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ENG 3807-001: Victorian literature

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English 3807-001: Victorian Literature
TR 11:00-12:15 CH3170
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Through attentive reading and discussion of three major Victorian literary areas (non-fictional prose, poetry, the novel) we will be learning about the Victorian age and its literature not only in terms of its distinctive identity, but also in terms of what we have inherited from it -- its popular economic theories, its mythologies of progress and mission, its spirit of reform, its faith, its skepticism, its diverse tastes, and perhaps above all its anomalies and contradictions. The objective of this course will be, through reading, writing and discussion, to make us more conversant with the literature of the period and to understand it not merely as a body of historical documents, but as something that continues to inform and shape our present culture.

TEXTS:
Mermin, Dorothy and Herbert Tucker, eds. Victorian Literature 1830-1900.
Bronte, Charlotte. Jane Eyre (Norton ed.)
Dickens, Charles. Hard Times (Norton ed.)
Eliot, George. The Mill on the Floss (Norton ed.)
Hardy, Thomas. Jude the Obscure (Riverside ed.)
Haggard, H. Rider. She

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Lively participation in class discussion.

2. Attentive reading. In order to effectively participate in the course, you must keep up with the assigned reading, completing it on schedule. This is essential. One of course must assume, as I certainly do, that you have no life beyond this class. Why should you?

3. Small Group Presentations. For each week an assigned team of two students will be responsible for presenting observations and questions on the assigned reading as a means of introducing and generating class discussion.

4. Papers/Writing. A) Short reading response writings (1 page) in the form of questions/observations for each major reading segment (e.g. novel, sets of poems, essays by a single writer, etc.). B) A 6-8 page paper due before mid-term (topic to be announced). C) Final 8-10 page paper on a minor Victorian literary figure not included on the syllabus. Names to be drawn by lottery. This project will involve:
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- An overview of the writer's work
- Discussion of one or more (if Poetry) representative examples of literary output
- Discussion of the writer's place in relation to Victorian topics, debates, dilemmas, other Victorian writers, etc. In other words, answer the question of what makes this writer a part of the Victorian literary world as it appears in the works we are discussing in class.

(More details forthcoming)

5. You will be required to use the MLA style of documentation and citation. You are expected to consult the current edition of the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers.

6. Exams. You will take a mid-term exam, which will be a take-home essay exam. You will also take a final in-class exam which will be in two sections: 1. an objective section involving definition and identification questions; 2. an essay response section involving a choice of three topics.

7. Regular attendance. (See below)

8. You must complete all course requirements in order to pass the class.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance and active participation are required. According to the current catalog,

Students are expected to attend class meetings as scheduled. When an absence does occur, the student is responsible for the material covered during the absence. When possible, the student should notify the instructor in advance of an anticipated absence.

Instructors will grant make-up privileges (when make-up is possible) to students for properly verified absences due to illness, emergency, or participation in an official University activity; and such absences will not militate against students in classes in which attendance is used directly in determining final grades. It is the student's responsibility to initiate plans for make-up work and to complete it promptly. If in the instructor's judgement the duration or number of absences renders make-up unfeasible, the instructor may contact the Vice President for Student Affairs and the Department Chairperson to determine an appropriate action. (57-58)
In addition, the 2001-2002 catalog includes the following sentences regarding absences: "If a student establishes a record or pattern of absences of concern to the instructor, the instructor may ask the Vice President for Student Affairs to make inquiries concerning the absences. The Vice President for Student Affairs also serves as the University contact person when catastrophic events result in extended student absences" (53).

Unless you have received my consent prior to your absence and you are able to provide me with documented evidence showing that your absence is legitimate and excusable, you are not allowed to make up tests or other graded in-class activities. A phone notification or an in-class personal notification is not considered an automatically legitimate excuse. Remember it is your responsibility to contact either your classmates or me to find out what you have missed and/or if there has been any change made on the original syllabus during your absence.

If you have seven unexcused absences, you will not pass the course. After your fourth excused absence, you must come to see me to discuss your performance in the class. If you accumulate nine or more excused absences, you should seriously consider dropping the class. Don't forget to sign your name on the attendance sheet that I will circulate at the beginning of each class period.

LATE PAPERS: Papers must be turned in on time unless you have received my prior consent. I will accept late papers also in cases of severe illness, official university activity and other urgent reasons upon presentation of a valid excuse issued by a proper authority.

GRADES: The grades for the final paper, two exams, group presentations, general participation, and the averaged grade for all response writings will all count equally and will be averaged to arrive at the final course grade.

Grading is on a 4.0 scale as follows:
A: 4.0-3.6; B: 3.5-2.5; C: 2.4-1.4; D: 1.3-0.1; F: 0.0

Grading of papers will be based on the Guidelines for Evaluating Writing Assignments in EIU's English Department attached to this syllabus.

DEPARTMENT'S STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM: "Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism -- 'The appropriation 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 a grade of F for the course, and to report
the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office."

**DISABILITIES:** If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

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**COURSE CALENDAR**

This syllabus may need to be modified at times. If you are not in class, make sure you find out if there has been any change.

**Week I**

**Jan. 8**

Introduction to the course. General background. Twentieth Century notions of things "Victorian."

**Jan. 10**

Thomas Carlyle: Chapters from Chartism, 1839 and On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History, 1841 (172-184)

(All page numbers for poetry and prose refer to the Mermin & Tucker text unless preceded by B, indicating the Broadview Anthology).

**Week II**

**Jan. 15**

Four chapters from Carlyle: Past and Present, 1843 (184-194).

**Jan. 17**

John Stuart Mill: "Childhood and Early Education" (321-329) and "A Crisis in My Mental History" (332-337) from Autobiography, 1873.

First paper assignment

**Week III**

**Jan. 22**

Harriet Martineau: Chapter from Autobiography, 1855-1877 (290-296); Mill: "What Is Poetry?" 1833 (298-301).

**Jan. 24**


**Week IV**

**Jan. 29**

Ruskin: "The Veins of Wealth," from Unto This Last, 1862 (622-627).

**Jan. 31**


Arthur Henry Hallam: "On Some Characteristics of Modern Poetry" (B 1190)

**Week V**

**Feb. 5**

Matthew Arnold: "The Buried Life" (710); "Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse" (714); "The Scholar
Feb. 7  Alfred, Lord Tennyson: "The Palace of Art" (390); "Mariana" (382); "The Kraken" (383); "The Lotos-Eaters" (394); "St. Simeon Stylites" (396); "Ulysses" (399).

Week VI
William Johnson Fox: "Tennyson - Poems, Chiefly Lyrical - 1830" (B 1181).

Feb. 14  Robert Browning: "My Last Duchess" (544); "The Bishop Orders His Tomb at Saint Praxed's Church" (549).

Week VII
Feb. 19  Browning: "Fra Lippo Lippi" (553); "Andrea del Sarto" (571); "Pictor Ignotis" (548).
Alice Meynell: "Robert Browning" (B 1429)

First Paper Due

Feb. 21  Pre-Raphaelites and others
Dante Gabriel Rossetti:
    "The Blessed Damozel" 801
    "The Woodspurge" 811
    "The Sea Limits"
    The House of Life 812-816
    "Hand and Soul" (Essay) (B 1234)
Robert Buchanan: "The Fleshy School of Poetry Mr. D.G. Rossetti" (Essay) (B 1329)

Week VIII
Feb. 26  Christina Rossetti:
    "After Death" 854
    "Up-Hill" 846
    "The Convent Threshold" 856

William Morris:
    "Apology," from The Earthly Paradise 890
    "The Beauty of Life" (Essay) Handout.
Algernon Charles Swinburne:
    "Hymn to Proserpine" 913

Feb. 28  Charlotte Bronte: Jane Eyre
Mid-term take-home exam handed out.
Return completed exam by class-time Tuesday, Mar. 7.

Week IX
Mar. 4  Bronte: Jane Eyre

Mar. 6  Bronte: Jane Eyre
Spring Break

Week X
Mar. 18 Charles Dickens: *Hard Times*
Mar. 20 Dickens: *Hard Times*

Week XI
Mar. 25 Dickens: *Hard Times*
Mar. 27 George Eliot: *The Mill on the Floss*

Week XII
Ap. 3 Eliot: *The Mill on the Floss*

Week XIII
Ap. 8 Thomas Hardy: *Jude the Obscure*
Ap. 10 Hardy: *Jude the Obscure*

Week XIV
Ap. 15 Hardy: *Jude the Obscure*
Ap. 17 H. Rider Haggard: *She*

Week XV
Ap. 22 Haggard: *She; Selections on Imperialism/Colonialism*, to be announced.

Week XVI
*Final Exam*