

PRELIMINARY SYLLABUS

English 3253 Victorian Literature

Fall 2009 TR 9:10-10:25
603 Hamilton

Prof. J.E. Adams (jea2139)

Philosophy 404,
M 1-2, Th 11:00-12:30, & by appt

A wide-ranging introduction to British literature in the age of Victoria (1837-1901) focusing on the many-faceted cultural impact of unprecedented material change. Victorian Britain was the world's first industrial society, at its zenith the most powerful nation on earth, ruling an empire on which the sun proverbially never set. But this manifold success, many writers feared, was subsuming all values in economic self-interest, and they responded by exploring sources of meaning and value outside the realm of exchange. They were especially drawn to domestic life, centering on an ideal of selfless femininity, and to an ideal of "culture" as a realm of disinterested contemplation, immune to the demands of practicality ("So what do you *do* with an English major?"), and associated above all with the experience of literature and art. Hence multi-volume novels of domestic life, lyrics of frustrated desire and agonizing doubt, and an explosion of critical writing devoted to (among other things) the social dimensions of industrialism, scientific challenges to religious faith, the nature of art, the rise of mass culture, and new models of gender and sexuality. We'll be especially interested in a host of formal innovations—the serial novel, "sage writing," the dramatic monologue, the "novel in verse," melodrama, the short story—as they reshape the representation of personal identity and social life. Authors include Tennyson, Carlyle, Mill, E. Gaskell, C. Bronte, R. Browning, E.B. Browning, Ruskin, George Eliot, Morris, Arnold, Pater, Stevenson, Kipling, and Wilde.

REQUIRED TEXTS (available at Book Culture or amazon.com):

Black, et. al. (eds.) *Broadview Anthology of British Literature*, vol. 5: *The Victorian Era*
Bronte, Charlotte *Jane Eyre* (Penguin)
Gaskell, Elizabeth, *Mary Barton* (Penguin)
Stevenson, Robert Louis. *Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (Dover)
Course packet (selections marked with an asterisk)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

There will be 2 papers of 5-6 pages (20 and 25%); some brief written exercises and in-class quizzes (20%), and a two-hour final exam (35%). Late papers accepted only in event of a documented medical emergency. If class size permits, students will be divided into small groups to lead brief discussions of the reading. The readings are assigned to be read *before* the relevant class: please read actively, marking as you go, and be sure to bring the reading to class.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

(*denotes photocopies in course packet; all other titles, except the novels, are contained in the Broadview Anthology edition or web page):

- Session 1: Locating Victorian Britain
- Session 2: Narrating Crisis, Political and Personal
Mill, from “The Spirit of the Age”; from *Autobiography*, “A Crisis in My Mental History”
Macaulay, from “Lord Bacon”*; Newman, from “The Tamworth Reading Room”*
- Session 3: Crisis (con)
Carlyle, from “Signs of the Times”
Sartor Resartus: Book 1, Chap 11; Book 2, Chaps 6-9*; Book 3, Chap 8
- Session 4: Lyric poetry: Affect and Audience
Macaulay, from “Milton”; Mill, “What Is Poetry?”; Landon, “Expectation”
Tennyson, “Mariana,” “The Palace of Art,” “The Lady of Shalott,” “The Lotus-Eaters”
- Session 5: Rhetorical Selves: The Dramatic Monologue
Tennyson, “Ulysses”; Browning, “Porphyria’s Lover,” “My Last Duchess,”
“The Bishop Orders His Tomb,” “Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister”
- Session 6: Impossible Love:
Tennyson, “Locksley Hall”
Browning, “Love among the Ruins,” “The Last Ride Together”
Bronte, *Jane Eyre*
- Session 7: *Jane Eyre* (con.)
- Session 8: *Jane Eyre* (con.)
- Session 9: *Jane Eyre* (con)
- Session 10: Melodrama: Boucicault, *The Octoroon*
- Session 11: FIRST PAPER DUE
The Impact of Industrialism: (Oct 13)
Ure, from *The Philosophy of Manufactures*
Dodd, from *A Narrative of the Experiences and Sufferings of William Dodd*
Engels, from *The Condition of the Working Class in England*
R.H. Horne, from *Report of the Children’s Employment Commission*
Hood, “The Song of the Shirt,” Barrett Browning, “The Cry of the Children”
Carlyle, from *Past and Present* (Broadview selection)

- Session 12: Carlyle, *Past and Present* (con.)
- Session 13: The “Industrial Novel”
Gaskell, *Mary Barton*
- Session 14: *Mary Barton* (con.)
- Session 15: *Mary Barton* (con.)
- Session 16: Staving off Catastrophe:
Tennyson, *In Memoriam*
- Session 17: *In Memoriam* (con.)
- Session 18: “The Novel in Verse”:
Barrett Browning, *Aurora Leigh*, excerpts from Book 1 and Book 5
Meredith, “Modern Love”
Tennyson, *Maud*
- Session 19: Purity and Danger:
Tennyson, “Guinevere”*; Morris, “Defence of Guenevere,” “Haystack in the Floods”
- Session 20: More Fallen Women:
Augusta Webster, “A Castaway”
D. G. Rossetti, “Jenny,” “The Blessed Damozel,” “The Woodspurge”
- Session 21: Art and Ethics:
Ruskin, from *Modern Painters*; “The Nature of Gothic” (from *Stones of Venice*)
Morris, “The Beauty of Life”
Browning, “Fra Lippo Lippi,” “Andrea del Sarto”
- Session 22: Culture and Freedom:
Mill, from *On Liberty*, Chapter 3, “Of Individuality”
Arnold, from “The Function of Criticism at the Present Time”
- Session 23: The Impact of Science:
Darwin, from *The Origin of Species* and *The Descent of Man*
“Defending and Attacking Darwin” (Broadview anthology)
Tennyson, “Lucretius”*
Pater, from *The Renaissance* (“Preface,” “Conclusion,” and “La Gioconda”*)
- Session 24: “Decadence”:
Swinburne, “The Triumph of Time,” “Hymn to Proserpine,” “Itylus,” “Anactoria”
Wilde, from “The Critic as Artist” and “The Decay of Lying”
Preface to *The Picture of Dorian Gray*; “Impression du Matin”

Session 25: Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*

Session 26: Literature and Empire:

Macaulay, from "Minute on Indian Education"; Gladstone, from "Our Colonies";

Livingstone, from Cambridge Lecture No 1;

Dickens and Collins, *The Perils of Certain English Prisoners*

Kipling, "Gunga Din," "The White Man's Burden," "Recessional"

Kipling, "The Man Who Would Be King"***

Session 27: Wilde, "The Importance of Being Earnest"