

The Country House Novel in Britain and Ireland

English Literature course

Offered during September for students studying for the fall term or extended academic year

Course Overview

This course will explore the ways in which English and Irish authors have used the setting of the country house to explore questions of class, wealth, gender, sexuality, nationhood, and empire. For Victorian and twentieth-century writers, the country house became an uncanny relic of a half-forgotten feudal past. We will look at how Gothic fiction envisaged the psychic space of the country house as both a crypt of repressed desires and a battleground for broader social tensions. The reading list includes works by Henry James, D.H. Lawrence, Elizabeth Bowen and others.

Teaching methods and assessment

This course is taught through seminars, lectures and small-group tutorials. Assessment will comprise of tutorial essays and a class presentation.

Supplementary activities

In addition to the course students are encouraged to visit country houses around Oxford, or further afield to supplement their teaching and learning. Students also have the option of attending a play in London.

This course will be led by Dr Harry Daniels, Lecturer at St Anne's College.



Hatfield House, Hertfordshire, image courtesy of The English Home