


Veranstalter	Prof. Dr. Stephan Karschay		
Thema	Law and Literature: British Modernism and Censorship [ENG-6, ENG-6a, ENG-12, AA7, AA10, LAA9, LAA12, IAA21, AA-MA01, AA-MA02, AA-MA03, AA-MA04]		
Art der Veranstaltung	Seminar II		
Veranstaltungsnummer	53-546		
Zeit	Do 14-16		
Raum	online		
Beginn	8. April 2021		

Some of the most famous classics of modernist literature have been the objects of censorship: the serial publication of James Joyce's *Ulysses* was discontinued in Britain, after American courts had already banned the novel wholesale in 1921. D. H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928) was tried for obscenity and banned from publication until 1960, after legislators had introduced a new obscenity law in 1959. The modernist fiction of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was subject to Victorian statutory law, the Obscene Publications Act of 1857, which was applied to 'indecent' publications and daring works of art, yet without clearly delineating what constituted 'obscenity'. However, the threat of censorship by law was only one form of cultural regulation used to police the production of literature in the nineteenth century and beyond. The famous circulating libraries of Mudie's and W. H. Smith's could determine the success of an author by excluding a published novel from their 'select' lists, consequently forcing writers (like Thomas Hardy) to self-censor their work before publication. Proto-modernist movements such as naturalism and decadence combined exciting aesthetic innovations with frank representations of sexuality and more wide-ranging challenges to bourgeois morality that could easily provoke censorious whistle-blowers into alerting the authorities against these new forms of writing. In this seminar, we will engage with the complex relationship between literature and the law in the period from 1880 to 1930. We will examine debates around censorship and the banning of books, which reached a high point at the turn of the century in Britain, and we look at some of the most famous literary scandals in British literary history. **This is a reading-intensive class that will require you to engage with a wealth of critical materials in addition to our primary texts.**

Set Texts

Please buy the following editions; the ISBN numbers will guide you to the correct text.

Moore, George. *Esther Waters* [1897], ed. Stephen Regan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012). [ISBN: 9780199583010]

Hall, Radclyffe. *The Well of Loneliness* [1928], intro. Diana Souhami (London: Virago, 2008). [ISBN: 9781844085156]

Workload:

Studienleistung: Regular contributions to seminar discussions, lively participation in teamwork, an oral group presentation, and written course work (such as reading-response papers). *Prüfungsleistung:* tba.

Further Reading:

Bradshaw, David & Rachel Potter, eds. *Prudes on the Prowl: Fiction and Obscenity in England, 1850 to the Present Day* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

Dolin, Kieran. *A Critical Introduction to Law and Literature* [2007] (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

Marshik, Celia. *British Modernism and Censorship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).