

English 262

David Stewart, ENGL 262, Fall 2002, British Literature from 1780 to 1930

Course: British 262: *Survey of British Literature from 1780 to 1930*

Semester: Fall 2002

Course format and

Credit Hours: 3-hr lecture/discussion

3 hr credit

Prerequisites: None

Instructor: Dr. David Stewart, 85 Boreman North, 293-4686,
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Schedule: Tuesday 1:00 p.m. - 2:15 p.m.

Thursday 1:00 p.m. - 2:15 p.m.

Location: 304 White Hall

Office hours: By appointment

Course objectives:

The objectives of this course are as follows:

- present the development of British literature over the course of three historical periods: Romantic, Victorian, Modern;
- identify the major literary forms that were used in each period;
- demonstrate how such literary forms need to be read and interpreted;
- identify the major historical, social, philosophical, and cultural forces that contributed to the development of literature during these periods.

Expected learning outcomes:

1. Students will have gained an understanding of the literature of the Romantic, Victorian, and Modern periods.
2. Students will have gained an understanding of the major ideas, issues, and concerns of each of the 3 periods (Romantic, Victorian, and Modern).

3. Students will be able to identify the major literary forms that were used during each period.
4. Students will develop an ability to independently interpret the major literary forms that were used during each period.
5. Students will increase their proficiency in oral and written communications.
6. Students will have gained an understanding of how historical, social, philosophical, and cultural forces can determine the development of literature.
7. Students will have gained experience in working within a team of their peers.

In this course you will be required to develop an understanding of the development of British Literature from 1780 to 1930 and to demonstrate how this literature has developed in its broader social, economic, political, and cultural context. You will be asked to demonstrate this understanding in 2 two essays, 1 take home exam, and e-mail commentaries on the texts that are assigned for each class period. You are also required to be an active learner and participate in class discussions. During class you will be divided into smaller groups and given assignments, which will be shared with the rest of the class, and often you will be asked to share your ideas of a text with the rest of the class.

The course encourages critical thinking in both in and out of class assignments. The class periods are centered on a number of assignments that encourage you to think about your opinion and the opinions of your peers regarding the texts that are assigned for a particular class period. These assignments include situations such as the following:

- dividing the class up into groups of 2 or 3 and having each group discuss the same text and then share their ideas with the other groups
- having each student write down their opinions on a particular text or concept and then have the students comment on each other's interpretation etc.
- asking students to prepare a 10 minute presentation on a particular text and then have the class comment on it

All these exercises constitute what I mean by "class discussion" on the syllabus. In a typical class I might begin by laying out some groundwork on the text we are studying (for example, I might talk about the historical, social, and economic context from which the text was produced; or, I might talk about some of the important scholarly interpretations of the text), I would then pose a particular problem and then ask the class to think about this by arranging the class into one of the formations listed above. So for example, I might talk about the historical, social, and political context of the 1790s and then talk about ways in which 'history' might be present in a literary

text (direct -reference, allusions, allegorically, symbolically, and in narrative structure); I would then ask the class to consider ways in which 'history' is present in a particular literary text from the 1790s.

The out of class assignments are a combination of essays and take home exams. The first assignment is an essay on the literature of English Romanticism. In this essay you are required to know the major characteristics of Romanticism and ways in which these characteristics are evident in the literature of the period. For example, you will be given the following essay question on Romanticism:

"The Romantic period is best described as revolutionary. Against the dominant ideologies of the day arose an irrevocable tide of new ideas."

Take one of the categories we have discussed in class (Romantic Politics; Romantic Aesthetics; Sex, Sexuality, Gender, and Equality; or, Philosophy and Religion) and write a paper discussing to what extent you think the Romantics were revolutionary.

In this essay you would be required to decide whether or not you agreed, disagreed, or only partly agreed with the comment. You would also have to identify what the dominant ideologies were of the particular topic you are discussing and also identify what new ideas arose to compete with the dominant ideologies. You would then need to discuss to what extent the romantic texts you have read support either the dominant ideologies or the new ideas. This assignment asks you to apply what your understanding of Romanticism is to literary texts written within the period, but in the overall context of how another critic has defined Romanticism.

A second out of class assignment is a take home exam on Victorian literature. Whereas the first out of class assignment has you think about literature in its historical, social, cultural, political context, the second assignment focuses more on getting you to analyze literature more from a formalistic perspective. We will still do the same in class exercises, as mentioned above, and the class sessions also consider Victorian literature in its larger cultural, political context etc.; however, the assignment for Victorian literature focuses on the literary and formalistic elements of a text so that you are given some training on how to read a text as a poem or a novel or an essay and not just as a historical document.

The third assignment is an essay on the modern period. In the first essay (on Romanticism) you were asked to analyze a number of texts within the context of the characteristics of the period, in this final assignment you are asked to focus on one text (T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*) and

answer the question "Why is T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* considered the quintessential modernist text?" To answer this you would have to identify the major tenets of modernism and construct an argument for *The Waste Land* being a text that manifests the major concepts of modernism.

In each of these 3 assignments you are required to apply the knowledge you have learnt to an analysis and interpretation of the texts you have read. You are encouraged to go beyond the text to its cultural, social, political, economic, and historical background and to bring concepts or ideas from other classes into your analyses of the texts you have read for this class.

Your e-mail commentaries are not required to be too lengthy. I am looking for evidence that you have read the assigned text and can identify some of the major concepts it deals with. I am not looking for a complete analysis of the texts. The length of the commentaries would vary, but they should not normally exceed a couple short paragraphs.

Romanticism

Class 1: Introduction and "Romantic Politics 1" (Aug. 20)

Review syllabus and course requirements

Handouts (to be read before class 2!!)

- timeline of major events (pp.22-23)
- handout on September Massacres

Class 2: "Romantic Politics 2" (Aug. 22)

Lecture/discussion on the political context of Romanticism

- timeline of major events
- English controversy about French Revolution
- handout on September Massacres
- emergence of working class consciousness and radical politics
- Biblical and apocalyptic language
- Slave trade

Class discussion. Read: *The Prelude* Books 9, 10, 11. (Pp.354 - 364); *The Ruined Cottage* (pp. 259-270)

Class 3: "Romantic Politics 3" (Aug.27)

Class discussion. *London* (pp.56-57); *The Little Black Boy* (pp.45-46); *A Song to the Men of England* (pp.727 - 728); *England in 1819* (pp. 728); *The Chimney Sweeper* (pp.46 -47).

Class 4: "Romantic Aesthetics" (Aug. 29)

Lecture/discussion:

- Eighteenth Century aesthetics
- Reason/Imagination
- Poetic form
- Poetic Language

Class discussion. Read: Preface to *Lyrical Ballads* (pp. 239 - 251); *Biographia Literaria* (pp.478 - 485); *Don Juan* (Canto 1 stanzas 200 - 207, pp.647 - 648).

Class 5: "Sex, Sexuality, Gender, and Equality 1" (Sep. 3)

Lecture/discussion:

- Cult of the Virgin
- Domestic Ideology
- Influence of Milton
- Romantic Friendships
- Emergence of sapphic identity
- Women's Rights
- Pornographic

Class discussion. Read: *The Sick Rose* (p.52); *My Pretty Rose Tree* (p.55); *Christabel* (pp.441 - 457)

Class 6: "Sex, Sexuality, Gender, and Equality 2" (Sep. 5)

Class discussion. Read: *Don Juan* (pp. 623 - 646); *La Belle Dame sans Merci* (p.845) *The Eve of St. Agnes* (pp.834 - 844).

Class 7: "Philosophy and Religion 1" (Sep. 10)

Lecture/discussion:

- Pantheism
- Deism/Natural religion
- Empiricism
- Radical religion

Class discussion. Read: *Eolian Harp* (pp. 419 - 420); *Tintern Abbey* (pp. 235 - 238); *Mont Blanc* (pp. 720 - 723).

Class 8: "Philosophy and Religion 2" (Sep. 12)

Class discussion. Read: *Frost at Midnight* (pp.457 - 459); *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* plates 3, 4, 5 (pp. 73 - 74) and plates 11, 14, 21; Ode: *Intimations of Immortality* (pp.286 - 292).

Class 9: Frankenstein (Sep.17)

Class discussion. Read the whole novel. It is in the Norton Anthology pp. 903-1034.

Romantic Essay (Sep. 19)

"The Romantic period is best described as revolutionary. Against the dominant ideologies of the day arose an irrevocable tide of new ideas "

Take one of the categories we have discussed in class (Romantic Politics; Romantic Aesthetics; Sex, Sexuality, Gender, and Equality; or, Philosophy and Religion) and write a paper discussing to what extent you think the Romantics were revolutionary.

Victorians

Class 10: Introduction and "Science and Religion 1" (Sep. 24)

Lecture/discussion

Main Themes:

- Science and Religion
- Industrialism
- The Victorian Debate about Gender

Science and Religion

- Darwin (Read pp. 1686 - 1690)
- Huxley (Read pp. 1690 - 1693)
- Gosse (Read pp. 1693 - 1696)

Read: *In Memoriam* sections Obit, 54, 55, 56, 57 (pp.1235 - 1257).

Romantic Essay Due!! (Sep. 26)

Class 11: "Science and Religion 2" (Sep. 26)

In Memoriam sections 118, 119, 120; and sections 7 and 8. (Pp.1235 - 1257).

Class 12: "Science and Religion 3" (Oct. 1)

Class discussion. Read: *Agnosticism and Christianity* (pp.1566 - 1570); *DoverBeach* (p. 1492); *The Scholar Gypsy* (p.1485); *Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister* (p.1350).

Class 13: "Industrialism 1" (Oct. 3)

Class discussion. Read:

- Babington 1697- 1702
- Engels 1702- 1704

- Kingsley 1710 - 1711
- Dickens 1711 - 1712
- Poverty Knock (1713)
- Mayhew 1714- 1715
- Besant 1715 - 1717

God's Grandeur (p.1651); *The Windhover* (p1552); *The Cry of the Children* (p.1174); *Parliamentary Testimony* (Handout).

Mid-Semester Reports due October 4

Class 14: "The Victorian Debate about Gender 1" (Oct. 8)

Class discussion. Read:

- Ellis (1721 - 1722)
- Martineau (1725 - 1726)
- Mulock (1732 - 1734)
- Nightingale (1734 - 1737)
- Besant(1738 - 1739)

Mariana (p.1202).

Class 15: "The Victorian Debate about Gender 2" (Oct. 10)

Class discussion. Read: *My Last Duchess* (p.1352); *Goblin Market* (p.1589).

Class 16: Tess of the D'Urbervilles (Oct. 15)

Class 17: Tess of the D'Urbervilles (Oct.. 17)

Modernism

Class 18: Introduction to Modernism (Oct. 22)

Lecture/discussion.

- Concepts of Modernism
- Eliot essay: "Why is T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* considered the quintessential modernist text?"

Victorian Take Home Exam Due!! (Oct. 22)

Class 19: "T.S. Eliot 1" (Oct. 24)

Class discussion. Read: *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock* (p.2364)

Class 20: "T.S. Eliot 2" (Oct. 29)

Class discussion. Read: *The WasteLand* part 1 (pp.2370 - 2372)

Class 21: "T.S. Eliot 3" (Oct. 31)

Class discussion. Read: *The Waste Land* parts 2 and 3 (pp.2372 - 2379)

Class 22: "T.S. Eliot 4" (Nov.5)

Class discussion. Read: *The Waste Land* parts 3, 4, and 5. (pp.2379 - 2383)

Class 23: "World War 1 Poetry 1" (Nov. 7)

Read: *The Soldier* (p.2050); *They* (p.2055); *The Rear-Guard* (p.2056); *The General* (p.2056); *Glory of Women* (p.2057); *Anthem for Doomed Youth* (p.2066); *Dulce Et Decorum Est* (p.2069); *Disabled* (p.2071); *Break of Day in the Trenches*(p.2062); *Dead Man's Dump* (p.2064).

Class 24: "Thomas Hardy" (Nov. 12)

Class discussion. Read: *The Imparipient* (p.1935); *Neutral Tones* (p.1935); *The Darkling* *Thrush* (p.1937); *The Convergence of the Twain* (p. 1945); *Ah, Are You Digging on My Grave?* (p.1946); *The Walk* (p.1948); *The Voice* (p.1949).

Class 25: "The Rise and Fall of Empire" (Nov. 14)

Class discussion. Read: "The Rise and Fall of Empire" (pp.2017 - 2041); *Heart of Darkness* (pp. 1957 - 2017).

Class 26: "William Butler Yeats and D. H. Lawrence" (Nov. 19)

Class discussion. Read: *The Lake Isle of Innisree* (p.2092); *The Second Coming* (p.2106); *Sailing to Byzantium* (p.2109); *Piano* (p.2347); *Snake* (p.2352).

Class 27: "James Joyce and Virginia Woolf" (Nov. 21)

Class discussion. Read: *The Dead* (pp.2240 - 2269); *The Legacy* (p.2226)

Thanksgiving Break Nov. 23-Nov.30

Revision Week Dec. 1- Dec. 7

Modernism Paper Due!! (Dec. 3)

Finals Week (Dec. 8- Dec. 14)

Assignments:

- 1) E-mail commentaries (**to be sent before class**) on readings assigned for each class.
- 2) 2 papers between 5-6 pages in length on Romanticism and Modernism/T.S. Eliot.
- 3) 1 take home exam on the Victorians.

E-mail assignments = 30% of final grade

Romanticism paper = 20% (Due by Sep.26)

Victorian Exam = 20% (Due by Oct.22)

Modernism/T.S. Eliot paper = 20% (Due by Dec.3)

In class discussion = 10%

Grade Assignment

100 - 90 A

89 - 80 B

79 - 70 C

69 - 60 D

59 - 0 F

Attendance Policy

You are allowed a total of 3 absences for the entire semester. A fourth absence will result in a final grade of F.

Social Justice Statement

West Virginia University is committed to social justice. Our University does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, color or national origin. The instructor of this course concurs with that commitment and expects to maintain a positive learning environment based upon open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. Any suggestions as to how to further such a positive and open environment in this class will be appreciated and given serious consideration. If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise the instructor and make appropriate arrangements with Disability Services (293-6700).

Required Text

The Norton Anthology of English Literature. Volume 2, 7th edition. Tess of the D'Urbervilles.
Thomas Hardy. Bedford Books. 1998.