**Reading Questions** for ***Brooklyn* (the film)**

**Directions**: Choose **TWO** of the questions below and develop them in some depth. **Please print** out your answers and bring them to class to turn in. Think about the other questions, too, though, so you will be able to say brilliant, insightful things about them in class.

1. Consider the Italian family dinner scene in *Brooklyn*. What does this scene suggest about how identity is formed on the individual, family, and national level? Hint: it is complex! Think about what the Irish in Brooklyn have in common with the Italians who moved there, and what might divide them, too. What does it suggest about the complex identity of children that will be born to Eilis and Tony?
2. When Eilis makes her choice between the two men who want to marry her, how did you feel about it? Can you see why she was tempted by both of them? Do you think it was a good choice for her? Why or why not?
3. Consider the portrait of New York society that we get in this film, which was written by an Irishman who has lived and worked in New York for several years. What does it seem to be showing about the experience of immigrants there? Think not just about the Irish girls and Danny’s family but also the older Irish men we see at Christmas time and the Irish priest. Consider the stressors, the coping strategies, the conflicting pressures that the different immigrants in the story face to both assimilate and to hold onto what matters most about their original culture, and the identity confusion that seems inevitable. What is the film saying about these things? Focus especially on what might have surprised or puzzled you.
4. Read the reviews of the film that I posted, along with the reflection of the Irish woman living in Toronto. Note especially the one for the Irish Times, which says that one of the film’s unconventional features is that Eilis “is a decent person who stumbles into romantic confusion.” Does this seem too generous a judgment? Why or why not?
5. After reading the reviews and noting the combination of elements—evaluation, plot summary, description, analysis, background information—choose one review to respond to. Do you mostly agree or disagree with its judgments? What particular passages of the review did you find the most effective or interesting? Feel free to quote from it.