

English 769

Donald Hall, ENGL 769, Fall 2005

Donald E. Hall

ENGL 769

Fall 2005

Office Hours: T 2-5pm

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Victorian Sexualities

This seminar will examine contemporary theories of gender and sexuality, and the varied representations of desire, erotic inter-relationships, and sexuality in Victorian literature, both in their historical context and for what they tell us about our own values and valuations. We will discuss the intersection of sexual identity/ies during the Victorian era in relationship with ideologies of class, gender, race, and nationality. Our course discussion moves from the containment of Victorian desire within discourses of social propriety to the ways that desires exceeded, threatened, and used those very discourses. The reading and workload of this seminar is quite heavy. And please note: **sexually explicit reading material is required in this class.**

Required Texts:

Queer Theories (Hall), *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader* (LOS below, Ablove, et al), *Undoing Gender* (Butler), *History of Sexuality: An Introduction* (Foucault), *My Secret Life* (ed. Kincaid), *Dracula* (Stoker), *Adam Bede* (Eliot), *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (Stevenson). You also need to locate copies of the following poems: "Goblin Market" (C. Rossetti), "Jenny" (D. Rossetti), "My Last Duchess" (Browning), Hopkins "Epithalamion," and Wilde "Helas" and "The Harlot's House." Please tell me if you cannot find them.

Class requirements:

Your full and well-informed participation in class is required at all times, but also respect the need for all seminar members to participate (I may ask you to hold your observations until others have spoken). Please come prepared with questions, observations, links, syntheses, and, most importantly, with all of the reading completed. You will write a conference-style paper for presentation to the class (7-8 pages, due to me and the respondent one week in advance), a response paper to someone else's conference presentation (3-4 pages), and a fully researched,

theory-based seminar paper (20-25 pages), due on the last night of class. Presentations should apply previously read theory (or out-of-class theory reading) to the primary texts assigned for that evening.

Schedule

8/23 General Introductions/Expectations

8/30 Overview of Sexuality Studies Hall: *Queer Theories LGS*: Essay 1 (Rubin)

9/6 Foucault and His Legacy Foucault: *History of Sexuality*, Vol 1.

9/13 Is There a History of Sexuality? *LGS*: Essays 27 (Scott), 28 (Halperin), 29 (Vicinus), 31 (D'Emilio)

9/20 Butler and Her Legacy? (Part I) *LGS*: Essay 20 (Butler) Butler: *Undoing Gender* (Intro-Chap. 4)

9/27 Butler and Her Legacy? (Part 2) Butler: *Undoing Gender* (Chap. 5-end)

10/4 Heterosexuality *Adam Bede*: Books 1-3

10/11 Desire and Victorian Class Structures *Adam Bede*: Books 4-6

10/18 Secrets and Sexuality *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (all)

10/25 Victorian Notions of "Proper" and "Improper" Desire *My Secret Life* Beg.-pg. 201

10/25 Prostitution, Desire, and the Objectification of Wom *My Secret Life* pg. 202-401

11/1 Sexuality and Autobiography *My Secret Life* pg. 402-end

11/8 Sexuality and Nation *Dracula* (pg. beg-231)

11/15 Sexuality and Disease *Dracula* (pg. 232-419)

11/22 **THANKSGIVING BREAK**

11/29 Desire and Poetic Form Poetry listed above (Rossettis, Browning, Hopkins, Wilde)

12/6 **PAPERS DUE/DISCUSSION**