

*Extraneous information has been excised from this version of the
Fall 2020 ENL3251 syllabus for public review.*

ENL3251: Victorian Literature “Victorian Bodies”



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

Course Description

The Victorian artist William Powell Frith’s 1862 painting “The Railway Station” depicts a 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 the travelers hither and thither across Great Britain. The tableau is evocative for the ways in which Frith anticipates the movement of Victorian bodies 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 new age and had marked ideas about how he was going to represent the Victorian era. Indeed, the Victorian texts we will read this semester are filled with bodies like those in “The Railway Station”—not to mention many Victorian bodies that Frith leaves out!—alongside anxieties about the kind of *crowdedness* depicted. In the texts we will read this semester, there are bodies old, young, classed, gendered, racialized, pathologized meeting and mixing as chaotically as the passengers in Frith’s painting. What did Victorians make of these bodies?

Rae X. Yan
University of Florida
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Their movements? Their attributes? Their gathering? Their scattering? How did Victorians 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?

Course Goals

At the end of the semester, students will have...

- investigated a diverse selection of Victorian literary fiction, travel writing, essays, political tracts, and scientific treatises
- learned significant aspects of Victorian cultural and social histories of empire, abolition, Darwinism, and more to contextualize the subjects discussed in our readings
- shaped arguments about the array of discourses surrounding Victorian bodies as biologically, culturally, politically, and socially constructed
- formed a foundation of research practices including biographical, historical, and textual analysis
- analyzed a range of relevant literary criticism to help us establish a model for research and contextualize the topical matter of our readings

Our Semester During the COVID-19 Global Pandemic

The way we would usually communicate, learn, teach, and just *be* have been dramatically impacted by COVID-19. With that in mind, I have tried to slow down aspects of what I usually teach to give us more time to breathe, dig more deeply into our readings, and recognize the limitations on our attentions and bodies during this time. I know some of you need to work hours that affect your ability to stay engaged with the class, you may be the caretaker for family members or friends during classtime, and/or you may need to care for your health or others. **It is always okay for you to ask for help and to share as little as you want about your personal circumstances.** I do not judge you and hope you may extend the same grace to me.

You are encouraged to:

- ask me for clarity, to repeat myself, or to answer a question that may have been asked before
- request a 1-week extension on any assignment at least once a semester
- take 3 few days off from class during any point in the semester for your personal needs (but please email me to let me know you are safe)
- take a break during a synchronous class session and get air, stretch, get a drink of water, eat, use the restroom, etc.
- tend to a family member or friend as you participate in class

I know that it is hard to be *here* when here is a digital space. Let us try our best and make it a goal to be gracious and support each other.

Primary Texts

I have provided you all with links to appropriate digital versions of our novels on our Canvas site through Perusall. PDFs of additional readings and handouts for our course will also be posted to our Canvas site through Perusall. Students should plan to use a laptop or tablet to view materials.

If you would like to purchase physical print copies of the books, I would suggest that you purchase the Penguin Classic or Oxford World Classic editions of any of the books with the exception of Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, for which I would suggest the Norton Critical edition (ISBN numbers 0393978893 or 978-0393978896).

Primary Victorian Readings

- Thomas Macaulay, "Minute on Indian Education" (1835)
- Alfred Tennyson, "Locksley Hall", "Break, Break, Break" (1842) and "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)
- Henry Mayhew, [we will use Broadview edition] *London Labour and the London Poor: Selections* (1851)
- Elizabeth Barrett Browning, "The Cry of the Children" (1843), "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)
- Lin Zexu, "A Letter of Advice to Queen Victoria" (1839)
- Mitra Dinabandhu, *Nil-Darpan, or, The Indigo Planting Mirror: A Drama* (1861), digital Archive.org edition
 - <https://archive.org/details/nildarpanorindig00mitriala/page/n5>
- Mary Seacole, *Wonderful Adventures of Mrs. Seacole in Many Lands* (1857)
- Charles Darwin, selections from *On the Origin of Species* (1859)
- Charles Dickens, *Great Expectations* (1861)
- Christina Rossetti, "Goblin Market" (1862)
- Robert Louis Stevenson, *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde and Other Tales* (1886)

Content Notice

As you will find, Victorian literature often explores deeply complicated and disturbing subject matter. We are here to work together during class discussions, to do the necessary work of confronting difficult topics such as abuse, animal cruelty/death, classism, colorism, misogyny, racism and racial slurs, sexual assault, and many other forms of violence. Please prepare yourself knowing that this content will be part of our semester, beginning with the first novel *Wuthering*

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Heights. While these are difficult conversations to have, they are as necessary for our current moment as they were for Victorians in the 1800s.

Assignments

I. Perusall Annotations (for every day with reading)

For our class, we will be experimenting with the real time collaborative annotation tool Perusall as a way to stay engaged with the reading for this course and locate significant passages on which we can focus our studies and discussion. As you read the texts from our course in Perusall, use the annotation tools to highlight phrases or sentences that particular interest, bemuse, confuse, anger, or excite you and write notes/comments that attempt to stimulate discussion by making an argument about the textual evidence at hand, offering informative questions or comments, and/or helping others by addressing their questions or confusions. You will want to write in complete sentences and offer thoughtful and comprehensive arguments based on the textual evidence that you are pointing out to your classmates. When you ask questions, you may want to find ways to open up the topic for debate and not just simple "yes" or "no" answers. The goal for our class is to use these annotations as ways to come up with topics both for your future papers and discussions during synchronous sessions.

Your annotations will appear alongside classmates' annotations in real time, so you should feel free to engage and respond to others' annotations by "mentioning" a fellow classmate using the @ symbol with their name. You will want to focus on *both* (a) annotating fully (annotating multiple parts of the reading, not just a couple of spots) and (b) providing deeply engaged, well-argued thoughts.

There are 45 readings this semester worth credit. I will take the scores from your top 35 Perusall annotation assignments to form your final grade for this semester.

Due: submitted by **11:59am** on the night before synchronous class sessions / by the time class would usually end on asynchronous class sessions

Deliverable: between 35 and 45 Perusall annotation assignments that show deep engagement and thoughtful analysis of the readings

II. Argumentative Close-Reading Paper 1 (complete a 3-page paper)

Submit a short 3-page argumentative close-reading paper. A handout on our Canvas site provides a guide on how to write 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, October 4, 11:59pm.

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

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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. Argumentative Close-Reading Paper 2 (complete a 5-page paper)

Submit a 5-page close-reading paper. 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 2 Due: Sunday, November 1, 11:59pm

Final Close-Reading Paper 2 Due: Sunday, November 8, 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

IV. Final Paper (7-9 pages)

Submit a final paper that provides a substantive argumentative close-reading that focuses on one of the texts we have read this semester on which you have **not** written before for Close-Reading Paper 1 or 2. 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** unless also from a reputable academic source). 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 9, 11:59pm

Final of Final Paper Due: Sunday, December 13, 11:59pm

Deliverable: Word document, 12 pt. font, Times New Roman or Cambria, 7-9 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.

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Note: this version of the syllabus only contains information about the readings, not the video lectures for the semester.

Week 1: Introduction to the Victorian Era and Bodily Obsessions

Monday, 8/31: First Day

- Introductions!

Wednesday, 9/2

- Thomas Macaulay, "Minute on Indian Education" (1835)
- Tennyson, "Locksley Hall" (1842)**

Friday, 9/4:

- Tennyson, "Break, Break, Break" (1842)**
- Tennyson, "Ulysses" (1842)**

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

Monday, 9/7: Labor Day, No Class

Wednesday, 9/9:

- W. K. Wimsatt and M. C. Beardsley, "The Intentional Fallacy" (458-488) from *The Sewanee Review*, Vol 54, No. 3 (1946), pp. 468-488**
- Roland Barthes, "Death of the Author / La mort de l'auteur" (pp. 142-148) from *Image/Music/Text* (1967)**
- Michel Foucault, "What is an Author?" (pp. 101-108) from *The Foucault Reader* (original essay given in 1969)**

Friday, 9/11:

- 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*)
- Brontë, *Wuthering Heights* (Vol I Ch I through Vol I Ch. 6)

Week 3: Haunting Bodies (Practicing Biographical Analysis I and Thinking with Theory)

Monday, 9/14:

- Brontë, *Wuthering Heights* (Vol I Ch 7 through Vol I Ch 14)

Wednesday, 9/16:

- Brontë, *Wuthering Heights* (Vol II Ch 1 through Vol II Ch 9)

Friday, 9/18:

- Brontë, *Wuthering Heights* (Vol II Ch 10 through Vol II Ch 20/end)

Week 4: Gothic Bodies at Work (Practicing Genre Analysis)

Monday, 9/21:

- John Ruskin, "The Nature of Gothic" from *Stones of Venice* (1853)**

Wednesday, 9/23:

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- Mayhew, selections from *London Labour and the London Poor*, Vol 1
- Mayhew, selections from *London Labour and the London Poor*, Vol 2

Friday, 9/25:

- EBB, "The Cry of the Children" (1843)

Week 5: Othered Bodies (Practicing Historicist Analysis Part I, Visual Analysis, & Using Literary Criticism)

Monday, 9/28:

- 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, 9/30:

- 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)
- Josiah Wedgwood, medallion art piece "Am I Not a Man, And a Brother?" (1787)
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, 10/2:

- **Check-In Email due 10/2, 11:59pm**

Week 6: Bodies Left Behind (Practicing Historicist Analysis Part II, Finding and Using Historical Contextualization)

Monday, 10/5:

- **Draft of First Close-Reading Paper due Sunday, 10/4, 11:59pm**
- No readings. Paper Workshopping.
- **Final Version of First Close-Reading Paper due Sunday, 10/11, 11:59pm**

Wednesday, 10/7:

- "A Curse for a Nation" (1854), "A Reed" (1846), and "A Musical Instrument" (1860)**
- John MacNeill Miller, "Slavish Poses: Elizabeth Barrett Browning and the Aesthetics of Abolition" (pp. 637-659) from *Victorian Poetry*, Vol. 52, No. 4 (2014)**

Friday, 10/9:

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

Week 7: Old Bodies (Practicing Historicist Analysis Part III, Using Primary and Contemporary Historical Documents)

Monday, 10/12:

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- Gaskell, *Cranford* (Ch. 5 through Ch. 10)

Wednesday, 10/14:

- Gaskell, *Cranford* (Ch. 11 through Ch. 16/end)
- Jeffrey Cass, "'The Scraps, Patches, and Rags of Daily Life': Gaskell's Oriental Other and the Conservation of *Cranford*." *Papers on Language & Literature* 35.4 (Fall 1999), pp 417-433.

Friday, 10/16:

- The Opium Wars (a 15 minute video)
- Lin Zexu, "Letter of Advice to Queen Victoria" (1839)
- Erika Rappaport, "Packaging China: Advertising Food Safety in a Global Marketplace." *A Thirst for Empire: How Tea Shaped the Modern World*. Princeton, 2017, pp. 120-143.

Week 8: Rebellious Bodies (Using Postcolonial Frameworks Part I)

Monday, 10/19:

- The Debates about Victorian Studies (15 minutes)
- Jenny Balfour-Paul, selections from "Indigo's Heyday, the Downfall of Woad and Salvation by Denim." *Indigo*. British Museum Press, 1998, pp. 41-48, 59-77.
- Sukanya Banerjee, "Who, or What, is Victorian?: Ecology, Indigo, and the Transimperial." *Victorian Studies*, vol. 58, no. 2, Jan 2016, pp. 213-23.

Wednesday, 10/21:

- Dinabandhu, *Nil-Darpan, or, The Indigo Planting Mirror: A Drama* (Act 1 through Act 3)
 - o <https://archive.org/details/nildarpanorindig00mitriala/page/n5>

Friday, 10/23:

- Dinabandhu, *Nil-Darpan, or, The Indigo Planting Mirror: A Drama* (Act 4 through Act 5/end)

Week 9: Traveling Bodies (Using Postcolonial Frameworks Part II)

Monday, 10/26:

- Seacole, *The Wonderful Adventures of Mrs. Seacole in Many Lands* (Ch 1 through Ch 10)

Wednesday, 10/28:

- Seacole, *The Wonderful Adventures of Mrs. Seacole in Many Lands* (Ch 11 through Conclusion)
- Paravisini-Gebert, Lizabeth. "Mrs. Seacole's *Wonderful Adventures in Many Lands* and the Consciousness of Transit." *Black Victorians / Black Victoriana*. Rutgers University Press, 2003, pp. 71-87.

Friday, 10/30:

- Researching for Papers (a 30-minute video)

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Week 10: Scientific Bodies (Practicing Historical Analysis Part IV, Using Contemporary Literary Documents)

Monday, 11/2:

- **Draft of Second Close-Reading Paper Due Sunday, 11/1, 11:59pm**
- No readings. Paper Workshopping.
- **Final Version of Second Close-Reading Paper Due Sunday, 11/8, 11:59pm**

Wednesday, 11/4:

- 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)

Friday, 11/6:

- Darwin, *On the Origin of Species* (Intro through Ch. 1)

Week 11: Evolving Bodies (Practicing Historicist Analysis Part V, Returning to What we Know)

Monday, 11/9:

- Darwin, *On the Origin of Species* (Ch. 2 and 3)

Wednesday, 11/11: No Class, Veterans Day

Friday, 11/13:

- Darwin, *On the Origin of Species* (Ch. 4)

Week 12: Modernizing Bodies (Thinking about Canonicity)

Monday, 11/16:

- Dickens, *Great Expectations* (Ch 1 [Vol 1 Ch I] through Ch 11 [Vol 1 Ch XI])

Wednesday, 11/18:

- Dickens, *Great Expectations* (Ch 12 [Vol 1 Ch XII] through Ch 21 [Vol 2 Ch II])

Friday, 11/20:

- Dickens, *Great Expectations* (Ch 22 [Vol 2 Ch III] through Ch 32 [Vol 2 Ch XIII])

Week 13: Resting Bodies

Monday, 11/23:

- Dickens, *Great Expectations* (Ch 33 [Vol 2 Ch XIV] through Ch 43 [Vol 3 Ch IV])

Wednesday, 11/25: No Class, Thanksgiving

Friday, 11/27: No Class, Thanksgiving

Week 14: Animalistic Bodies (Practicing and Revisiting Close-Reading)

Monday, 11/30:

- Dickens, *Great Expectations* (Ch 44 [Vol 3 Ch V] through Ch 59 [Vol 3 Ch XX] and Appendix A/Alternate Ending)

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Wednesday, 12/2:

- Rosetti, "Goblin Market" (1862)

Friday, 12/4:

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

Week 15: Transformative Bodies (Practicing Biographical Analysis II, Using Author Essays)

Monday, 12/7:

- Stevenson, *Jekyll and Hyde* ("The Last Night" through "Henry Jekyll's Full Statement of the Case")
- Stevenson, "A Gossip on Romance"

Wednesday, 12/9: Last Day of Class

- **Draft of Final Paper Due Sunday, 12/13, 11:59pm**
- No readings. Paper Workshopping.

******* Final version of Final Paper due Sunday, 12/13, at 11:59 *******