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ENG 5005-001: Studies in Nineteenth-Century British Literature

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Course Description: The rise of detective fiction in the mid-nineteenth century coincides with what is, arguably, the hey-day of domestic fiction, a type of novel that celebrates the everyday and the familial. At first glance, the very ordinariness of the domestic sphere would seem to stand in opposition to the extraordinary and sensational behaviors of criminals and their victims. We find, however, in nineteenth-century British fiction that detectives first make their appearances probing beneath the veneer of respectability to expose the secrets at the heart of the domestic circle. In this course we will investigate the overlaps of social history and imaginative construction, private and public spheres, legal contexts and urban transformations that gave rise to the detective in fact and in fiction. In addition to gaining a sense of the nineteenth-century's basic historical narrative, we will investigate the dark undersides of the domestic sphere, metropolitan society, and the British Empire at large. While we will be reading novels and short stories that feature professional and amateur detectives, our examination of fictional texts will be augmented by a study of several contemporary "true crimes," feminist criticism, narrative theories, as well as post-colonial criticism. And, in addition to studying the emergence of the genres of detective and crime fiction, in this course we will find that the detective can serve as a model for the processes of interpretation and exposition that we ourselves use when we read, think, and write about fiction.

Texts:
Black, Jeremy and Donald McFaidl Nineteenth-Century Britain.
Braddon, M.E. Lady Audley's Secret (1862)
Collins, Wilkie. The Moonstone (1868)
Dickens, Charles. Bleak House (1852-1853)
Doyle, Arthur Conan. The Sign of Four (1888)
Two Course packets available at Copy Express in the MLK, jr. Union Building (2nd Floor) that include primary texts by Edgar Allan Poe, W.S. Hayward, Andrew Forrester, and others, as well as supplemental secondary readings.

Guidelines for Requirements and Grading:
25% for overall in-class work, including:
1 Historical Brief at 10 minutes with 1 page handout (see sign up sheet).
1 Discussion leading of a primary text at 15-20 minutes
1 Discussion leading of a secondary critical article at 15 minutes

15% Annotated Bibliography for the primary text on which you lead discussion. This bibliography needs to include four articles/chapters that differ from the required secondary readings. For each annotation 1) summarize the critic’s argument(s) briefly and 2) include critical analysis that answers the following questions: What approach does the critic take and how useful/appropriate does that seem for the literary text it discusses? How effective (persuasive, thorough, insightful) is this article? What are its limits? What does it leave out? Please email copies of the bibliography to each of your classmates and to me by the Saturday prior to your discussion leading.

20% One-page, single-spaced no margin essay (11-12 point font) on Bleak House that relates a part to the whole. Due: October 6th.

40% Final research-based literary analysis that includes both historical research and engagement with secondary critical work. Given the length of this paper, it can hardly be a complete interpretation, but it should try to sketch both the main lines of such an interpretation and to signal which passages or features of the text would be most important in support of that interpretation. This paper can, if you wish, deal with the same primary text that you presented on, but it need not do so.

Note: It should go without saying but actively engaged attendance is mandatory. That is, I expect you to be prepared for discussion by having read and thought about the assigned texts, even on weeks when you are not signed up to present.

Provisional Schedule
Week 1 August 25 *indicates that the reading can be found in your packets.
Distribution of syllabus, Intro to Victorian period
In-class reading and discussion of “Murders in the Rue Morgue” and if time, “The Purloined Letter”
Assignments: Pick up class texts at TRS and Packet One at Copy Express in the Union.
Dickens’ Bleak House 1-22; Black and Macraird “The Industrial Revolution 1 & II” 15-24, 26-37 and “Population and Migration” 55-76.
NOTE: from this point on in the syllabus the assigned readings are listed under the class date that they will be discussed.

Week 2 September 1 Labor Day/ No Class (This class will be made up in Final’s week)

Week 3 September 8
Discuss syllabus, assignments, databases and readings: Black and Macraird; Poe’s “The Mystery of Marie Roget” Bentham, Foucault, Dickens.
HB: Jeremy Bentham and Legal Reform: John Belleau
Week 4 September 15

* Bleak House* chapters 23-45; Black and Macraild 98-122; 125-145; 244-257.
 HB: Women’s Rights and Married Women’s Separate Property Laws—Bredesen
 HB: 1823 Prison Act, 1826 Criminal Justice Act
 HB: 1829 Police Act and professionalizing the Metropolitan Police
 HB: 1834 Poor Law Amendment and Workhouses

Week 5 September 22

* Bleak House* chapters 46-67; Black and Macraild 147-165; 207-220
 Dickens on the Detectives,* Miller “Discipline in Different Voices: Bureaucracy, Police, Family and *Bleak House”*; LaCapra “Ideology and Critique”* and Newton “Historicisms Old and New”*
 HB: 1842 creation of the first professional detective force
 HB: 1845 Public Health and Sanitation Acts
 HB: 1851 Crystal Palace and Great Exhibition

Week 6 September 29

*Lady Audley’s Secret:* Scholarly introduction and volumes One and Two; Black and Macraild “Transport and Communications” (39-54), “Morality, Sexuality and ‘Victorian Values’” (259-274); Cobbe, “Criminals, Idiots, Women and Minors: Is the Classification Sound?”*; Poovey’s “Covered but not bound”*
 HB: Sensation Fiction
 HB: Divorce and Matrimonial Causes Acts

Week 7 October 6 The Femme Fatale.

*Lady Audley’s Secret* volume Three;
 HB: Treatment of and laws concerning the Insane; the insanity defense.

Week 8 October 13

The first professional female detectives in fiction: Andrew Forrester Jr.’s “G”

*The Female Detective:* Introduction,* “Tenant for Life,”* “Child Found Dead: Murder or No Murder”*;
 *Revelations of a Lady Detective* “The Mysterious Countess,”* and “Found Drowned”

Handout: Two cases from Forrester’s *Revelations of a Private Detective* (1863).

* Literary Historiography: Ellery Queen’s “Female of the Species”*and “In the Queen’s Parlour”*; E.F. Bleiler’s “On Ghost Texts”*; excerpt from Michele B. Slung’s “Introduction” to *Crime on Her Mind;*
 Kathleen Gregory Klein’s Introduction/ Chapter 1 British Police wo/men*; excerpt from Joseph Kestner’s *Sherlock’s Sisters;* excerpt from Stephen Knight’s *Crime Fiction.*

HB: First Police Women/The First Detectives

Week 9 October 20

The first professional female detectives in fiction, continued.
 Dever “‘An Occult and Immoral Tyranny’: The Novel, the Police, and the Agent Provocateur.”*
 Brightwell “The Case of the Household Spy: Public Service and Domestic Service in Hayward’s ‘The
Mysterious Countess.”* Bredesen “Conformist Subversion: Ambivalent Agency in Revelations of a Lady Detective.”*

**Historical Contexts:** Handouts, Work in Progress “Substantiating the Female Detective in Popular Print Culture.”

**Week 10 October 27**
- *The Moonstone:* Prologue and First Period; Ashley “Wilkie Collins and the Detective Story”*
- McCuskey, “Kitchen Police: Servant Surveillance and Middle-Class Transgression.”*
- **HB:** 1857 Sepoy “Rebellion”

**Week 11 November 3**
- **Final Paper Proposal Due with Bibliography / Conferences**
- *The Moonstone* Second Period

**Week 12 November 10**
- *The Moonstone* Second Period continued, Epilogue, Supplemental readings
- Hutter, “Dreams, Transformations, and Literature: The Implications of Detective Fiction”*
- Gruner, “Family Secrets and the Mysteries of The Moonstone”*
- Roy, “The Fabulous Imperialist Semiotic of Wilkie Collins’ The Moonstone.”*
- **HB:** 1873 creation of Intelligence Department (11/09)
- Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *Strand Magazine*, the creation of Sherlock Holmes

**Week 13 November 17**
- “A Scandal in Bohemia”*
- *The Sign of Four*; Black and Macrailld “Britain and the Wider World 2”;
- Mcbratney “Racial and Criminal Types: Indian Ethnography and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s The Sign of Four.”
- **HB:** Caesar Lombroso and criminal anthropology

**THANKSGIVING BREAK: Nov 24-29**

**Week 14 December 2**
- Conference length paper electronic and hard copy due and distributed to classmates
- Second Wave Female Detectives
- “Loveday Brooke”, “Dorcas Dene” and “Lady Molly of Scotland Yard”

**Week 15 December 9**
- Presentations: Two panels, 3 students each.

**Exam Week December 16**
- Presentations: Two panels, 3 students each.

**Final Research Paper Due Tuesday, December 17th by 10pm**
- **Possible Research Paper Topics:**
  - The Urban Space and the Detective
  - The Detective and the Empire
  - The New Profession of Detection
  - Gender and Detection: Constructions of Masculinity/Constructions of Femininity
  - Separate Spheres and the Figure of the Detective
  - Detectives and Class
  - Detection and National Identity
  - Performing Detection: the Detective as Performer