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ENG 5005-001: Women in Victorian Fiction

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Eng 5005: Women in Victorian Fiction W 7-9:30 p.m.
Dr. Duangrudi Suksang
Office: 3335 (314 I) Coleman Hall
Office Hours: MWF 10-11:30; M 1-2 p.m.; W 5:15-6:30 p.m. and by appointment
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We will look at various representations of women in Victorian novels written by women and men. We will also read some nonfictional prose to get a better understanding of women's status in Victorian society and their predicaments. The class will be conducted as a seminar. Class members will take an active part in leading class discussion and presenting secondary sources on the novel being discussed.

Texts:
Dickens, Charles. *Oliver Twist* (1837)--Norton Critical Edition
Moore, George. *Esther Waters* (1894)
Nightingale, Florence. *Cassandra* (1852)
Altick, Richard. *Victorian People and Ideas* (1973)
Rossi, Alice S., ed. *Essays on Sex Equality*

English Department statement on plagiarism:

"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 assignments of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office."

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

1. Each member of the class will be responsible for leading class discussion on a novel or novels and presenting at least one critical essay listed on the syllabus. You can also present an article that you have found on your own. If you choose a different article, you need to give the article to me ahead of time so that I can make it available to other members of the class on electronic reserve. The presenter will also give me a handout (single spaced) containing a summary of the article and evaluative comments before class. I will make copies of the handout for the class.

2. Reading Responses: You will write reading responses to 5 novels—1-2 pages before class discussion of the novel and 2-3 pages after we have discussed the whole novel. The two parts will be considered together as one response. You can write as much as you want. These reading responses are informal, but they should be typed and double-spaced. You can comment on whatever you find interesting, puzzling, thought-provoking, or disturbing. You can also make connections with what you know about the Victorian period in general. As the semester progresses, you might want to try to make connections with other novels that we will have read in this course. You are to turn in your response at the beginning of the period. You should make an extra copy for your own use. Your response must not be a summary of the plot.

3. Paper: You will write a ten-page paper on a topic of your choice based on one or two of the novels assigned for this class. For example, you may want to present a critical study of one female character or a comparative study of two female characters from different novels. You can use any approach you like. You should plan to do your research early since it usually takes at least 2 weeks to get a book or an article through interlibrary loan. I will meet with you individually to talk about your topic. You will also include an annotated bibliography containing 5 secondary sources that you have either cited or consulted.

4. We will not have a final, but you will present your paper during the period assigned for our final exam.

Grades:

- Reading responses (10 X 5) 50 points
- Presentations/participation 10 points
- Paper 40 points

Please feel free to talk to me anytime. Don't hesitate to see me if I can be of any help as you prepare for a presentation or a research project for your paper.

Tentative syllabus

Week #1
Wed Jan 9 Introduction
Sign up for presentations on background information, articles, and novels.
Week #2  
W Jan 16  Presentations on background information  
Richard Altick's *Victorian People and Ideas*  
Group 1: Chapters 1-3; Group 2: Chapters 4-6; Group 3: Chapters 7-9

Week #3  
W Jan 23  Read and discuss chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, &12 in Joan Perkin's *Victorian Women*  
(London: John Murray, 1993.)--Electronic reserve (password: ds5005)  
Florence Nightingale's *Cassandra*

Week #4  

Week #5  
W Feb 6  Begin discussing *Jane Eyre* (Chapters I-XXVI)

Week #6  
W Feb 13  Continue discussing *Jane Eyre* (Chapters XXVII-XXXVIII)  
Article presentations: Adrienne Rich's "The Temptations of a Motherless Woman" (469-483) and Sandra M. Gilbert's "A Dialogue of Self and Soul: Plain Jane's Progress" (483-491)--in the text.  

Week #7  
W Feb 20  Begin discussing *The Mill on the Floss* (7-274)

Week #8  
W Feb 27  Continue discussing *The Mill on the Floss* (274-423)  
Levine, George. "Intelligence and Deception: *The Mill on the Floss*" (489-502)  
Deirdre David's "Maggie Tulliver's Desire" (595-609)  
All three articles are in the text.
Week #9
W Mar 6  Mary Barton and Appendices A, B, and C

Week #10  Spring Break March 11-15

Week #11
W Mar 20  Ruth

Week #12
W Mar 27  Begin discussing Tess of the D'Urbervilles (1-246).

Week #13
W Apr 3  Continue discussing Tess of the D'Urbervilles (246-314).
Article presentations: Goss, Elliott B., Jr. "Psychic Evolution: Darwinianism and Initiation in Tess of the d'Urbervilles" (422-32) Morton, Peter R. "Neo-Darwinian Fate in Tess of the d'Urbervilles" (432-45) Beer, Gillian. "Descent and Sexual Selection: Women in Narrative" (446-51) All three articles are in the text.

Week #14
W Apr 10  The Odd Women. Read also Appendices A, B (skip 5 and 6) C & D.

Week #15
The Nether World (1-289)

Week #16
W Apr 24  The Nether World. (290-392)