

English 262: British Literature Survey II

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Spring 2015, CRN: 11110, MWF 2:30pm-3:20pm, Clark Hall 320

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Course Description and Goals

This course focuses on the Romantic, Victorian, and Modernist periods of literature in Great Britain. We will study important literary works from the late eighteenth century through the high modern period, as well as later postcolonial writers, within their historical contexts. We will aim to establish connections across time between different writers, genres, eras, and social issues. The course is designed to give you a sense of literary history, an understanding of some central texts, and a grasp of how British literature and its readers have developed in the past two and a half centuries. We'll read a relatively small, representative sample, but you'll still need to do a lot of reading and the poetry, essays, fiction, and drama will require your full attention, so don't fall behind. My lectures and our class discussions will be much more interesting and useful to you if you keep up. In general, literature is a compelling method to uncover and appreciate other times, cultures, experiences, perspectives, and social and global concerns. The course will also encourage students to develop the skills of close reading and critical analysis that are essential not only to your success in academia, but also to your personal, civic, and professional lives. By studying literature produced in a specific time and place, we can discover how a culture attempts to describe and shape its reality; thus, we can learn to understand how others' evolving notions of the world and their place in it reflect and shape our own. Because Americans owe much of their values and ideologies to Britain, this area of literature is particularly relevant for us in understanding how various forms of writing from our Anglo counterpart have influenced our own historical and contemporary culture.

Textbooks and Materials

Greenblatt et al, eds. *The Norton Anthology of British Literature Volume 2*, 9th ed.
Kincaid, Jamaica. *A Small Place*
Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein*, Broadview 2nd Ed.
Austen's *Mansfield Park* (film) 1999, dir. Patricia Rozema
Downton Abbey Season 2 (in library)
Misc. Handouts (provided by me and/or on eCampus)
Small folder or binder for notes, handouts, syllabus/course schedule, etc. (This should be brought to every class.)

Course Requirements and Policies

- **In-class Assignments/Homework** (25%)
Such tasks include but are not limited to quizzes, preparing discussion questions prior to class, answering readings questions before or during class, group work, and informal writing assignments. In-class assignments cannot be made up.
- **Midterm exam** (25%)
This 50-minute exam will be open-note and consist of mostly short answer questions on readings, viewings, and class discussion/notes from the first half of the semester. There will be a take-home essay question that counts as part of your midterm exam.
- **Final exam** (25%)
This 90-minute exam will be open-book and consist mostly of short answer questions from readings, viewings, and class discussion/notes. It will be based largely on the material from the

second half of the semester. The day and time of the exam are chosen by the university and this test cannot be given early or late.

- **Creative Project (25%)**

You'll have the option of doing either an "historical scrapbook" based on a fictional character you've created or one that we've studied; OR a comparative analysis which will look at an original literary text we're studying and compare it to an adaptation or rewriting in contemporary culture. You'll receive a separate handout with more details on creative projects.

Assignments

Please be advised that **late work** is not accepted. Also, I **do not take assignments electronically** (ie, via email). You need to have your assignments written or printed at the beginning of class to expect credit. Likewise, you must be present in class on exam days to receive credit. Please note that this class requires a considerable amount of reading and work; having completed English 101 and 102 (or equivalents) is particularly recommended. Grading is typically based on a scale of check plus, check, check minus, or no credit. Exams are given percentages and letter grades.

Attendance

Although I will not be taking regular attendance, I expect you to come to all classes (except in cases of emergency or other rare, compelling circumstances). It's a discussion class, so please prepare to contribute. In-class assignments help motivate attendance and participation as they cannot be made up.

Email

Please check your WVU MIX account daily for email updates from me (and other professors) concerning class cancellation, necessary changes to the reading schedule or assignments, and other miscellaneous announcements. Email is a great way to contact me about questions and concerns and I typically respond within 24-48 hours.

Cheating and Plagiarism

Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated; it is taken very seriously by universities, scholars, and instructors (including me). It can lead to an F in the course and can go on your permanent academic record. Please come to me if you're having a crisis and we'll work something out before you feel you need to resort to desperate measures such as academic dishonesty.

Electronics

I should never SEE or HEAR your cell phone. It's impolite, immature, distracting for the rest of the class, and limits your ability to learn and contribute. Please notify me before class if you expect an emergency call so that you may leave your phone on vibrate and step outside briefly to deal with it. Other electronics (laptops, iPods, tablet computers, eReaders, etc) are not allowed, unless given special permission. If I see you on electronics, you will most likely be asked to leave class and it will affect your participation grade. If you want to check the time, wear a watch; if you want to enter assignments or due dates in your electronic calendar, wait until class lets out; and so on. Thank you for your courtesy and respect.

Special Needs

If you have a special need (such as certain health problems, hearing or vision impairment, or a learning disability) that could affect your class performance or productivity, please notify me within the first week of class and I will do my best to accommodate you. Special needs should be registered with Disability Services on campus (304) 293-6700.

Professionalism and Community

While primary and secondary education are compulsory, collegiate education is elective. Except under rare circumstances, you are in this class by choice. At the college level, we are expected to act like adults, be conscientious in our academic work, and take responsibility for our behavior. Coming to college is like entering a career; to advance yourself you must maintain a certain level of professionalism in your

courses. Whether it is a matter of being on time, coming to class prepared, avoiding the urge to text during class, or respectfully addressing your peers and instructor, you are responsible for creating a positive and engaging learning environment. At this level, most of what you get out of college is what you are willing to put into it. Learning doesn't just happen by showing up to class – most of it depends on you and the outside work you put into the course. Mutual respect and diversity are important and valued in the classroom. We come from a wide range of backgrounds from areas such as social class, gender identity, sexuality, race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, political belief, and so on. This diversity enriches our classroom and discussions as we can hear and appreciate the perspectives of others.

Course Schedule

Week 1 (Jan. 12-16)

- M: Course introduction and syllabus
- W: Intro to Romantic Period (Norton, p. 3-28)
- F: Olaudah Equiano (97-105); Samuel Taylor Coleridge "On the Slave Trade" (108-110)

Week 2 (Jan. 19-23)

- M: *Martin Luther King, Jr. Day* – NO CLASS
- W: Mary Wollstonecraft, "A Vindication of the Rights of Woman" (208-232)
- F: William Wordsworth (270-272), "Tintern Abbey" (288-292)

Week 3 (Jan. 26-30)

- M: Samuel Taylor Coleridge (437-439), "Christabel" (464-477)
- W: Jane Austen, (523-524); discuss *Mansfield Park* (1999 film)
- F: Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* selections (eCampus)

Week 4 (Feb. 2-6)

- M: Percy Shelley (748-751), "Ode to West Wind" (791-793), "Ozymandias" (776)
- W: John Keats (901-903), "Ode to Nightingale" (927-929)
- F: Lord Byron (612-616), "She Walks in Beauty" (617-618), "So, we'll go no more a roving" (620)

Week 5 (Feb. 9-13)

- M: Thomas DeQuincey, "Confessions of an Opium-Eater" (565-580)
- W: Intro to Gothic (584-585)
- F: Ann Radcliffe, *Monk Lewis*, (598-608)

Week 6 (Feb. 16-20)

- M: *Frankenstein* (introduction and vol. 1)
- W: *Frankenstein* (vol. 2 and 3)
- F: *Frankenstein* (cont'd); midterm review

Week 7 (Feb. 23-27)

- M: **MIDTERM EXAM**
- W: Intro to Victorian era (1017-1030)
- F: Victorian era, cont'd (1030-1043); Victorian novel

Week 8 (March 2-6)

- M: JS Mill (1086-1088), from "The Subjection of Women" (1104-1115); Ruskin's "Of Queen's Gardens" (1614-1616)
- W: Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1123-1124), "Runaway Slave at Pilgrim's Point" (1130-1137)
- F: Robert Browning (1275-1278); "My Last Duchess" (1282-1283); dramatic monologue HW

Week 9 (March 9-13)

- M: Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1156-1159), "The Lady of Shalott" (1161-1166)
- W: Pre-Raphaelites (1463-1464); Christina Rossetti (1489-90), "Goblin Market" (1496-1508)
- F: "Empire and National Identity" (1636-1640)

Week 10 (March 16-20)

- M: imperial gothic and Arthur Conan Doyle's "The Speckled Band" (1830-1848)

- W: Robert Louis Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1677-1719); *Jekyll & Hyde* intro and handout (eCampus)
 - F: *Jekyll and Hyde*, cont'd
- Week 11 (March 21-29)
- *Spring Break*
 - *Spring Break*
 - *Spring Break*
- Week 12 (March 30-April 3)
- M: Oscar Wilde (1720-21); *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1733-1777)
 - W: *The Importance of Being Earnest*, cont'd
 - F: *Easter Break Holiday -NO CLASS*
- Week 13 (April 6-10)
- M: 20th century overview (1887-1896)
 - W: 20th century cont'd, (1897-1913)
 - F: discuss *Downton Abbey*, season 2
- Week 14 (April 13-17)
- M: William Butler Yeats (2082-2085), "Easter 1916" (2093-2095)
 - W: T.S. Eliot, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (2521-2527)
 - F: Virginia Woolf (2143-2144), *Mrs. Dalloway* (2155-2264)
- Week 15 (April 20-24)
- M: Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, cont'd
 - W: "Nation, Race, and Language" (2718-2721); Thiong'o "Decolonizing the Mind" (2737-2741)
 - F: Salman Rushdie, selections (2745-2751)
- Week 16 (April 27-May 1):
- M: selection on imperialism and postcolonialism (eCampus)
 - W: Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place*
 - F: Review for Final Exam, evaluations
- Week 17 (May 4)
- **FINAL EXAM:** Monday, May 4, 11:00am-12:30pm (in our regular classroom)