

Literature 491
Senior Seminar
Spring, 2011



Class meets: TR 1:45-3:00 in KH 206
Instructor: Merritt Moseley. Office: KH 239
Office hours: MTWR 9-10; MW 2-3, and other times by arrangement
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INTRODUCTION

This course serves as a capstone course for the literature major. As such, it offers students an opportunity to engage in an intellectual project which can challenge and satisfy them during their concluding course of study for the B.A.. The essay you produce in this course will serve as a significant measure of your competence as a literature major, as well as fulfilling the university requirements of information literacy intensive (ILI), writing intensive (WI), computer competency and oral competency.

This capstone project necessitates: 1) identifying a significant question or issue of interest within one or more literary texts; 2) exploring the issue through research and articulating your interpretive position vis-à-vis the existing body of criticism; and 3) communicating these findings through a significant paper (minimum length 20 pp.) and presenting at the undergraduate research symposium (tentatively scheduled for April 21).

Copies of your paper are kept on file in the Dept. of Literature and further archived and made available online (with your permission) via Ramsey Library. Think about the implications of this fact; you are representing your best possible efforts not to me, but to potential readers throughout the world. Each semester, the department faculty votes on the best senior paper (Bryan Award). Winners are announced at the departmental award function in the spring.

For more information on LITER 491, see <http://literature.unca.edu/information-juniors-and-seniors#researchseminar>.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

At the conclusion of the course, students will demonstrate

1. a substantial understanding of the meanings, conventions, technical features and the historical and cultural contexts of their selected work[s] of literature;
2. advanced literacy through their interpretation and analysis of literary criticism and primary texts;
3. competency in all stages of the writing process (prewriting, drafting, revision and editing) ;
4. an ability to recognize, employ and adapt the technical, rhetorical and imaginative features of English to produce a polished and substantial research paper;
5. the ability to integrate their own ideas with the ideas of others;
6. oral competency in verbal communication skills through class discussions and in a formal presentation at the undergraduate research symposium;
7. computer competency in their ability to use electronic environments for drafting, reviewing, revising, editing and sharing texts as well as their ability to locate, evaluate, organize and use research material from a range of electronic sources.

Students will demonstrate the following Information Literacy Intensive learning outcomes in their ability to

1. find information presented in different formats (for example, in books, scholarly journals, and authoritative web sites).
2. evaluate information presented in different formats
3. integrate information from different sources into their assignments
4. cite information from different formats as appropriate to the discipline in which they are writing.

5. demonstrate academic integrity by respecting intellectual property, using information ethically, and avoiding plagiarizing

Students will satisfy the following Writing Intensive learning outcomes:

1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the roles played by various genres of writing in their respective disciplines.
2. Students will demonstrate through the drafting of their written work and understanding of the process of revision in writing projects.
3. Students will be able to articulate a coherent thesis or purpose in their writing and support it with evidence and argumentation appropriate to a given discipline or audience.
4. Students' writing will demonstrate the conventions and tone appropriate for its given purpose.

Evaluation:

- Participation 10%
N.B. This includes responsible interaction with your advisor.
- Literary Biography 10%
- Prospectus 10%
- Annotated Bibliography 10%
- UGR Presentation 10%
- Senior Thesis 50%
(N.B. It is not possible to pass the class without a passing grade on the thesis, no matter how exemplary all other graded activities are.)

COURSE POLICIES:

- **Attendance.** The Department's policy on attendance (available at <http://literature.unca.edu/departments-policies>) apply in this class; i.e. more than two unexcused absences may well result in a lowered grade. Likewise, it is important to be prepared for class; if part of the assignment is peer evaluation, you must appear with the work that is to be evaluated. And it's important to come to class on time and stay throughout.
- **If it snows.** If class is cancelled, we will make up the work another time. If it's delayed or operating on a regular schedule, we will have class. If you cannot safely attend, then let me know. I don't want anybody's blood on my hands.
- **Interactivity in class.** You are part of the scholarly community here and silent watchfulness is not sufficient participation. Your participation not only signals your engagement but contributes to the success of your classmates.
- **Honesty in all written work.** The Department's policy on plagiarism (also found at <http://literature.unca.edu/departments-policies>) is clear and uncompromising and I expect everyone to follow it carefully. Plagiarized work may result in failure for the assignment, or for the course,

depending on my decision. If you are ever in any doubt about the honesty/acceptability of some practice governing the use of borrowed material, please ask me, or err on the side of caution, or both. And remember that material taken without acknowledgement from the Internet is plagiarized, just as it would be if taken from a printed book or article.¹

- Please notice that I have official **office hours**; but these are not the only times you can see me. If you need to talk with me, speak to me in class about a good time for you, or drop by, or send me an email. You don't have to be in crisis, or having a problem. You may phone me, either in my office (which has voice mail) or at home (253-6940), though I ask that you not call late at night except in an emergency. I will schedule mandatory conferences from time to time. I do this using Jiffle, an online scheduling system, which I'll clarify as we go along.
- **Students with disabilities.** If you have a disability that requires any sort of accommodation, please make sure that you are registered with the office of Disabled Student Services, located in 219A University Hall (telephone 232-5050); and make your needs known to me (in confidentiality) immediately.
- Every student in this class has an account on UNCA's Gmail server and I will send email to that account and expect you to read it. Feel free to forward your email to some other account if you wish. **But you're responsible for anything I send to your Bulldog email address. Check your email frequently. Don't let your mailbox fill up. Much of the interaction in this class will occur via Moodle, including some assignments (given and received), possibly changes in schedule, etc. Check it.**
- Note workshop days and plan to bring a hard copy of your paper to class on those days.
- If you submit an assignment as an email attachment, you are responsible for confirming its successful delivery.
- **Late Withdrawals and Incompletes.** Late withdrawals and incompletes are only granted in dire circumstances. Not only are they not automatic, but also they require the approval from the instructor, necessitate a formal procedure including a compelling reason ("I didn't get finished" isn't such a reason), and involve other university officials, who may deny the request even if the instructor has approved it. Failure to finish the thesis on schedule will lead to failure, not incomplete.

¹ Much of the material in this syllabus has been adopted, or adapted, from the work of colleagues Blake Hobby and Lorena Russell whose example is gratefully acknowledged.

- All **writing assignments** should be properly formatted using a word processor. Version copies and final versions should be word-processed and carefully edited. Use MLA style for documentation. A good guide to writing academic prose is Dr. Gillum's Dos and Don'ts for Scholarly Writing (<http://literature.unca.edu/writing-and-research>). Consult this document when editing your essays. I expect seniors to be able to master conventions like the proper punctuation of quotations and senior papers will not be finally accepted without such mastery.
- **Required textbook:** *The MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 7th edition. Ordered through the bookstore; feel free to buy one used or otherwise you find it cheaper. But everyone must own this book. I have made some other reading assignments from 2 other books (Charles Lipson, *How to Write a BA Thesis*; Wayne Booth, et. al., *The Craft of Research*) and these will be available online; I've also assigned other online readings.

Note Well: Except in a real emergency, explained to me ahead of time, all cell phones must be turned off in this classroom.



Assignments

All assignments should draw upon the assigned readings, supplemental readings, class discussions, research, your own experiences, and your own creative ideas. All sources should be appropriately cited and referenced in MLA style.

You are expected to keep informed about all assignments. Failure to hand in any of the assignments on time will result in a failing grade for that assignment, a "0." Exceptions to this policy will only be made under dire circumstances and then with adequate documentation.

Literary Biography--Due Feb 1 (See Appendix A for a model)

Prepare a 6-page literary biography. You must include a bibliography in MLA style and must cite all sources you use. Use MLA form, textual references, quotes, paraphrases, and parenthetical citations.

Related Resources: Biographies, autobiographies, letters, *The Dictionary of Literary Biography*, *Contemporary Authors*, encyclopedias. Many works in the Reference section of the library are useful. For writing advice, see *The Elements of Style* (Strunk and White). For a model, see Appendix A at the end of the syllabus.

Method of Evaluation: LIT 491 Rubric

Prospectus and Working Bibliography--Due Feb. 15

Perform a close reading of the primary text(s) relating to your topic. Include a main idea that is original (a "thesis"); argue your main idea by marshalling

evidence from the text. Use MLA form, textual references, quotes, paraphrases, and parenthetical citations.

Compile a list of at least 20 scholarly books and journals pertaining to your topic of interest. Rely on the library catalog for books, print journals, and media; use the library's electronic databases for studies in literature: MLA Bibliography, JSTOR, Project Muse, The Literary Reference Center, LION, EbscoHost, WorldCat. Follow MLA style.

Related Resources: For help with MLA style, see *The MLA Handbook, A Research Guide for Undergraduate Students* (Baker and Huling), *A Writer's Reference* (Hacker), the companion site to the Hacker book (<http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/writersref6e/Player/Pages/Main.aspx>), www.zotero.org, and the Son of Citation Machine: <http://citationmachine.net/>.
Method of Evaluation: Graded for completeness and for correctness of citations.

Annotated Bibliography--Due March 1

First, locate scholarly sources that relate to your topic. These may be sources you plan to use to support your argument or sources you plan to refute with your argument. Then, provide detailed annotations, each around 100 words.

Method of Evaluation: Graded for completeness and for correctness of citations.

All Paper Drafts

Include a main idea that is original (a "thesis"); argue your main idea by marshalling evidence from the text. Use MLA form, textual references, quotes, paraphrases, and parenthetical citations. Drafts should incorporate any necessary changes, revisions, and edits required by the senior seminar director and your thesis advisor. The final draft will be published and must be carefully polished.

Method of Evaluation: LIT 491 Rubric

Literature 491 Rubric, courtesy of Blake Hobby

| CRITERIA | A (4) | B (3) | C (2) | D (1) | F (0) |
|--|--|---|---|--|---|
| Essay Purpose Thesis (controlling idea), claim(s), ideas, focus, content | An original, focused thesis; filled with independent thinking | A focused thesis; mostly contains independent thinking | Recognizable thesis; thesis may be too broad or narrow; contains some independent thinking | Contains thesis but purpose is not always clear; little independent thinking | No clear purpose or often does not respond correctly to the assignment; does not meet criteria including length requirements |
| Development Paragraph structure, paragraph focus, general strength of the rhetoric | Thesis is imaginatively, logically and precisely developed; strong analysis guides development; paragraphs are well structured and focused | Examples support the thesis in an orderly and logical fashion; ample analysis guides development; paragraphs are structured and focused | Thesis is sufficiently developed; adequate analysis guides development; paragraphs are structured but may not always be focused | Thesis is insufficiently developed; some analysis guides development; paragraphs are often inadequately structured and focused | Little or no development or often does not correspond to the assignment; fails to meet guidelines including length requirements citations, etc. |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|--|---|
| <p>Organization Overall structure, introduction, conclusion, transitions</p> | <p>Well organized; contains artful transitions between sentences and paragraphs; an inviting lead draws the reader in; a satisfying conclusion wraps things up</p> | <p>Clearly and logically organized; transitions are often formulaic; introduction and/or conclusion work but may not be compelling</p> | <p>Organized; may contain predictable, mechanical sequence; transitions are sometimes weak; introduction and/or conclusion may be minimally satisfying</p> | <p>Some evidence of organization; organization may not be followed clearly; transitions are frequently weak; introduction and/or conclusion may be weak;</p> | <p>No apparent principle of organization; no apparent rationale for paragraphing; may not correspond to the assignment given</p> |
| <p>Source Materials Support, textual references, citations, details, examples, quotes</p> | <p>References to materials are significantly related to purpose; source materials support the controlling idea and provide rich details and examples</p> | <p>References to materials relate to purpose; source materials support the controlling idea and provide details and examples</p> | <p>References to materials are appropriate but may not always be related to purpose; although present, source materials may not contain adequate details and examples</p> | <p>Few references to materials; references may seldom relate to purpose; source materials may often lack adequate details and examples</p> | <p>No references to materials or references are irrelevant; may not correspond to the assignment given; may not contain proper citations, textual references or MLA style</p> |
| <p>Sentence Structure Sentence fluency, paper flow, sentence clarity, sentence variety</p> | <p>Artful sentences that vary in length and structure create compelling writing and forceful rhetoric</p> | <p>Sentences vary in length and structure; sentences sometimes need to be recast for clarity of style</p> | <p>Very few errors in sentence structure; some variation in length and structure; a number of sentences need to be recast</p> | <p>Errors in sentence structure; little variation in length and structure; many sentences need to be recast</p> | <p>Frequent sentence structure errors; some errors may indicate a failure to understand the basic grammar of the sentence</p> |
| <p>Diction Word choice, voice, audience, clarity of language</p> | <p>Concrete, specific words used correctly; diction is distinctive and mature; no colloquialisms, clichés or trite expressions; language anticipates the audience's needs</p> | <p>Word choice is generally accurate; writer goes beyond automatic word choices to more precise and effective choices; language meets the audience's needs</p> | <p>Word choice is generally correct; range of words is limited; in some cases the wording is abstract and imprecise; language sometimes does not meet the audience's needs</p> | <p>Vague, ordinary words; relies on clichés and jargon; language often does not meet the audience's needs</p> | <p>Words that should be within the range of college students are misused or confused.</p> |
| <p>Conventions Grammar and mechanics; paper formatting, bibliography,</p> | <p>Free of spelling, grammatical and mechanical errors; no MLA</p> | <p>Few spelling, grammatical and mechanical errors; minor MLA style</p> | <p>Some spelling, grammatical, mechanical, and MLA errors; errors in syntax,</p> | <p>Major grammatical, mechanical, and MLA (sentence fragments,</p> | <p>Frequent grammatical, mechanical, other basic errors make comprehensio</p> |

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| works cited, overall MLA or APA form | style mistakes (includes formatting, page numbers, heading, header, and citations) | mistakes (includes formatting, page numbers, heading, header, and citations) | agreement, pronoun case and reference, spelling and punctuation | run-on sentences, reference, spelling and punctuation) | n difficult; incorrect MLA form/style |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|---|--|---------------------------------------|

Grade Scale (used for final course grade)

| | | | |
|------------|------------------|------------|------------|
| A (93-100) | A- (91-92) | B+ (89-90) | B (83-88) |
| B (80-82) | C+ (78-79) | C (72-77) | C- (70-71) |
| D (65-69) | F (64 and below) | | |

SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS. DATES HIGHLIGHTED IN YELLOW MEAN NO CLASS MEETING.

| Date | assignment | readings | to be submitted |
|------|---|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1/11 | Introduction | Lipson 304-307 | |
| 13 | Research question | Booth 35-65; MLA 307 | <i>one page; includes advisor's signature</i> |
| 18 | Discussion of Literary Biography | sample Lit Biog on MOODLE | |
| 20 | Conferences; Lit Biog (draft) due | | <i>Draft Lit Biog--before conference</i> |
| 25 | Conferences | | |
| 27 | Discussions of prospectus and working bibliography | MLA 31-33; Lipson 66-86; Booth 68-84 | |
| 2/1 | Literary biography finished | | <i>lit biog</i> |
| 3 | peer reviewing & suggestions | | |
| 8 | Conferences--with prospectus and working bibliography | MLA 123-211, as needed | <i>prospectus/working bib draft--before conference</i> |
| 10 | Conferences | | |
| 15 | Discussion of annotated bibliography | online instructions and example | <i>prospectus/working bib finished and submitted</i> |
| 17 | one article--analyze and evaluate, for peer | Booth 87-88 | <i>title of article, summary of pros and cons--1 page</i> |
| 22 | Conferences re annotated bibliography | | <i>annotated bib by conference</i> |

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|------|---|-----------------------|---|
| 24 | conferences | | |
| 3/1 | article presented to class | | |
| 3 | article presented to class | | <i>annotated bibliography submitted</i> |
| 8 | Spring Break | | |
| 10 | Spring Break | | |
| 15 | Discussion of symposium applications and abstracts | UR guidelines, online | |
| 17 | Submit app and abstract to me | | app and abstract |
| [21] | submit to Undergraduate Research program | | " |
| 22 | Conferences--with 1st 10 pages and 5 sources | | <i>1st 10 pages and 5 sources--by conference</i> |
| 24 | conferences | | |
| 29 | | | |
| 31 | THESIS--WHOLE 9 YARDS | | <i>THESIS</i> |
| 4/5 | Conferences re Thesis | | |
| 7 | Conferences | | |
| 12 | peer editing of thesis | | |
| 14 | peer editing of thesis | | |
| 19 | THESIS DUE | | <i>THESIS</i> |
| 21 | SPRING SYMPOSIUM--ALL STUDENTS EXPECTED TO PRESENT | | |
| 26 | Last minute editing, fixin' etc. | | |
| 28 | THESIS TO DAWN MCCANN, MEETING ALL EXPECTATIONS, PROPER FORM, PERMISSION FORM, CD, ETC. | | <i>PERFECT THESIS, SUITABLE FOR PERPETUAL ARCHIVING</i> |
| [29] | Grades due for graduating seniors | | |
| | | | |

IMPORTANT FINAL WORD:

Much of this syllabus is about what is expected of you. You are entitled to have expectations of me, too. I'm obviously not an expert on all the literature you folks are writing about, or the secondary literature on it, but I hope I can help by being resourceful on finding materials and thinking clearly and usefully about them. I am an experienced academic writer and hope that I can provide a careful second reader for your work as we go along. I will try to be prompt in response.

You have the right to expect me to be accessible. I have announced office hours; if these are not convenient for you, I will be happy to meet with you at other times. Let me know if you want to see me or talk to me. Contact me when you wish, either in person, or by phone or email. If you have questions, about an assignment or anything else, ask me.

The semester moves fast, and accelerates after the midpoint. Don't let things slide. Don't allow questions to remain unresolved. Things can get away from you very quickly and it's hard to recover. I'm always willing to help a student trying to succeed.

APPENDIX A

Here is an example of a literary biography, a bit longer than yours needs to be.

Since 1980, Julian Barnes has made a name for himself as one of the strongest and most interesting of the novelists of his generation, a group that also includes Martin Amis and Ian McEwan. His work is distinguished by its intelligence and wit; its ready willingness to deal with important themes; and its versatility. Even aside from his detective novels, Barnes's novels demonstrate a continual freshness that is unusual. In scope, or ostensible scope, they range from the story of a man seeking the original parrot used by Flaubert while he wrote one of his stories to a professed history of the world (these two books, *Flaubert's Parrot* and *A History of the World in 10 1/2 Chapters*, are probably his best known), though since he investigates the vagaries of the human heart in most of his novels, there is nothing miniaturist about *Flaubert's Parrot* or his other shorter works. Barnes has never won Britain's top prizes for literary fiction and his books do not achieve blockbuster sales but he is, quite rightly, one of the most esteemed contemporary writers.

He was born in Leicester, England, on 19 January 1946. The son of teachers, he enjoyed a fairly typical middle-class upbringing. In 1956 his family moved to Northwood, a London suburb, served by London Underground's Metropolitan line and thus the "Metroland" of his first novel. From 1957 to 1964 he attended the City of London School, commuting by train. He then went on to Magdalen College, Oxford, reading modern languages and receiving his B.A. degree in 1968. He spent the 1966-67 year as an English teacher in a school in Rennes, France. This was one early sign of his lifelong interest in France. Upon

graduation he appeared headed for a career in the law--he actually qualified as a barrister--but never practiced it, choosing instead to work on the margins of the literary world. For instance, he was on the staff of the *Oxford English Dictionary* from 1969 to 1972. During that time he met several other writers of his generation--poet Craig Raine and novelist Martin Amis most importantly--and began reviewing books for the *Times Literary Supplement*, later becoming literary editor of the *New Statesman*. He also wrote restaurant reviews, a television column and another column, under the pseudonym Basil Seal, borrowed from Evelyn Waugh.

After what he thought was a prolonged apprentice period, Barnes published his first two novels in 1980. One of these, *Metroland*, was a short and charming *Bildungsroman* centered on a young man growing up in London's northern suburbs, obsessed with France, and his coming to terms with life. In 1981 *Metroland* was awarded a Somerset Maugham award, given to an outstanding first novel. The other was perhaps more surprising: a detective thriller called *Duffy*, published under the pseudonym Dan Kavanagh. The name seems a tribute to Pat Kavanagh, a well-known literary agent, whom Barnes had married in 1979. *Duffy* is the first of a series, featuring a sleuth who has been disgraced as a policeman (though the suggestion is that he may not have been corrupt enough to succeed in the forces) and is also set apart by being bisexual.

The second *Duffy* novel, *Fiddle City*, concerning criminal corruption at Heathrow Airport, appeared in 1981. The following year appeared Barnes's second "regular" novel--or perhaps Barnes's second novel, full stop, since *Fiddle City* was also credited to Dan Kavanagh--*Before She Met Me*. This is a brilliant study of obsessive jealousy, both funny and horrific.

In 1984 *Flaubert's Parrot* constituted Barnes's "breakthrough." It was his first great success, and, as he has said, "the book that launched me." It is a wonderfully original book, a novel that often seems like something else (and was accused, by some critics, of being no novel at all but a set of sketches, a book of essays, some sort of spoof). The narrator and main character Geoffrey Braithwaite is a Flaubert aficionado (like Barnes) and the novel records his search for the original stuffed parrot which Flaubert kept at hand while writing "Un Cour Simple," a novella which includes a parrot. Indirectly this novel, like its predecessor *Before She Met Me*, is about love and infidelity.

The success of *Flaubert's Parrot* permitted the author to leave much of his freelance journalism behind, though he has continued to practice literary journalism, for a variety of publications, despite what must be an income from his novels such that he no longer needs the journalism. He says he likes it.

The third *Duffy* book, *Putting the Boot In*, was published in 1985. Concerned with skullduggery among the players and owners of a minor professional football club, this one marks a change in that, with a new awareness of AIDS, *Duffy's* bisexuality becomes more complicated. He is in love with a woman with whom he is unable to have sex, while he is able to have frequent short affairs with men. AIDS changes this.

Barnes has discussed his awareness that his "regular" novel following *Flaubert's Parrot* would be difficult--he suggests that the reviewers were looking for *Victor Hugo's Dachshund*--and *Staring at the Sun* (1986) was entirely different. A somewhat subdued account of the life of a woman, Jean Serjeant, from childhood to death, it contains a mystical dimension hitherto absent from the author's work. While no failure, *Staring at the Sun* received temperate notices, especially from British reviewers.

Going to the Dogs (1987) was Barnes's fourth and apparently last Duffy book. He has admitted being tired of the series. This one is set in the world of dog-racing in East London.

In 1989 Barnes published his most ambitious novel so far, *A History of the World in 10 1/2 Chapters*. Though not exactly a history of the world, the novel does begin with Noah and the flood and end in a heaven. The ten chapters of history are all different and discontinuous. The story of the ark is told by a stowaway woodworm and differs significantly from the received story of Noah and his family; another chapter tells the story of a disastrous movie-making expedition in South America; another is the account of a medieval blasphemy trial of woodworms; another is a scholarly account of Géricault's painting called "The Raft of the Medusa." Once again Barnes provided ammunition for critics who argued that his novels were unsatisfactory either because (1) he was more interested in technical experimentation and postmodern sleight of hand than the human realities that underlie the realistic novel; or (2) his books are not the continuous narrative meant by "novel" but rather loose collections of short stories or even essays. Barnes has declared that a novel is "an extended piece of prose, largely fictional, which is planned and executed as a whole" and that (concerning *A History*) "I'm a novelist and if I say it's a novel, it is . . ."

The stories in the book are only apparently discontinuous, being linked through repeated themes or motifs, including the Ark and arks, woodworms, reindeer, and the separation of the clean and unclean. Though there is much in this book which suggests that there is no history, only contending stories, the "half chapter," which is about love, claims that we must believe in love--as we must believe in objective truth--no matter how strongly the evidence may be against it.

The next novel was *Talking It Over* (1991), which returned to some of the traits of *Before She Met Me*, being built on a love triangle with a woman at the apex. The formal innovation of this novel consisted of the address straight to the reader of the three main characters, Stuart, Oliver, and Gillian, who not only strive to seduce the reader's admiration but inquire nervously about what the others are saying, provide warnings against their deceptions, and so on. Again the conflicting stories may seem to suggest that there is no real truth, only conflicting stories, but it is possible to discover the facts, though how they should be judged is another matter.

Commentators on Julian Barnes often mention his unpredictability, his refusal to make one book resemble its predecessors, and the publication, in 1992, of *The*

Porcupine is a good illustration. Set in an imaginary former Communist country (much like Bulgaria, in which it was published) it deals with the moral complexities of freedom and order, truth, ends and means.

In 1990 Barnes was appointed London correspondent for *The New Yorker* and in 1995 he published a collection of his contributions under the title *Letters from London, 1990-1995*. The range of interests, from landscape gardening to politics to stamp design, and the wit and intelligence of the commentary, made this a distinguished addition to his oeuvre.

The next year appeared another illustration of his lifelong interest in France: *Cross Channel*, a collection of short fictions, all in some way about the cultural and historical relationship of the English and the French. The stories include historical reconstructions (like "Dragons," set during the wars of religion) and modern fictions, the best of which, "Experiment," is delicately but richly provocative on art, sex, truth, and the English in France.

As the century drew to a close and the United Kingdom was riven by nationalist forces there was considerable discussion in England of what (if anything) constituted the English identity, and Barnes's *England, England* (1998) is an oblique contribution to that discussion. In it a tycoon decides to construct, on the Isle of Wight, a giant amusement park containing everything that is most English or at least, most exploitably English for tourism. He begins with a survey and finds that the top fifty things associated with England include not just the Royal Family, the House of Parliament, and Manchester United Football Club but also Snobbery, Whingeing, and Not Washing/Bad Underwear. His new England is so successful that the old one returns to something like the dark ages.

In 2000 Barnes returned to the three characters of *Talking It Over*, in *Love, Etc.* (which was the French title given to *Talking It Over*) and shows what has happened to them in the years after Gillian transferred her affections from her husband Stuart to his alleged best friend Oliver. Managed in the same way as the original, that is in alternating monologues which challenge and correct each other and pursue the reader's sympathies, this is a harder novel, with a harder Stuart in some measure avenging his earlier defeat by Oliver and Gillian.

Barnes has announced that his next book will be a collection of essays about France called *Something to Declare* which will be published in January 2002.

Aside from the regular appearances of his novels, Julian Barnes's biography is unsensational. He gives interviews somewhat more grudgingly than many of his counterparts, it seems, and considers his private life off limits to the public. He lives in London, still married to Pat Kavanagh. They have no children. They made news with some marital troubles in the early 1990s, and more recently Barnes has been involved in the notoriety surrounding Martin Amis's book *The Information*, which may contain a disguised portrait of his old friend Barnes, and for which, in the course of demanding an enormous advance, he fired his longtime agent--Pat Kavanagh. The friendship--which is of interest not only because it involves celebrities, but because they are two of the most admired

novelists of their generation--was severed. Barnes has declined to discuss the controversy.

Another controversy concerns his failure to win the most celebrated awards for fiction in Britain, the Booker Prize or the Whitbread Prize. He has been on the "short list"--i.e., a finalist--for the Booker twice, for *Flaubert's Parrot* and *England, England*. He has nevertheless been richly celebrated: he has won the Geoffrey Faber Memorial Award, the Somerset Maugham Award, the French Prix Femina and the German Shakespeare Prize and was made an Officier de L'Order des Arts et des Lettres.

FOR FURTHER READING [. . .]

[Moseley, Merritt. "Julian Barnes". *The Literary Encyclopedia*. First published 07 July 2001[<http://www.litencyc.com/php/speople.php?rec=true&UID=267>, accessed 04 January 2011.]