
Professor John Olmsted
Rice 108
Office Hours: TuTh 4:30-5:30 p.m.
and by appt.
Phone: 775-8582
E-mail: John.Olmsted@oberlin.edu

Texts:

Emily Bronte, **Wuthering Heights**. 1847.
Charlotte Bronte, **Jane Eyre**. 1847.
W. M. Thackeray, **Vanity Fair**. 1847-48.
Charles Dickens, **David Copperfield**. 1849-50.
Carol Christ, ed. **The Norton Anthology of English Literature: The Victorian Age**.
Seventh edition, volume 2B

Aims of the Course:

Our aim in this course is to become more alert and responsive readers of fiction and poetry written in mid-nineteenth-century England. We will place the works in their biographical, social and cultural context, paying particular attention to the demands and opportunities of parts publication, the function of illustration in the novels, and the evolving debates about male and female authorship. Lectures will provide contextual information and tentative readings, but each participant will forge individual responses in the weekly journals and in class discussion. The ultimate aim of the course is to provide you with a reading list for the rest of your lives and the skills to be subtle and emotionally involved readers.

Course policies and requirements:

Since we meet only twice a week and have a good deal of material to cover, it is essential that you not miss classes. I don't believe in checking up on adults, but I do know from experience that people who miss classes write uninformed and unsatisfactory journals, receive poor grades and are generally, as the Victorians would say, bound for the gutter.

People who come late to class will earn my moral disapproval and lose the esteem of their colleagues. I will try desperately not to let my personal feelings on this issue intrude into my evaluation of your work, but so far I've been unable to do this.

Each Tuesday you will give me a two- to five-page journal, typed, proof-read and elegantly expressed in full (in all senses of the word) sentences. Each journal will discuss the texts assigned for that week and reflect back on the discussions of the previous week. The implication of these assignments is that you will have done all of the reading for that week before you come to the Tuesday class, and that you will have attended to and reflected on the discussions of the previous week. The discipline of the weekly paper is hard to get used to at first, but most participants in the course adapt quickly to the format and enjoy having a course where writing and reading are spread evenly over the entire semester. Late journals will be downgraded.

Class Schedule:

Week of

September 1	Tennyson, "The Lady of Shalott," "Locksley Hall" and "Ulysses," Norton, 1204-1208, 1219-1225, 1213-1214 William Holman Hunt painting on the cover of the Norton anthology
September 8	"The Victorian Age 1830-1901," Norton, 1043-1065. Tennyson, "Ask Me No More" and "Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal," Norton, 1227-1228 Tennyson, In Memoriam , Norton, 1230-1232, and poems number 1, 3, 5, 7, 34, 56, 82, 95, 119, 130, and Epilogue
September 15	Browning, "Porphyria's Lover," 1349-1350, "The Laboratory," 1353-1355 Christina Rossetti, 1583-1605 Emily Bronte, 1418-1425 Wuthering Heights
September 22	Wuthering Heights
September 29	Wuthering Heights From Norton, George Eliot, 1456-1469, "The Woman Question", 1719-1739, John Stuart Mill, 1155-1165
October 6	The madwoman on the main floor Jane Eyre
October 13	Jane Eyre
October 20	FALL BREAK

October 27 "The unplumbed, salt, estranging sea"
Arnold, 1514-1528, 1479-1482, 1492-1498

November 3 The world made from within
Vanity Fair

November 10 **Vanity Fair**

November 17 **Vanity Fair**

November 24 "These pages must show"
Masculine heroism in **David Copperfield**

December 1 **David Copperfield**

December 8 **David Copperfield**
Browning, "Andrea del Sarto," 1385-1390