

flann o brien at swim two birds

Flann O'Brien at **Swim-Two-Birds**: A Masterpiece of Metafiction and Irish Wit

flann o brien at swim two birds is a phrase that instantly transports readers into the quirky, labyrinthine world of one of Ireland's most celebrated and inventive writers. **Swim-Two-Birds**, published in 1939, is O'Brien's debut novel and remains a standout work in 20th-century literature, revered for its playful narrative structure, rich humor, and bold experimentation with storytelling. Delving into this novel offers a unique window into Flann O'Brien's literary genius and the vibrant cultural landscape from which he wrote.

The Enigmatic World of **Swim-Two-Birds**

Swim-Two-Birds is not your typical novel. Right from the start, the reader is plunged into a story-within-a-story, where characters rebel against their author, and narrative layers fold into one another like an intricate puzzle. The novel's title, derived from an old Irish tale, hints at the deep roots O'Brien planted in Irish mythology and folklore, yet the book itself is a modernist romp that challenges conventional storytelling.

What Makes **Swim-Two-Birds** So Unique?

At its core, **Swim-Two-Birds** is a metafictional masterpiece. Metafiction refers to fiction that self-consciously addresses the devices of fiction, often blurring the lines between reality and narrative. O'Brien's work does this with extraordinary flair:

- ****Multiple Narrators:**** The primary narrator, a university student, writes a novel featuring other characters who themselves create stories, resulting in multiple narrative layers.
- ****Characters Rebellion:**** Some characters in the novel become aware of their fictional status and attempt to defy the author, a brilliant device that adds a comic and philosophical dimension.
- ****Intertextuality:**** O'Brien weaves in references to Irish legends, classical literature, and contemporary works, showcasing his deep engagement with literary traditions.

This complexity, paired with O'Brien's razor-sharp wit and penchant for wordplay, makes **Swim-Two-Birds** a work that rewards careful reading and re-reading.

Flann O'Brien's Literary Style and Humor

Understanding **Swim-Two-Birds** requires appreciating Flann O'Brien's distinctive voice. His writing bursts with humor—often absurd, sometimes dark, but always intelligent. The humor arises not just from jokes but from the very structure of the novel and his playful treatment of literary conventions.

Language and Wordplay

O'Brien's mastery of language is evident throughout **Swim-Two-Birds**. His prose dances between the colloquial and the literary, often within the same paragraph, creating a lively and engaging rhythm. He employs:

- ****Puns and linguistic twists:**** These add layers of meaning and delight to the text.
- ****Parody and satire:**** O'Brien mocks literary genres and clichés, from detective fiction to romantic melodrama.
- ****Irish Vernacular:**** The novel captures the cadences and idioms of Irish speech, grounding its experimental narrative in a distinct cultural voice.

This combination of linguistic playfulness and cultural specificity has contributed to the novel's enduring appeal among readers and scholars alike.

The Cultural and Historical Context of **Swim-Two-Birds**

To fully appreciate Flann O'Brien at **Swim-Two-Birds**, it helps to consider the backdrop against which the novel emerged. Ireland in the 1930s was a nation grappling with its identity, shaped by political upheaval and a revival of interest in Irish culture and language.

Irish Literary Tradition and Innovation

Flann O'Brien, whose real name was Brian O'Nolan, was deeply embedded in the Irish literary scene. He was a contemporary of other great Irish writers such as Samuel Beckett and James Joyce, and his work shares certain modernist traits with theirs—particularly the experimental narrative style. However, O'Brien's approach was distinct in its humor and irreverence.

Swim-Two-Birds reflects a playful critique of Irish nationalism, literary pretensions, and the idea of authorship itself. By blending myth with modern narrative techniques, O'Brien both honors and subverts Ireland's storytelling

heritage.

Political Undertones and Satire

Beneath its humor and metafictional antics, **Swim-Two-Birds** subtly engages with the political realities of its time. The novel's skepticism toward authority figures and its portrayal of characters who resist control can be read as a metaphor for Ireland's own struggles with power, censorship, and conformity in the early 20th century.

O'Brien's satirical eye often takes aim at the literary establishment, Irish bureaucracy, and cultural nationalism, making **Swim-Two-Birds** not just a literary experiment but a sharp social commentary.

Exploring Themes in **Swim-Two-Birds**

The richness of Flann O'Brien at **Swim-Two-Birds** lies in its thematic complexity. The novel explores several profound ideas, wrapped in a comedic and fantastical narrative.

Identity and Authorship

One of the central themes is the relationship between the author and the characters. O'Brien cleverly blurs the lines between creator and creation, questioning who really holds power in storytelling. This raises intriguing philosophical questions about free will, control, and the nature of fiction.

Reality versus Fiction

The novel constantly plays with the boundary between reality and fiction. Characters' awareness of their fictional existence and their interaction with the "real" narrator create a dizzying effect that challenges readers to rethink what is real within the story.

Irish Myth and Modernity

By incorporating elements of Irish mythology alongside modern literary devices, O'Brien examines how cultural narratives evolve. This fusion highlights both the enduring power of myth and the possibilities of contemporary storytelling.

Tips for Reading *Swim-Two-Birds* for the First Time

If you're about to embark on the journey of reading Flann O'Brien at *Swim-Two-Birds*, here are some helpful pointers to enhance your experience:

- **Embrace the Complexity:** Don't worry if the multiple narrative levels feel confusing at first. The novel is designed to be playful and challenging, so give yourself permission to enjoy the chaos.
- **Look for Humor:** Pay attention to the wit and irony—they are central to understanding the novel's tone and message.
- **Familiarize Yourself with Irish Culture:** Although not essential, a bit of background in Irish mythology and history can enrich your reading experience.
- **Take Notes:** Keeping track of characters and their stories can help untangle the narrative layers.
- **Revisit Sections:** The novel's richness often reveals itself on multiple readings, so don't hesitate to go back and re-examine passages.

Legacy of Flann O'Brien at *Swim-Two-Birds*

Decades after its publication, *Swim-Two-Birds* continues to captivate readers and influence writers. It has inspired countless authors interested in metafiction, experimental narratives, and Irish literature. O'Brien's innovative style paved the way for postmodern literature, blending humor with philosophical inquiry.

The novel remains a testament to Flann O'Brien's brilliance and his ability to transform traditional storytelling into something fresh and exhilarating. For anyone interested in exploring the boundaries of fiction and the richness of Irish literary culture, *Swim-Two-Birds* is an indispensable read.

Reading Flann O'Brien at *Swim-Two-Birds* is not just about following a story—it's about engaging with a literary puzzle that invites laughter, reflection, and a deep appreciation for the art of storytelling itself.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the central theme of Flann O'Brien's 'At Swim-Two-Birds'?

'At Swim-Two-Birds' explores themes of metafiction, the nature of storytelling, and the fluid boundaries between reality and fiction. It challenges traditional narrative structures by featuring stories within stories and characters who are aware of their fictional status.

How does Flann O'Brien use metafiction in 'At Swim-Two-Birds'?

Flann O'Brien employs metafiction by creating a layered narrative where characters write stories that influence other characters, and the narrator comments on the act of writing itself. This self-referential style blurs the lines between author, narrator, and character.

Why is 'At Swim-Two-Birds' considered a pioneering work in Irish literature?

'At Swim-Two-Birds' is considered pioneering because it broke away from conventional storytelling in Irish literature by incorporating modernist and postmodernist techniques, such as unreliable narration, fragmented narratives, and a playful approach to mythology and folklore.

What role does Irish mythology play in 'At Swim-Two-Birds'?

Irish mythology is integral to the novel, as Flann O'Brien weaves mythological figures and themes throughout the narrative. This incorporation enriches the story's cultural depth and connects contemporary fiction with Ireland's literary heritage.

How has 'At Swim-Two-Birds' influenced contemporary literature?

'At Swim-Two-Birds' has influenced contemporary literature by inspiring writers to experiment with narrative form and structure. Its innovative use of metafiction and intertextuality paved the way for later postmodern works and remains a touchstone for authors exploring narrative complexity.

Additional Resources

Flann O'Brien at Swim Two Birds: A Literary Labyrinth Explored

flann o brien at swim two birds represents one of the most intriguing and innovative contributions to 20th-century Irish literature. This novel,

originally published in 1939, showcases O'Brien's unique blend of metafiction, satire, and narrative complexity. It remains a seminal text in the study of postmodern literature and Irish cultural identity, inviting readers and critics alike to dive into its layered storytelling and playful subversions of traditional narrative forms.

Unpacking the Narrative Complexity of *Swim Two Birds*

Flann O'Brien's *Swim Two Birds* is not merely a novel; it is a literary puzzle that challenges conventional storytelling. The narrative is famously multi-tiered, incorporating stories within stories and characters who are aware of their fictional nature. This metafictional approach disrupts the reader's expectations and compels a more active engagement with the text.

The novel's title itself is derived from an Irish place name, symbolizing the deep cultural roots embedded in the narrative. O'Brien utilizes this setting as a backdrop to explore themes of identity, authorship, and the nature of fiction. *Swim Two Birds* defies a linear narrative structure, interweaving three distinct but interconnected plots: the story of a university student writing a novel, the novel's characters who rebel against their author, and a third narrative involving a detective story.

Metafiction and Narrative Self-Awareness

One of the defining features of *Swim Two Birds* is its metafictional quality. The characters in the student's novel become self-aware and protest against their author's control. This narrative device foregrounds questions about the relationship between creator and creation, a topic that resonates deeply in literary theory.

O'Brien's use of metafiction predates and arguably anticipates many postmodernist techniques, placing *Swim Two Birds* alongside works by writers such as Jorge Luis Borges and Italo Calvino. The novel's self-referential style invites readers to question the boundaries between fiction and reality.

Satire of Irish Literary Traditions

Flann O'Brien's *Swim Two Birds* also serves as a sharp satire of Irish literary conventions and the cultural milieu of the 1930s. O'Brien critiques the tendency of contemporary Irish literature to romanticize rural life and nationalist themes. Through his fragmented narrative and comic tone, he challenges the seriousness and solemnity that dominated Irish letters at the time.

This satirical edge is evident in the novel's playful engagement with Irish myth and folklore, as well as its parodic treatment of popular literary genres such as detective fiction. The text's humor and irreverence open up space for a more diverse and critical understanding of Irish identity.

Thematic Explorations in Flann O'Brien's *Swim Two Birds*

Swim Two Birds is rich with thematic concerns that extend beyond its narrative innovation. At its core, the novel grapples with questions about the construction of identity, the power dynamics inherent in storytelling, and the role of language in shaping reality.

Identity and Fictionality

The novel interrogates the nature of identity by blurring the lines between author, narrator, and character. Characters in *Swim Two Birds* exist simultaneously as fictional creations and as entities with their own agency. This dynamic complicates traditional notions of selfhood and authorship, suggesting that identity is fluid and contingent.

Such exploration aligns the novel with broader philosophical debates on the nature of consciousness and existence. O'Brien's characters' rebellion against their author can be read as a metaphor for the struggle for self-determination in a world dominated by external forces.

Language and Literary Experimentation

Language plays a crucial role in *Swim Two Birds*, both as a tool of storytelling and as a subject of scrutiny. O'Brien's prose style shifts effortlessly between high literary diction and colloquial speech, reflecting the multiplicity of voices within the novel.

The author's linguistic playfulness also extends to his use of Irish English and allusions to Gaelic culture, imbuing the text with a distinctively Irish sensibility. This interplay of languages and registers enriches the reading experience and underscores the novel's thematic preoccupation with cultural hybridity.

Comparative Perspectives and Literary Influence

Considering Flann O'Brien at *Swim Two Birds* in the broader context of

literary history reveals its pioneering nature. The novel's experimental style and thematic concerns place it in conversation with other modernist and postmodernist works.

Comparisons with Contemporary Works

Swim Two Birds shares affinities with James Joyce's *Ulysses* in its Irish setting and linguistic innovation, yet it diverges through its overtly comic and metafictional approach. While Joyce's work is often celebrated for its dense symbolism and stream-of-consciousness technique, O'Brien's novel adopts a more accessible and humorous tone without sacrificing intellectual rigor.

Similarly, the novel's narrative fragmentation and self-reflexivity align it with the works of Vladimir Nabokov and John Fowles, who also explored metafictional themes. However, O'Brien's distinct Irish voice and satirical edge distinguish *Swim Two Birds* in this landscape.

Literary Legacy and Influence

Flann O'Brien at *Swim Two Birds* has influenced generations of writers interested in metafiction and experimental narrative structures. Its innovative blending of humor, cultural critique, and narrative complexity has earned it a cult following among literary scholars and enthusiasts.

The novel's impact is evident in the works of authors such as David Mitchell and Salman Rushdie, who similarly engage with multiple narrative layers and cultural hybridity. Furthermore, *Swim Two Birds* continues to be a subject of academic study, particularly in Irish literary studies and postmodernist theory.

Strengths and Limitations of *Swim Two Birds*

While *Swim Two Birds* is widely regarded as a masterpiece, it is not without its challenges and criticisms. Understanding these aspects provides a balanced perspective on the novel's place in literary canon.

- **Strengths:** The novel's inventive narrative structure and sharp wit make it an enduringly engaging read. Its thematic depth offers rich material for analysis, and its cultural specificity provides insight into Irish identity and literary traditions.
- **Limitations:** The novel's complexity and unconventional style may pose difficulties for some readers, particularly those unfamiliar with metafiction or Irish cultural references. Additionally, its fragmented

narrative can sometimes disrupt narrative flow, requiring patience and attentiveness.

The balance between intellectual challenge and entertainment is a hallmark of O'Brien's writing, making *Swim Two Birds* a rewarding experience for readers willing to engage with its intricacies.

Swim Two Birds remains a testament to Flann O'Brien's literary genius, blending humor, innovation, and cultural commentary in a novel that continues to captivate and provoke thought decades after its publication. Its place as a cornerstone of Irish literature and metafictional narrative endures, inviting ongoing exploration and appreciation.

Flann O'Brien At Swim Two Birds

flann o brien at swim two birds: *At Swim-Two-Birds* Flann O'Brien, 2022-11-02 Along with one or two books by James Joyce, Flann O'Brien's *At Swim-Two-Birds* is the most famous (and infamous) of Irish novels published in the twentieth century. A wildly comic send-up of Irish literature and culture, *At Swim-Two-Birds* is the story of a young, lazy, and frequently drunk Irish college student who lives with his curmudgeonly uncle in Dublin. When not in bed (where he seems to spend most of his time) or reading he is composing a mischief-filled novel about Dermot Trellis, a second-rate author whose characters ultimately rebel against him and seek vengeance. From drugging him as he sleeps to dropping the ceiling on his head, these figures of Irish myth make Trellis pay dearly for his bad writing. Hilariously funny and inventive, *At Swim-Two-Birds* has influenced generations of writers, opening up new possibilities for what can be done in fiction. It is a true masterpiece of Irish literature.

flann o brien at swim two birds: *Alive-alive O!* Rüdiger Imhof, 1985 To find out more information about Rowman & Littlefield titles please visit us at www.rowmanlittlefield.com.

flann o brien at swim two birds: *A Casebook on Flann O'Brien's "At Swim-Two-Birds"* Thomas Foster (C.),

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flann o brien at swim two birds: *Flann O'Brien, Bakhtin, and Menippean Satire* M. Keith Booker, 1995-10-01 This work applies Mikhail Bakhtin's theory of literary discourse and the concept of carnivalisation to the work of Flann O'Brien. The author emphasizes the political and social implications of the writings, arguing that O'Brien maintained a reflexive focus on language throughout his career.

flann o brien at swim two birds: *A Casebook on Flann O'Brien's "At Swim-Two-Birds"* Thomas Foster, 2002

flann o brien at swim two birds: *Irish Modernism* Edwina Keown, Carol Taaffe, 2010 An examination of the emergence, reception and legacy of modernism in Ireland. Engaging with the ongoing re-evaluation of regional and national modernisms, the essays collected here reveal both the importance of modernism to Ireland, and that of Ireland to modernism. This collection introduces fresh perspectives on modern Irish culture that reflect new understandings of the contradictory and contested nature of modernism itself.--

flann o brien at swim two birds: *Flann O'Brien & Modernism* Julian Murphet, Ronan

McDonald, Sascha Morrell, 2014-07-31 *Flann O'Brien & Modernism* brings a much-needed refreshment to the state of scholarship on this increasingly recognised but still widely misunderstood 'second generation' modernist. Rather than construe him as a postmodernist, it correctly locates O'Brien's work as the product of a late modernist sensibility and cultural context. Similarly, while there should be no doubt of his Irishness, and his profound debts to Irish language, history and culture, this collection seeks to understand O'Brien's nationally sensitive achievement as the work of an internationalist whose preoccupations reflect global modernist trends. The distinct themes and concerns tracked in *Flann O'Brien & Modernism* include characterization in branching narrative forms; the ethics and paradoxes of naming; parody and homage; lies and deception; theatricality; sexuality; technology and transport; and the inevitable matter of drink and intoxication. Taken together, these specific topics construct a mosaic image of O'Brien as an exemplary modernist auteur, abreast of all the most salient philosophical and technical concerns affecting literary production in the period immediately before and after World War Two.

flann o brien at swim two birds: *Assembling Flann O'Brien* Maebh Long, 2014-01-02 Flann O'Brien - also known as Brian O'Nolan or Myles na gCopaleen - is now widely recognised as one of the foremost of Ireland's modern authors. *Assembling Flann O'Brien* explores the author's innovative and experimental work by reading him in relation to some of the 20th century's most important theorists, including Derrida, Agamben, Freud, Lacan and Žižek. *Assembling Flann O'Brien* offers a detailed study of O'Brien's five major novels - including *At Swim-Two-Birds* and *The Third Policeman* - as well as his plays, short stories, journalistic output and unpublished archival material. The book presents new theoretical perspectives on his works, exploring his compelling engagements with questions of the proper name, the archive, law, and desire, and the problems of identity, language, sexuality and censorship which acutely troubled Ireland's new state. Combining a wide range of contemporary theory with a sensitivity to the cultural and political context in which the author wrote, Maebh Long opens up entirely new aspects of Flann O'Brien's writings, and explores the ingenious and the problematic within his oeuvre.

flann o brien at swim two birds: *Literary Contexts in Novels*, 2006

flann o brien at swim two birds: *At Swim-Two-birds* O'Brien Flann, 2021-12-22 *At Swim-Two-Birds* is a 1939 novel by Irish writer Brian O'Nolan, writing under the pseudonym Flann O'Brien. It is widely considered to be O'Brien's masterpiece, and one of the most sophisticated examples of metafiction. The novel's title derives from *Snám dá Én* (Middle Ir.: The narrow water of the two birds; Modern Irish: *Snámh Dá Éan*), an ancient ford on the River Shannon, between Clonmacnoise and Shannonbridge, reportedly visited by the legendary King Sweeney, a character in the novel. The novel was included in *TIME* magazine's list of the 100 best English-language novels from 1923 to 2005. It was also included in a list, published by *The Guardian*, of the 100 best English-language novels of all time.

flann o brien at swim two birds: *Flann O'Brien and the European Avant-Garde, 1934-1945* Tobias William Harris, 2025-01-23 Crossing the boundaries of a single-author study, this book uncovers Flann O'Brien's attempt to forge a commercially successful Irish literary project from international avant-garde influences. Situating O'Brien's early work within a global context, the book uses new evidence of his collaborations to reimagine him as a networked writer. O'Brien drew upon experimental techniques to generate new categories of writing, rethink Irish culture and reach a wide audience. This study illuminates a network of cultural production around O'Brien, linking his work to English comic magazines, Dadaist photomontage, Expressionism, Central European theatre, and renowned writers like Jorge Luis Borges and Franz Kafka. By re-examining Flann O'Brien within the context of the momentous global political and cultural crises that spurred avant-garde experimentation, the book also rewrites the cultural history of Ireland in the 1930s and 1940s.

flann o brien at swim two birds: *Irish Writing in the Twentieth Century* David Pierce, 2000 With five Nobel Prize-winners, seven Pulitzer Prize-winners and two Booker Prize-winning novelists, modern Irish writing has contributed something special and permanent to our understanding of the twentieth century. *Irish Writing in the Twentieth Century* provides a useful,

comprehensive and pleasurable introduction to modern Irish literature in a single volume. Organized chronologically by decade, this anthology provides the reader with a unique sense of the development and richness of Irish writing and of the society it reflected. It embraces all forms of writing, not only the major forms of drama, fiction and verse, but such material as travel writing, personal memoirs, journalism, interviews and radio plays, to offer the reader a complete and wonderfully varied sense of Ireland's contribution to our literary heritage. David Pierce has selected major literary figures as well as neglected ones, and includes many writers from the Irish diaspora. The range of material is enormous, and ensures that work that is inaccessible or out of print is now easily available. The book is a delightful compilation, including many well known pieces and captivating discoveries, which anyone interested in literature will long enjoy browsing and dipping into.

flann o brien at swim two birds: Ireland's Gramophones Zan Cammack, 2021-08-10

Because gramophonic technology grew up alongside Ireland's progressively more outspoken and violent struggles for political autonomy and national stability, Irish Modernism inherently links the gramophone to representations of these dramatic cultural upheavals. Many key works of Irish literary modernism—like those by James Joyce, Elizabeth Bowen, and Sean O'Casey—depend upon the gramophone for their ability to record Irish cultural traumas both symbolically and literally during one of the country's most fraught developmental eras. In each work the gramophone testifies of its own complexity as a physical object and its multiform value in the artistic development of textual material. In each work, too, the object seems virtually self-placed—less an aesthetic device than a “thing” belonging primordially to the text. The machine is also often an agent and counterpart to literary characters. Thus, the gramophone points to a deeper connection between object and culture than we perceive if we consider it as only an image, enhancement, or instrument. This book examines the gramophone as an object that refuses to remain in the background of scenes in which it appears, forcing us to confront its mnemonic heritage during a period of Irish history burdened with political and cultural turbulence.

flann o brien at swim two birds: The absurd in literature Neil Cornwell, 2013-07-19 Neil Cornwell's study, while endeavouring to present an historical survey of absurdist literature and its forbears, does not aspire to being an exhaustive history of absurdism. Rather, it pauses on certain historical moments, artistic movements, literary figures and selected works, before moving on to discuss four key writers: Daniil Kharms, Franz Kafka, Samuel Beckett and Flann O'Brien. The absurd in literature will be of compelling interest to a considerable range of students of comparative, European (including Russian and Central European) and English literatures (British Isles and American) – as well as those more concerned with theatre studies, the avant-garde and the history of ideas (including humour theory). It should also have a wide appeal to the enthusiastic general reader.

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flann o brien at swim two birds: Possible Worlds Theory and Contemporary Narratology

Alice Bell, Marie-Laure Ryan, 2019 The notion of possible worlds has played a decisive role in postclassical narratology by awakening interest in the nature of fictionality and in emphasizing the notion of world as a source of aesthetic experience in narrative texts. As a theory concerned with the opposition between the actual world that we belong to and possible worlds created by the imagination, possible worlds theory has made significant contributions to narratology. Possible Worlds Theory and Contemporary Narratology updates the field of possible worlds theory and postclassical narratology by developing this theoretical framework further and applying it to a range of contemporary literary narratives. This volume systematically outlines the theoretical underpinnings of the possible worlds approach, provides updated methods for analyzing fictional narrative, and profiles those methods via the analysis of a range of different texts, including

contemporary fiction, digital fiction, video games, graphic novels, historical narratives, and dramatic texts. Through the variety of its contributions, including those by three originators of the subject area--Lubomír Doležal, Thomas Pavel, and Marie-Laure Ryan--Possible Worlds Theory and Contemporary Narratology demonstrates the vitality and versatility of one of the most vibrant strands of contemporary narrative theory.

flann o brien at swim two birds: Unauthorized Versions José Lanthers, 2000 Certain moments in history, especially periods of cultural turmoil and political change, appear to be conducive to the writing of Menippean satire. *Unauthorized Versions* is the first integral study of Menippean satires written in Ireland in the three decades following the declaration of the Irish Free State in 1922. The book discusses works by Darrell Figgis, Eimar O'Duffy, Austin Clarke, Flann O'Brien, and Mervyn Wall in the context of political and social developments, particularly relating to economic policy, the role of the Church, and censorship. Mikhail Bakhtin defines Menippean satire as an unresolved dialogue between actual and/or implied voices designed to test a truth or philosophical idea. The Irish satirists of the first half of the twentieth century use medieval Ireland as a setting for addressing contemporary concerns, or borrow characters from medieval Irish texts that they place in a modern context. Each satire thus creates a series of dialogues: between the past and present; between characters who represent opposing values and ideologies; and between the older texts and their modern reworkings. *Unauthorized Versions* reveals the double bind at the core of every Menippean satire. Each writer discussed in the book expresses an awareness of the paradox of an author writing in the vacuum created by official censorship, seeking to engage his audience in the dethroning of the very authorities by whom he is deprived of his audience. By revealing his own ambiguous position, the satirist knowingly subverts his own authority along with that of his opponents. This study will appeal to students and scholars interested in Irish literature, genre studies, the reception of the Middle Ages, and the relationship between literature and history. Jos Lanthers, associate professor of classics at the University of Oklahoma, will begin her position as associate professor of English at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in Fall 2000. She is author of *Missed Understandings: A Study of Stage Adaptations of the Works of James Joyce* and coeditor of *Troubled Histories, Troubled Fictions: Twentieth-Century Anglo-Irish Prose*. Irish satire in the twentieth century has awaited a critic as intelligent and well-informed as Jose Lanthers, whose *Unauthorized Versions* nicely complements Vivian Mercier's pioneering efforts. For several of the works she discusses, Lanthers here provides the only substantial criticism they have received to date. Her approach combines sensitivity to form and expression with a constant attentiveness to historical context, while her study is anchored in a lucid and suggestive use of Bakhtin. Every library with an interest in Irish writing will want this book.--R. Brandon Kershner Alumni Professor of English, University of Florida Lanthers' well-argued volume will be a valuable resource for the study of modern Irish prose at the upper-division undergraduate level and above.--Choice Works discussed in *Unauthorized Versions* Darrell Figgis *The Return of the Hero* Eimar O'Duffy *King Goshawk and the Birds* The Spacious Adventures of the Man in the Street Asses in Clover Austin Clarke *The Bright Temptation* The Singing-Men at Cashel The Sun Dances at Easter Flann O'Brien *At Swim-Two-Birds* The Third Policeman Mervyn Wall *The Unfortunate Fursey* The Return of Fursey

flann o brien at swim two birds: The Encyclopedia of Twentieth-Century Fiction, 3 Volume Set Brian W. Shaffer, 2011-01-18 This Encyclopedia offers an indispensable reference guide to twentieth-century fiction in the English-language. With nearly 500 contributors and over one million words, it is the most comprehensive and authoritative reference guide to twentieth-century fiction in the English language. Contains over 500 entries of 1000-3000 words written in lucid, jargon-free prose, by an international cast of leading scholars Arranged in three volumes covering British and Irish Fiction, American Fiction, and World Fiction, with each volume edited by a leading scholar in the field Entries cover major writers (such as Saul Bellow, Raymond Chandler, John Steinbeck, Virginia Woolf, A.S. Byatt, Samuel Beckett, D.H. Lawrence, Zadie Smith, Salman Rushdie, V.S. Naipaul, Nadine Gordimer, Alice Munro, Chinua Achebe, J.M. Coetzee, and Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong'o) and their key works Examines the genres and sub-genres of fiction in English

across the twentieth century (including crime fiction, Sci-Fi, chick lit, the noir novel, and the avant-garde novel) as well as the major movements, debates, and rubrics within the field, such as censorship, globalization, modernist fiction, fiction and the film industry, and the fiction of migration, diaspora, and exile

flann o brien at swim two birds: Modern Irish Writers Alexander G. Gonzalez, 1997-08-26 While the Irish Literary Revival began around 1885 and ended somewhere between 1925 and 1940, the Irish Renaissance has continued to the present day and shows no sign of abating. The period has produced some of the most important and influential figures in Irish literature, some of whom are counted among the world's greatest authors. The Revival saw a reestablishment of Ireland's literary connections with its Celtic heritage, and writers such as William Butler Yeats and Lady Gregory drew heavily on the myths and legends of the past. James Joyce boldly reshaped the novel and wrote short fiction of enduring value. Contemporary Irish writers continue to be leading figures and include such authors as Brian Friel, Seamus Heaney, and Eavan Boland. Included in this reference book are alphabetically arranged entries for more than 70 modern Irish writers, including Samuel Beckett, William Trevor, Patrick Kavanagh, Medbh McGuckian, Sean O'Casey, J. M. Synge, and Nuala Ni Dhomhnaill. Entries are written by expert contributors and reflect a broad range of perspectives. Each entry contains a brief biography that summarizes the author's career, a discussion of major works and themes, an overview of the author's critical reception, and a bibliography of primary and secondary works. An introductory essay reviews the large and growing body of scholarship on modern Irish literature, while an extensive bibliography concludes the volume.

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