

*Note:  
Extraneous information has been excised from this version of the  
Fall 2019 ENL3251 syllabus for public review.*

## **ENL3251: Victorian Literature “Victorian Bodies”**



*William Powell Frith, “The Railway Station” (1862)*

### **Course Description**

In William Powell Frith’s 1862 depiction of “The Railway Station” we see a wide variety of bodies meeting and mixing in London’s Paddington Station: railway workers awkwardly shuffle baggage, dogs look around anxiously, a mother kisses her boy as he clutches a cricket bat, a man in a fur coat—assumed to be a Venetian refugee—looks around in confusion, a bridal party prepares their tickets, and several detectives detain a suspect just at the moment he prepares to board a steam locomotive that will transport them hither and thither across Great Britain. The tableaux is evocative for the ways in which Frith suggests and anticipates the movement of bodies in Great Britain—up and down the class structure, through the countryside and city streets, around the world and back again. Like many Britons who lived during the reign of Queen Victoria from 1837 to 1901, the painter was deeply interested in the proliferation and movement of bodies during this modern new age. Indeed, the Victorian texts we will read this semester are filled with bodies like those seen in “The Railway Station,” alongside anxieties about the kind of *crowdedness* we see in Frith’s works as writers attempted to understand the increasing diversity and number of bodies making up the British Empire. In the texts we will read this semester, there are bodies old, young, classed, gendered, racialized, and pathologized meeting and mixing as chaotically as the passengers in Frith’s painting. What did Victorians make of these bodies? Their movements? Their attributes? Their gathering? Their scattering? How did they construct

those bodies in their literary works and what are we supposed to make of these bodies as they hustle and bustle into our own imaginations?

Over the semester, we will investigate a diverse selection of Victorian literary fiction, contemporary essays, political tracts, and scientific treatises as we shape arguments about the array of discourses surrounding Victorian bodies as biological, cultural, political, and social. In the process, we will form a foundation of practices that will aid us to be stronger researchers. We will practice the research methods of biographical, historical, and textual analysis and look to relevant literary criticism to help us establish a model for research. Given the texts we will explore, we will necessarily engage and discuss topics such as abuse, animal cruelty/death, classism, misogyny, racism and racial slurs, sexual assault, and many other forms of violence. We will think about the ways in which the body becomes another type of text to be read, a work of art with considerable stakes in cultural history.

## Primary Texts

This is an upper-level English course; therefore, the reading load will be substantial. Students taking this course can expect an average of 200-250 pages of reading per week.

You need to buy the Norton Critical edition of the first novel we will be reading for this course, Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, as soon as possible. You can purchase this specific edition using the ISBN numbers 0393978893 or 978-0393978896; the Amazon page can be accessed here: [https://www.amazon.com/Wuthering-Heights-Norton-Critical-Editions/dp/0393978893/ref=sr\\_1\\_2?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1525296621&sr=1-2&keywords=wuthering+heights+norton+critical+edition](https://www.amazon.com/Wuthering-Heights-Norton-Critical-Editions/dp/0393978893/ref=sr_1_2?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1525296621&sr=1-2&keywords=wuthering+heights+norton+critical+edition).

You will also need to buy the Oxford World's Classics edition of the *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. With the exception of *Wuthering Heights* and *Strange Case*, I would suggest that you purchase the Penguin Classic or Oxford World Classic editions of the other texts. For those who would like to use free electronic texts, I will provide you with links to appropriate digital versions of our novels on our Canvas site. PDFs of additional readings and handouts for our course will also be posted to our Canvas site. Students should plan to bring either a laptop or tablet to view digital materials in class.

*Note:* I will provide you with the texts marked with \*\* via a link or PDF on Canvas

## Primary Victorian Readings

- Alfred Tennyson, "Break, Break, Break" (1842), "Locksley Hall" (1842), "St. Simeon Stylites" (1842), "Ulysses" (1842), \*\*
- Emily Brontë, [must use Norton Critical edition of] *Wuthering Heights* (1847/1850)
- John Ruskin, "The Nature of Gothic" from *Stones of Venice* (1850)
- Elizabeth Barrett Browning, "The Runaway Slave at Pilgrim's Point" (1848), "Hiram Powers' Greek Slave" (1850), "A Curse for a Nation" (1854), "A Reed" (1846) and "A Musical Instrument" (1860) \*\*

- Elizabeth Gaskell, *Cranford* (1853)
- Thomas Macauley, “Minute on Indian Education” (1835)\*\*
- Lin Zexu, “A Letter of Advice to Queen Victoria” (1839)\*\*
- Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859)
- Thomas Carlyle, selection from “Chartism” (1840) \*\*
- Charles Darwin, selections from *On the Origin of Species* (1859) \*\*
- Christina Rossetti, “Goblin Market” (1862) \*\*
- Wilkie Collins, *The Moonstone* (1868)
- Robert Louis Stevenson, *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde and Other Tales* (1886)
- Arthur Conan Doyle, “The Man with the Twisted Lip” (1889) \*\*

**In addition to texts, please buy and bring to class 1 pack of index cards.**

## Assignments

### I. Analytical Reflection (submit 1 page, once a week)

After each reading session, you should endeavor to take time to reflect about key passages and themes by taking notes on what you have noticed and the arguments you could make about those passages. Such analytical reflections should be your first attempts to produce close-readings about the passages, topics, ideas, and characters that most interest you in the texts we read. This form of analytical writing helps you (1) prepare for class participation and, more importantly, (2) develop ideas for close-reading papers. I would suggest that right as you read, bookmark or highlight 2 to 4 passages you find interesting or important—passages that you are deeply confused by, profoundly angry at, uncharacteristically enraptured to read, etc. When you finish a reading session, write down a few brief thoughts starting with a citation of the passages you found interesting: write down the chapter number(s) and/or page number(s) of passage(s) that evoke strong interest so you can easily reference them later. Copy-and-paste or transcribe a part of the passage. Then, write a few interpretive arguments to close-read the textual material.<sup>1</sup> You could also diagram what interests you in passages from the text by linking together multiple quotes, major questions, plot points, characters, and themes in a visualization (i.e., a “mind map”

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<sup>1</sup> A note that one could write might look like this:

In *Middlemarch* Book I, Ch. VI: “Even with a microscope directed on a water-drop we find ourselves making interpretations which turn out to be rather coarse... In this way, metaphorically speaking, a strong lens applied to Mrs Cadwallader’s match-making will show a play of minute causes producing what may be called thought and speech vortices to bring her the sort of food she needed” (55). Here it seems like Eliot is showing her reader a little science experiment, with Mrs Cadwallader, the town busy-body, as the primary specimen! She is compared to a “creature” in a water-drop that has “active voracity,” which seems to suggest something sinister about her gossiping ways (her “speech vortices”). However, Eliot also suggests that if you use a “strong lens” she might not be so actively voracious after all since if you look with the “stronger lens” more closely you see she, a “swallower”, “waits passively” for her prey. This reminds me of the language about competition and consumption from our discussions about Darwin’s natural selection last Wednesday.

or other brainstorming diagram) and upload a picture of your thoughts as your 1-page submission.

Once a week (on weeks that we have reading), post your **best** page of analytical reflections for assessment before or by the assigned due date in the Course Schedule on the appropriate thread in Canvas Discussions as either a text response (250-500 words copied into a Canvas Discussions text box, not posted as a separate Word file) or an embedded/attached image of a page from your notebook. Reflections are the only assignment that cannot be turned in “late” for a 10% grade reduction, as noted in the Course Policies section. You may miss up to 3 collections so that you will be graded for 12 out of 15 weeks’ worth of reflections; if you turn in all 15 weeks’ worth of reflections, your grade will reflect assessments from your 12 best-scoring weeks. I do not accept notes submitted after the due date for credits.

Due: once a week, every week we have readings, due dates posted in Canvas

Deliverable: 1 post of 250-500 words or a picture of your reflection page

## **II. Argumentative Close-Reading Papers (complete 2 papers, 2-3 pages each)**

You will need to submit 2 short argumentative close-reading papers during the course of the semester. A handout on our Canvas site provides a guide on how to write these close-reading papers. You will need to submit a complete draft of your work for peer review. We will peer-review the draft, and then you will have until 11:59pm the day that we peer-reviewed to submit a final version of your work

Draft Close-Reading Paper 1 Due: Sunday, September 15, 11:59pm.

Final Close-Reading Paper 1 Due: Sunday, September 22, 11:59pm.

Deliverable: Word document, 12 pt. font, Times New Roman or Cambria, 2-3 pages, double-spaced, 1-inch margins, uploaded to Assignments in Canvas

Draft Close-Reading Paper 2 Due: Sunday, October 13, 11:59pm

Final Close-Reading Paper 2 Due: Sunday, October 20, 11:59pm.

Deliverable: Word document, 12 pt. font, Times New Roman or Cambria, 2-3 pages, double-spaced, 1-inch margins, uploaded to Assignments in Canvas

## **III. Final Paper Proposal (1-2 pages)**

You must submit a paper proposal for your final paper that contains:

- (1) contextual information notifying me of
  - a. what text you will write on
  - b. what topic you will explore within that text
  - c. your debatable, substantive thesis
  - d. a general idea of the evidence (the moments or passages in the text) supporting your reading
- (2) information regarding the historical, biographical, and/or literary critical sources you will be using to enrich your literary analysis

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- a. you should reference a minimum of 3 scholarly sources (articles, books, or book chapters, NO websites)
- (3) a References section in MLA format containing citations for the edition of the primary text you will be studying and the secondary sources you plan to use

A guide for writing the final paper proposal may be found on our Canvas site. You must submit both a draft final paper proposal that will undergo peer-review and a final version.

Draft of Paper Proposal Due: Sunday, November 24, 11:59pm.

Final Paper Proposal Due: Tuesday, November 26, 11:59pm.

Deliverable: Word document, 12 pt. font, Times New Roman or Cambria, 2 pages, double-spaced, 1-inch margins, uploaded to Assignments in Canvas

#### **IV. Final Paper (7-9 pages)**

Submit a final paper that provides a substantive argumentative close-reading focusing on one of the texts we have read this semester on which you have **not** written before. For this paper, you must synthesize your close-reading with at least 3 additional resources of relevant scholarship that engage 1 or 2 of the following: genre criticism, biographical analysis, or historical contextualization. The sources you use for this paper may, of course, be from our readings over the semester. You may also use outside secondary sources that you find, but these other secondary sources must be scholarly (peer-reviewed articles, books, or book chapters from reputable university and academic presses, **NO websites**). I would suggest meeting in office hours mid-October to early November to start discussing ideas for this paper. Use proper MLA formatting for your [parenthetical in-text citations](#) and [Works Cited section](#) at the end of your paper. Your Works Cited information will not count toward your final page count.

Draft of Final Paper Due: Tuesday, December 4, 11:59pm

Final of Final Paper Due: Friday, December 7, 11:59pm

Deliverable: Word document, 12 pt. font, Times New Roman or Cambria, 8-10 pages, double-spaced, 1-inch margins, uploaded to Assignments in Canvas.

### **Course Schedule**

The schedule for this course is subject to change according to necessity. You will be updated of such changes as soon as they are made. If there is an unexpected class cancellation, you should look for my direct communications.

#### **Week 1: Introduction to the Victorian Era and Bodily Obsessions**

Wednesday, 8/21: First Day

- Syllabus
- Tennyson, "Break, Break, Break" (1842)\*\* (we will read this during class together)

Friday, 8/23: Understanding Victorian Obsessions

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- Tennyson, "Locksley Hall" (1842), "Ulysses" (1842), "St. Simeon Stylites" (1842, optional reading)\*\*
- **Reflection 1 Due Thursday 8/22 by 11:59pm**

## Week 2: Authorial Bodies (Practicing Biographical Analysis I and Thinking with Theory)

Monday, 8/26: The Life of Emily Brontë

- Brontë, *Wuthering Heights* (Ch. 1 through Ch. 6)
- Charlotte Brontë, "Biographical Notice of Ellis and Acton Bell (1850)" AND "Editor's Preface to the New Edition of *Wuthering Heights* (1850)" (pp. 307-316 in the Norton edition of *Wuthering Heights*)

Wednesday, 8/28:

- Brontë, *Wuthering Heights* (Ch. 7 through Ch. 13)
- Roland Barthes, "Death of the Author / La mort de l'auteur" (pp. 142-148) from *Image/Music/Text* (1967)\*\*

Friday, 8/30:

- Brontë, *Wuthering Heights* (Ch. 14 through Ch. 17)
- Michel Foucault, "What is an Author?" (pp. 101-108) from *The Foucault Reader* (original essay given in 1969)\*\*
  - o Stop reading at the paragraph that begins "Let us analyze this 'author function'..."
- **Reflection 2 Due Thursday 8/29 by 11:59pm**

## Week 3: Gothic Forms, Gothic Bodies (Practicing Genre Analysis)

Monday, 9/2: Labor Day, No Class

Wednesday, 9/4:

- Brontë, *Wuthering Heights* (Ch. 18 through Ch. 25)
- John Ruskin, "The Nature of Gothic" from *Stones of Venice* (1853)\*\*

Friday, 9/6:

- Brontë, *Wuthering Heights* (Ch. 26 through Ch. 34/end)
- **Reflection 3 Due Thursday 9/5 by 11:59pm**

## Week 4: Enslaved Bodies (Practicing Historicist Analysis Part I, Visual Analysis, & Using Literary Criticism)

Monday, 9/9:

- EBB, "The Runaway Slave at Pilgrim's Point" (1848)\*\*
- Selection from "Introduction" (29-32) and "Appendix C: Trans-Atlantic Abolitionism and Responses to EBB's Anti-Slavery Poems" (pp. 331-343) from the Broadview Press *Elizabeth Barrett Browning Selected Poems* (2009)\*\*

Wednesday, 9/11:

- EBB, "Hiram Powers' Greek Slave" (1850)\*\*
- Linda Hyman, "The Greek Slave by Hiram Powers: High Art as Popular Culture" (pp. 216-223) from *Art Journal* Vol. 35, No. 3 (1976)\*\*

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- Josiah Wedgwood, medallion art piece “Am I Not a Man, And a Brother?” (1787)  
[http://americanhistory.si.edu/collections/search/object/nmah\\_596365](http://americanhistory.si.edu/collections/search/object/nmah_596365)
- “250 Years of Wedgwood” from *Smithsonian Magazine* (2009)  
<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/250-years-of-wedgwood-143057153/>

Friday, 9/13:

- “A Curse for a Nation” (1854), “A Reed” (1846), and “A Musical Instrument” (1860)\*\*
- Leonid Arinshtein, “‘A Curse for a Nation’: A Controversial Episode in Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s Political Poetry” (pp. 34-42) from *The Review of English Studies* Vol. 20, No. 77 (1969)\*\*
- (optional) John MacNeill Miller, “Slavish Poses: Elizabeth Barrett Browning and the Aesthetics of Abolition” (pp. 637-659) from *Victorian Poetry*, Vol. 52, No. 4 (2014)\*\*
- **Reflection 4 Due Thursday 9/12 by 11:59pm**

### Week 5: Old Bodies, Bodies Left Behind (Practicing Historicist Analysis Part II, Finding and Using Historical Contextualization)

Monday, 9/16:

- **Draft of First Close-Reading Paper due Sunday, 9/15, 11:59pm**
- No readings. Paper Workshopping.
- **Final Version of First Close-Reading Paper due Sunday, 9/22, 11:59pm**

Wednesday, 9/18:

- Gaskell, *Cranford* (Ch. 1 through Ch. 4)

Friday, 9/20:

- Gaskell, *Cranford* (Ch. 5 through Ch. 10)
- **Reflection 5 Due Thursday 9/19 by 11:59pm**

### Week 6: Colonizing Bodies (Practicing Historicist Analysis Part III, Using Primary and Contemporary Historical Documents)

Monday, 9/23:

- Gaskell, *Cranford* (Ch. 11 through Ch. 16/end)

Wednesday, 9/25:

- Thomas Macauley, “Minute on Indian Education” (1835)
- Lin Zexu, “Letter of Advice to Queen Victoria” (1839)

Friday, 9/27:

- Stevenson, “The Body Snatcher” (1884) from *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde and Other Tales*
- **Reflection 6 Due Thursday 9/26 by 11:59pm**

### Week 7: Crowds of Bodies

Monday, 9/30:

- Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities* (Vol. 1, Ch. 1 through Vol. 2, Ch. 6)

Wednesday, 10/2:

- Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities* (Vol. 2, Ch 7 through Vol. 2, Ch. 13)

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– **Reflection 7 Due Tuesday 10/1 by 11:59pm**

Friday, 10/4: No Class, Homecoming

**Week 8: Resurrected Bodies**

Monday, 10/7:

- Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities* (Vol. 2, Ch. 14 through end of Vol. 2)

Wednesday, 10/9:

- Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities* (Vol 3., Ch. 1 through Vol. 3, Ch. 6)

Friday, 10/11:

- Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities* (Vol. 3, Ch. 7 through end of Vol. 3)
- **Reflection 8 Due Thursday 10/10 by 11:59pm**

**Week 9: Revolutionary Bodies (Practicing Historical Analysis Part IV, Using Contemporary Literary Documents)**

Monday, 10/14:

- **Draft of Second Close-Reading Paper Due Sunday, 10/13, 11:59pm**
- No readings. Paper Workshopping.
- **Final Version of Second Close-Reading Paper Due Sunday, 10/20, 11:59pm**

Wednesday, 10/16:

- Thomas Carlyle, “Ch. 1 Condition-of-England Question” (pp. 1-8) from *Chartism* (1840) <https://archive.org/details/chartism00carl>
- David R. Sorensen, “‘The Unseen Heart of the Whole’: Carlyle, Dickens, and the Sources of *The French Revolution in A Tale of Two Cities*” (pp. 5-25) from *Dickens Quarterly* Vol. 30, No. 1 (2013)\*\*
- **Reflection 9 Due Tuesday 10/15 by 11:59pm**

Friday, 10/18: No Class, Professional Engagement

**Week 10: Evolving Bodies (Practicing Historicist Analysis Part V, Reviewing Visual Analysis)**

Monday, 10/21:

- Adrian Desmond, “Evolution Before Darwin” (pp. 1-8) from “Chapter 1: Evolution and Society: Setting the Scene” of *Politics of Evolution* (1989)\*\*
- First issue of *The Lancet* from October 5, 1823 (pp. 1-3)\*\*
- First issue of *Nature* from November 6, 1869 (pp. 1-2)\*\*

Wednesday, 10/23:

- Darwin, *On the Origin of Species* (Intro through Ch. 2)

Friday, 10/25:

- Darwin, *On the Origin of Species* (Ch. 3 and Ch. 4)
- **Reflection 10 Due Thursday 10/24 by 11:59pm**

**Week 11: Vulnerable Bodies (Thinking about Canonicity)**

Monday, 10/28:

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- Rosetti, “Goblin Market”

Wednesday, 10/30:

- Collins, *The Moonstone* (Prologue through “First Period” Chapter X)

Friday, 11/1:

- Collins, *The Moonstone* (“First Period” Chapter XI through “First Period” Chapter XVII)
- **Reflection 11 Due Thursday 10/31 by 11:59pm**

### Week 12: Stolen Bodies

Monday, 11/4:

- Collins, *The Moonstone* (“First Period” Chapter XVIII through “Second Period, First Narrative” Chapter II)

Wednesday, 11/5:

- Collins, *The Moonstone* (“Second Period, First Narrative” Chapter III through end of “Second Period, Second Narrative”)

Friday, 11/9:

- Collins, *The Moonstone* (“Second Period, Third Narrative” Chapter I through “Second Period, Third Narrative” Chapter VIII)
- **Reflection 12 Due Thursday 11/7 by 11:59pm**

### Week 13: Sleeping Bodies (Practicing Close-Reading)

Monday, 11/11: *Veterans Day, No Class*

Wednesday, 11/13:

- Collins, *The Moonstone* (“Second Period, Third Narrative” Chapter IX through end of “Second Period, Fourth Narrative”)

Friday, 11/15:

- Collins, *The Moonstone* (“Second Period, Fifth Narrative” through Epilogue)
- **Reflection 13 Due Thursday 11/14 by 11:59pm**

### Week 14: Transformative Bodies (Practicing Biographical Analysis II, Using Author Essays)

Monday, 11/18:

- Stevenson, *Jekyll and Hyde* (“Story of the Door” through “Incident at the Window”)
- Stevenson, “A Chapter on Dreams”

Wednesday, 11/20:

- Stevenson, *Jekyll and Hyde* (“The Last Night” through “Henry Jekyll’s Full Statement of the Case”)
- Stevenson, “A Gossip on Romance”
- **Reflection 14 Due Tuesday 11/19 by 11:59pm**

Friday, 11/22:

- **No readings. In-Class Research Day.**

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### Week 15: Tired Bodies (Thinking of Rest)

Monday, 11/25:

- **DRAFT Paper Proposal Due Sunday, 11/24, 11:59pm.**
- No readings. Draft workshopping.
- **Final Version of Paper Proposal Due Tuesday, 11/26, 11:59pm.**

*Wednesday, 11/27: No Class, Thanksgiving Break*

*Friday, 11/29: No Class, Thanksgiving Break*

### Week 16: Numb Bodies (Practicing Close-Reading and Historical Analysis)

Monday, 12/2:

- Doyle, "The Man with the Twisted Lip"
- **Reflection 15 Due Sunday 12/1 by 11:59pm**

Wednesday, 12/4: Last Day of Class

- **Draft of Final Paper Due: Tuesday, 12/3, 11:59pm**
- No reading. Final Paper Writing Workshop.

**\*\*\*\*\* Final version of Final Paper due Friday, December 6, at 11:59pm. \*\*\*\*\***