Spring 1-15-2015

ENG 3807-001: Victorian Literature

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Course Description and Objectives:
Queen Victoria’s reign spanned sixty-four years (1837-1901) and saw England change from a rural and agrarian nation to an imperial world power. Although you will be exposed to a variety of literary forms—poems, short fiction, essays, legal transcripts as well as news reportage—it was during the Victorian period that the novel became, arguably, the dominant genre. Much of our reading then will be taken up with making our way through some big books by major and by lesser known writers. The novel has at its center a protagonist—our hero or heroine—who faces at least one antagonist. Sometimes, as in the case of melodrama, the distinctions between the hero and villain are obvious. In other cases, the lines between hero and villain are blurred, as when our hero or heroine is flawed and our villain sympathetic. In this class we will be tracking these oppositions and the points in between as they appear in classic “realist” novels, detective stories, pulp fiction, psychological thrillers, and African adventures.

At the same time we will put these representations of the heroic and villainous in context. We will become familiar with topics and debates of great interest to the Victorians: the social problems and the enormous discrepancy between the rich and poor, questions concerning faith, the roles and rights of women and men, the position of “Little England” vis à vis her enormous empire.

The objectives of this course include gaining a strong sense of the formal features and aesthetic affects that characterize Victorian literature, as well as the social and political concerns with which literature of that time creatively engages. While as a class we will be looking at the Victorian period by way of constructions of the heroic, you will be free to choose any subject of interest in this era on which to write your final research paper.
Assignments: To achieve the objectives described above students will need to keep up with the rigorous reading schedule and actively participate in the class discussion. Please note that this class will be conducted in a seminar-style format. This means that students are, in their own ways, responsible for the production of knowledge about this period and the literature. It is vital that each person come prepared to engage full with the course material and with each other.

To be fully prepared for each meeting requires having read and thought about the text(s) assigned for the day and able to initiate or contribute to discussion with relevant and meaningful questions or comments that indicate a serious effort to grapple with the readings and the questions that frame this course.

Course Readings:
- Anne Brontë ~ The Tenant of Wildfell Hall
- Charles Dickens ~ David Copperfield
- H. Rider Haggard ~ King Solomon’s Mines
- Alan Moore, et al ~ The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen
- Susie Steinbach ~ Understanding the Victorians
- Robert Louis Stevenson ~ The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde

As well as selected assigned readings available through E-Reserves or distributed in class.

The following assignments will foster the active engagement necessary to make this a productive and exciting learning experience.

I. Papers: Two short essays (15% each)
   One Research-based paper and presentation with annotated bibliography due week fourteen (20%)

II. Examinations: Mid-term (15%) and Final (20%)

III. Other: Mini-Research projects, Discussion Partnerships, General Contribution and Citizenship (15%)

COURSE POLICIES
CLASS ATTENDANCE, punctuality, preparation, and participation are expected and required. You are presumed to be professionals-in-training responsible for attending class regularly and participating in discussion. Furthermore, I can’t teach you if you aren’t in class. In order to deal with unforeseen emergencies, you are allowed to miss up to the equivalent of one week of class (3 classes over the course of the semester) without documented excuse. Any additional absences will, however, be penalized at a rate of one letter grade per two class meetings; any student who is absent for more than nine classes (equivalent of three weeks) will earn a grade of F for the course.

ASSIGNMENTS are to have been completed by class time on the date that they appear on the syllabus. The book(s) in which the day’s assignments are contained should be brought to class. Unannounced quizzes on assigned material may be given at any time. There will be no opportunity to make up missed quizzes or in-class writing assignments. Students are responsible for material covered in class and announcements or assignments made in class as well as for assignments on the syllabus.

MAJOR TESTS AND EXAMS should be written on test booklets, available at the Union Book Store. Please write tests in ink and on the appropriate booklets. Announced tests and exams must be taken
at the scheduled time. Except in cases of DOCUMENTED emergency or official university absence arranged ahead of time, there will be no opportunity to make up mid-term or final exams.

ALL PAPERS AND OTHER WRITTEN WORK must be handed in on the date due. Work turned in late without advance clearance will not be accepted. Any work turned in late with clearance will be penalized, usually at the rate of 5 points per day (not per class meeting) of lateness. Additionally, late submission may delay the grading and return of the paper, perhaps until semester's end. BE SURE TO KEEP A COPY OF EVERY PAPER YOU HAND IN. In the case of a missing paper, the student is responsible for supplying a copy.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS: I will be using different formats for your papers and will specify accordingly.

DOCUMENTATION: Use the MLA system to cite all primary and secondary sources used in preparation of your papers. Also, be sure to introduce sources in your text. Each student should have access to the latest edition of The MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, and to a handbook of usage and mechanics.

RESPONSIBLE USE OF ELECTRONIC MEDIA: Please keep in mind that electronic media materials must be documented as conscientiously and accurately as any other material. Be aware also that it is necessary to ascertain the authority, reliability, and accuracy of all materials and that it may be particularly difficult to do so in the case of electronic media. Be sure to evaluate and clearly identify any source of information, analysis, or opinion; process material from electronic sources as critically and creatively as you do print sources. Check with the Writing Center for up-to-date documentation conventions. DOWNLOADING IS NOT RESEARCH.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: All written work (papers, exams, tests, quizzes) must be prepared independently; all sources and background material (print, electronic, or other) must be digested and acknowledged. Make to understand the meaning of plagiarism and the policy of the English Department:

Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—"the appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author and representation of them as one's original work" (Random House Dictionary of the English Language)—has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of the grade of F for the writing in which plagiarism occurs and a grade of F for the course, as well as to report the incident to the university's Judicial Affairs Office. Respect for the work of others should encompass all formats, including print, electronic, and oral sources.

STUDENTS WITH DOCUMENTED DISABILITIES: If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodation, please note that arrangements must be made through the Office of Disability Services; you should, therefore, contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

Please note: All email communication should include the course number and your last name in the subject line. I prefer a courteous salutation to a casual “yo, professor” and full sentences to text speak.

Course schedule: This is a reading schedule that will be adjusted periodically. This contains the major assignments but there will be readings and work in class or posted online.

Week One
1/12 Introduction to course--Read with curiosity
   Introduction to course content, themes, objectives.
Major events during The Reign of Queen Victoria See Steinbach’s Timeline

Watch George Cukor’s 1935 version of the film *David Copperfield*

HMWK: Read up to and including chapter 21 (XXI)

Response paper: Choose a character and make a prediction based on a careful reading of the text.

1/14 Discuss assigned readings /Start watching Cukor’s *David Copperfield*

Major events during The Reign of Queen Victoria/ See Steinbach’s Timeline

1/16 Continue with Cukor’s *David Copperfield*

Introduce Woloch’s ideas in “The One vs the Many”

Discuss early schooling, meeting Steerforth

Homework: Read: *DC* chapters up to and including Chapter 18

Steinbach: Chapter 1 “A Green and Pleasant Land” of Cities and Slums: Space

And Chapter 4: “Wealth, Poverty, Growth and Slumps: The Economy”

**Week Two**

1/19 Martin Luther King, Jr.’s birthday/ No class – Try to make the world a better place today.

1/21 Discuss *David Copperfield* and Steinbach

Homework: Read *DC* ch 19-22

1/23 Discuss assigned reading.

Homework: *DC* chapter 23-34

Steinbach: Chapter 6: “Born into the Lower-Upper-Middle Class”

**Week Three**

1/26 Discuss Readings

Homework: *DC* chapters 35-40

1/28 Discuss *David Copperfield*

Homework: *DC* chapters 41-48

1/30 Discuss *David Copperfield*

Homework: *DC* chapters 49-55

Steinbach, chapter 3 “Ruling the World: Imperialism”

**Week Four**

2/02 Discuss *David Copperfield* and Steinbach

Homework: read *DC* chapters 56-60

2/04 Discuss *David Copperfield* and Narrative

Homework: Finish *David Copperfield*

2/06 Discuss *David Copperfield*

Introduction to First Essay and create a rubric

First paper due Monday, February 16th.

**Week Five**

2/09 Introduction to *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*

2/11 *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*

2/13 Lincoln’s Birthday/No classes
Week Six:
2/16 Paper One due
2/18 In-class Peer workshop / Conferences with Dr. Bredesen
2/19 Conferences with Dr. Bredesen
2/20 TWH and Married Women’s Separate Property Acts
  Read handout “A Brief Summary in Plain Language of the Most Important Laws
  Concerning Women” by Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon

Week Seven
2/23 Continue Discussion of TWH
2/25 Narrative frame and voice in TWH
2/27 Finish discussion of The Tenant of Wildfell Hall
Introduction to Sensation Fiction
For Monday: Read Handout
Wilkie Collins’s “The Diary of Anne Rodway”

Week Eight
3/02 Revision of paper 1 due
  Discuss “The Diary of Anne Rodway” (1856)
  For Wednesday: Read Christina Rossetti’s “Goblin
  Market” (Handout)

3/04 Discuss “Goblin Market” and the Female Hero(ine)
For Monday read handouts: excerpts from Henry
Morton Stanley’s Through the Dark Continent and
Mary Kingsley’s Travels in West Africa
Be prepared to revisit/discuss Steinbach ch 3
  “Ruling the World”
**Please Bring King Solomon's Mines to class

3/06 Midterm

Week Nine
3/09 Discuss Stanley and Kingsley
  Introduce H. Rider Haggard’s King Solomon’s Mines
3/11 KSM Ch I-V
3/13 KSM Ch VI-IX
  Introduce Final Project and Presentation

Spring Break~March 16-20th, 2015 ~
  This would be a good time to finish reading King Solomon’s Mines

Week Ten
3/23 KSM Ch X-XIII
3/25 KSM Ch XIV-XIX
3/27 Paper Two Due
**Please bring The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde to class on Monday
Read: Steinbach, ch 10 “Good, Murderous Melodramas: Arts and Entertainment” and
Ch 13 “Vestiges and Origins: Science”
Week Eleven
3/30  Conclude discussion of KSM and discuss Steinbach
      Introduce Robert Louis Stevenson’s The Strange Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde
04/01  J&H pp 7-30
04/03  J&H pp 31-62
      Prepare supplemental material for Monday

Week Twelve
04/06  Mini-presentations and discussion
04/08  Introduce The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen volume 1
      LEG 1: “Empire Dreams”
04/10  LEG 2: “Ghosts and Miracles” and LEG 3: “Mysteries of the East”

Week Thirteen
04/13 LEG 4: “Gods of Annihilation” and LEG 5: “Some Deep, Organizing Power”
04/15 LEG 6: “The Day of Be-With-Us”
04/17 Excerpt from Ruth the Betrayer and introduction to Penny Dreadful
      Final paper proposal due

Week Fourteen
4/20  watch Penny Dreadful
4/22  wrap-up discussion of Penny Dreadful
4/23  Conferences with Dr. Bredesen
4/24  TBD

Week Fifteen
4/27  Presentations
4/29  Presentations
5/01  Presentations

Final Exam: Wednesday, May 6th ~ 12.30-2.30pm

William Frith The Railway Station (1862)