4:
Compose two prompts for discussion based on readings for November 5. Submit to Prof. Almeida by November 4.

Read for November 12:
Long Day’s Journey into Night, Eugene O’Neill, 165 pages
Charles Fanning, “Regional Realists of the Thirties and Forties,” Irish Voice in America, pp. 292-312

Screen for November 12:
The Quiet Man

Week 10  
November 5
Late 20th Century Irish America: Immigration and Neighborhood Change, Female Voices of Change

In-Class Discussion:
Discuss late century immigration and Vatican II
Listen to oral histories of Anne Maguire, Alice McDermott, Sr. Murphy,

Read for November 12:
Long Day’s Journey into Night, Eugene O’Neill, 165 pages
Suggested Reading:
Charles Fanning, “Regional Realists of the Thirties and Forties,” Irish Voice in America, pp. 292-312

Screen for November 12:
The Quiet Man

Week 11  
November 12
Women Emerging on Stage and Screen in the Post-War Period

In-Class Discussion:
Discuss Long Day’s Journey into Night
Discuss the The Quiet Man
Compare treatment of women in both works.
Review requirements for final paper and how to include primary sources
Reading for November 19:
Miriam Nyhan Grey, “Dr. Gertrude B. Kelly and the Founding of the Cumann na mBan,” *Ireland’s Allies*, pp 75-89
Anne Maguire, *Rock the Sham*, pp. 22-45, 48-63
Janet Nolan, *Servants of the Poor*, excerpts (20-30 pp)
Suggested:

Week 12
November 19
Radicals, Reformers
*Margaret Sanger, Nellie Bly, Anne Maguire, Dr. Gertrude Kelly, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn*

Final Project Proposal Due

In-Class Discussion:
Discuss these women who battle convention

Read for December 3:
*Brooklyn* by Colm Toibin, 262 pages
Screen for December 3:
*Brooklyn* (the film)

Week 13
November 26
Thanksgiving Break
No Class

One-on-one meetings with students to discuss final project.

Read for December 3:
*Brooklyn* by Colm Toibin, 262 pages
Screen for December 3:
*Brooklyn*

Week 11
December 3
Books into Film
*Immigration from the Irish Point of View*

In-Class Discussion:
Discuss *Brooklyn* as a film and a book
Final review of requirements for final paper.
**Week 15**  
*December 10*  
**Final Projects Due**

**In-Class Activity:**  
Students present final projects