

School of English, Film, Theatre and Media Studies
ENGL 312: Victorian Literature
Second Trimester, 2006

COURSE ORGANISATION

Course Co-ordinator

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Lecturers

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Lecture Times

Monday, Thursday, 3.10-4.00 in New Kirk LT301.

Tutorials

There are 11 tutorials, starting in Week 2. Students will be required to prepare worksheets in advance of tutorials. These will be handed out in the previous Thursday's lecture and available thereafter on Blackboard.

Additional Information

Information about the course will be posted from time to time on the English Section's notice-board on the third floor of the Hugh Mackenzie building, outside Hugh Mackenzie 206, as well as announced in lectures. If you have a question or problem, consult your tutor or one of the lecturers.

Draft and final examination timetables will be posted on the HM noticeboard and Floor 8 of Von Zedlitz.

AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND CONTENT

This course aims to introduce advanced students to a representative group of key Victorian texts, poetry, fiction and autobiography, and to provide the critical and cultural contexts in which they have been and are being read. The course is organised in terms of three central concerns of the period, issues of gender and sexuality, of religious doubt, and of empire.

Students passing the course will:

- be familiar with the texts studied on the course;
- have an understanding of the cultural and historical contexts of these texts;
- be familiar with the critical and theoretical contexts in which these texts have been and are currently being read;
- be able to develop their own critical and theoretical readings in formal academic writing.

Texts in order of teaching

The Engl 312 Class Anthology (Student Notes, price t.b.a.); Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield* (Oxford, \$12); Edmund Gosse, *Father and Son* (Penguin, \$16.95); Rudyard Kipling, *Plain Tales from the Hills* (Oxford, \$15.95). These prices are subject to change.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment has been structured to help students meet the objectives of the course. The course combines internal assessment and a final examination. The internal requirement is one test (sat in class time) and one research essay, which together account for 50% of the final mark. The examination, which will be three hours and will be open book, provides the other 50%. Students whose examination grade is better than their combined 50/50 result will receive the exam grade as their assessment for the course. Information concerning the exam will be made available during the course.

Internal assessment

Class Test (worth 15% of the final mark)

Topic: *David Copperfield*

Date: 7 August

Research Essay (worth 35% of final mark)

Topic: See below.

Length: 3000 words

Due date: 13 October.

Presentation of Written Work:

All written work must be in an acceptable academic format. Guidelines for presentation of written work are set out in *Guidelines for SEFT Students* (Student Notes and on the school's website). A style checklist is also included at the end of this handout.

The deadlines for term work must be strictly observed. If you need an extension beyond the due date for any piece of work, you should apply to your tutor before the due date, providing supporting documentation if possible. Work submitted with an extension will be graded in the normal way.

Late work submitted without an extension will be counted, as long as it is received before 13 October. You will, however, be penalised by a grade reduction (i.e. A to A-, C+ to C) and there will be no comments on your assignment. Make sure you plan your work in advance to deal with competing deadlines – the final three weeks of the trimester are particularly risky.

Workload:

You should expect to spend, on average, about 18 hours per week on work for a 300-level course (including time in class). Please note that this is a rough guideline only. Some students might have to put in more time, others less. The time commitment is likely to be greatest in the weeks immediately prior to tests and essay submission dates.

Mandatory Requirements:

The minimum course requirements are completion of all in-term assessment by 13 October at the very latest, sitting the final examination, and preparing for and attending at least 70% of tutorials. Failure to satisfy any of these course requirements will leave you with a fail grade.

Students with Disabilities at Victoria:

The contact for students with disabilities enrolled in English courses is the department administrator, VZ 809A, ext 6800.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence. You commit plagiarism at any time when you take words or ideas without acknowledgment from another source and try to pass them off as your own. It does not matter whether the source is a published book or article, an Internet site, or another student's essay. See *Handbook* for valuable advice on proper handling of source material. Minor plagiarism (i.e., the possibly inadvertent use of a few phrases, ideas or sentences) will be penalised by a warning and a lowered grade (e.g., A- to B+, C+ to C). Repeated minor plagiarism or major plagiarism (i.e., an essay wholly or substantially drawn from another source) will mean that the essay is given a grade of "E", and may also result in action under the University's Statute of Conduct.

University Requirements/Academic Grievance Procedures

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's requirements, particularly those regarding assessment and course of study requirements, and formal academic grievance procedures, contained in the statutes in the *Calendar*, and should read the requirements of this course outline in that context. The *Calendar* also contains the Statute on Conduct which ensures that members of the University community are able to work, learn, study, and participate in the academic and social aspects of the University's life in an atmosphere of safety and respect. The statute contains information on what conduct is prohibited and what steps can be taken if there is a complaint.

If you have any academic problems with your course, you should talk to the tutor or lecturer concerned or, if you are not satisfied with the result of that meeting, see the Head of School, Prof. Robert Easting, or the Associate Dean (Students) of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. Class representatives are available to assist you with this process.

Lecture Programme

10 July: **Introduction: historical contexts:** *Class Anthology* (JS)

Module one: Gender and sexuality

13 July: Introduction: The Woman Question: John Stuart Mill, *Class Anthology*, p. 26, 'The Lady of Shalott', handout (JS)

17 July: Poetry: Christina Rossetti, 'Goblin Market', handout (HR)

20 July: Poetry: Elizabeth Barrett Browning, handout (JS)

24 July: Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield* (JS)

27 July: *DC* (JS)

31 July: *DC* (video)

3 August: *DC* (JS)

7 August Class Test (*David Copperfield*)

Module two: Empire

10 August: Introduction: Writing and Reading Empire: some theoretical questions: *Class Anthology* (JM)

14 August: Rudyard Kipling, *Plain Tales from the Hills* (HR)

17 August: *PTH* (HR)

21 August – 1 September: Mid-semester Break

4 September: *PTH* (HR)

7 September: Poetry, Kipling, handout (HR)

11 September: Maoriland, *Class Anthology* (JS)

14 September: Maoriland, *Class Anthology* (JS)

Module three: Religious doubt

18 September: Introduction: God's Funeral, (JS)

21 September: Edmund Gosse, *Father and Son* (AJ)

25 September: *F&S* (AJ)

28 September: *F&S* (AJ)

2 October: Poetry: Alfred, Lord Tennyson, handout (HR &JS)

5 October: Poetry: Matthew Arnold, *Class Anthology* (HR)

9 October: Poetry: Robert Browning, handout (HR, JS).

12 October: Conclusion (HR, JS)

Research Essay: Due 9 October. Length 3000 words

1.

And wilt thou have me fashion into speech
The love I bear thee, finding words enough,
And hold the torch out, while the winds are rough,
Between our faces, to cast light on each?—
I drop it at thy feet. I cannot teach
My hand to hold my spirit so far off
From myself – me – that I should bring thee proof
In words of love hid in me out of reach.
Nay, let the silence of my womanhood
Commend my woman-love to thy belief, –
Seeing that I stand unwon, however wooed,
And rend the garment of my life, in brief,
By a most dauntless, voiceless fortitude,
Lest one touch of this heart convey its grief.

Use Elizabeth Barrett Browning's sonnet (*Sonnets from the Portuguese XIII*) as the basis of a discussion of speech and silence, assertion and obedience, in Victorian poetry of gender and sexuality. You should refer to at least two authors, and a range of poems.

4. Before we women can write, declared Virginia Woolf, we must kill the angel in house. What evidence do you find of Victorian women poets endeavouring, or succeeding, in this undertaking? You should refer to at least two authors, and a range of poems.

5. Is *Father and Son* best described as a novel about science or a novel about literature?

6.

The book is not a conventional biography; still less is it an autobiography. It is something entirely original; it is a triumphant experiment in a new formula; it is a clinical examination of states of mind over a detached and limited period.

Use this quote as the basis for a discussion of form in *Father and Son*.

7. 'Religious doubt was not just a subject, it was a way of writing.' Discuss the literary techniques used by Victorian poets to convey religious doubt. You should refer to at least two authors, and a range of poems.

8. What is the place of nostalgia in the poetry of religious doubt? You should refer to at least two authors, and a range of poems.

9. 'Oh, East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet' Kipling wrote in 'The Ballad of East and West'. Is this stance reflected in *Plain Tales from the Hills*? (You may include 'The Strange Ride of Morrowbie Jukes' and 'The Man Who Would Be King' in your discussion if you wish.)

10. What is the role of the *memsahib* (Anglo-Indian woman) in *Plain Tales from the Hills*?

11. To what extent can the term 'sentimental racism' be used to describe the poetry of Empire? (You should refer to at least two authors, and a range of poems.)

12.

Even though the indigenous people are imprisoned within the texts, and their traditions distorted by being reduced from oral performance to print, nevertheless they are accorded a participatory

role within the text, and thus in the historical sequences. Moreover, the textualisation of traditions is, in effect, a demonstration that indigenous traditions have a place within the discourse. Once the indigenous people were located in a textual world as participants, and their traditions were accorded status within the discourse, they could not be erased.

Discuss the application of this quote to the poetry of Empire. (You should refer to at least two authors, and a range of poems.)

Bibliography.

Biography.

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Cultural background

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Trudgill , Eric. *Madonnas and Magdalens : the Origins and Development of Victorian Sexual Attitudes*. London : Heinemann, 1976.

Wilson, A.N. *God's Funeral*. London: Abacus, 1999.

———, *The Victorians*. London: Hutchinson, 2002.

