

ENGLISH 4540: VICTORIAN POETRY**Instructor:** Monica Smith**Office:** 38 Park Hall**Office Hours:** 12:15-1:45 T/TH or by appointment**Email:** msmith@english.uga.edu**Course URL:** www.english.uga.edu/~msmith/4540/4540.htm

PREREQUISITES: (ENGL 2310 or ENGL 2320 or ENGL 2330 or ENGL 2340 or ENGL 2400) **and** (ENGL 2310 or ENGL 2320 or 2330 or ENGL 2340 or ENGL 2400 or CMLT 2111 or CMLT 2210 or CMLT 2212 or CMLT 2220). Not open to students with credit in ENGL 4530.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: In Victorian Poetry, we will engage with the astounding variety of poetic forms, themes, missions, and performances appearing in Britain during the years 1830-1901. Victorian poetry reflects, records, and wrestles with all the problems and successes of the era: a rapidly growing and increasingly problematic empire; restless, dissatisfied, and potentially revolutionary groups of citizens at home; immense capitalist wealth alongside shocking poverty; revolutionary travel and communication technologies thrilling to advocates and distressing to those yearning for the good old days; competing political and social philosophers butting heads in both the halls of Parliament and the taverns of Manchester; simultaneous excitement about and fear over feminism; religious upheaval rivaling the Reformation; and fierce debates over the control, use, and purpose of language, education, and art. We will, therefore, not only engage with the poetry itself, but also with its historical, cultural, and intellectual contexts in class discussion and assignments.

CLASSROOM PERFORMANCE: This is an active, discussion-oriented class with substantial, demanding, daily readings. Each day, students should come to class prepared to articulate and defend their own readings, both on paper and in person. Although not specified by page number on the syllabus, students are expected to read and should expect quizzes over the introductory sections on each author we study.

REQUIRED TEXTS: Please purchase the editions specified below. Books have been ordered at Off-Campus Bookstore and FTX, both on Baxter Street.

- *Victorian Literature 1830-1900*. Eds. Dorothy Mermin and Herbert F. Tucker. Harcourt, 2002.
- Barrett Browning, Elizabeth. *Aurora Leigh*. Ed. Margaret Reynolds. Norton, 1996.
- course packet, available from Bel-Jean

ASSIGNMENTS AND REQUIREMENTS:

Daily Readings are substantial and demanding. The study of poetry demands careful, multiple readings; skimming will not suffice, and may in fact do more harm than good. I therefore strongly recommend that you get in the habit of looking ahead on the syllabus; know when our next long work is due, and plan to start reading in advance. All readings should be completed before coming to class.

In-class Writings will vary from a quick, four or five line response to a question or prompt to a detailed analysis of a particular passage. These writings will be assessed according to the degree of engagement the student demonstrates with the question or assignment.

Memorization Projects: Twice during the semester students will select 14-20 consecutive lines from (different) poems of their choice on the syllabus and recite them to me. Due during the week of January 27 and March 16.

Annotation Project: Students will complete an annotation project on a poem or excerpt from a long poetic work of their choice in order to demonstrate 1) close engagement with the text through detailed and significant explication and analysis and 2) understanding of and engagement with the arguments in critical texts dedicated to the poem, and integration of critical texts, reference works, and other media (paintings, photographs, audio, etc.) when appropriate.

- You should let me know what selection you have chosen by submitting a one-page typed proposal outlining why you are interested in working with this particular text; proposal due no later than

January 22. Selections should come from works on the syllabus, either required or recommended readings. Please note that no more than one person may choose a particular work, and some works will not be appropriate for annotation—so make your selection carefully and early, and please see me if you would like suggestions or guidance.

- The first half of the project (due February 10) should consist of your annotations alone—your reading of the poem/section without any secondary materials. The second half of the project (due April 20) should build on the first half, incorporating a variety of secondary materials; you may, of course, revise your original annotations at this point. We will have a library orientation on March 23 to assist in preparing the second half of the project.
- Annotations should be formatted using the footnote feature of Microsoft Word, or the footnoting function of a comparable word processing program. Projects that contain audio annotations should be submitted both on paper and on a floppy or CD-ROM with the accompanying audio files linked to the annotation. Students may prepare a hypertext version of the project in lieu of a hard copy, if so desired.

The Critical Essay should be 4-7 pages. Papers are due at the beginning of class. No late papers will be accepted. Paper topics will be distributed several weeks before the due date. The critical essay should adhere to all the conventions of formal academic prose, following the guidelines specified by MLA. Essay must be your own original work and must be written specifically for this class. If you have questions about the ethics or mechanics of acknowledging another person's writings or ideas, please see me.

- Revision: Students have the option of revising the critical essay if they so desire. If a student revises, then the first grade will count 1/3 and the revision 2/3 of the final percentage. If the student does not revise, then the original grade will stand. As with all other work, no late revisions will be accepted. If a revision is undertaken, however, it must be thorough, significant, and complete. Incomplete, insubstantial, or surface-error-only revision will result in a grade at least ten points lower than the original.

Midterm and Final Exam: Each exam will consist of two parts: identifications and an essay. The midterm essay will be a take-home essay, due on the next class day. The final exam identifications and essay will be completed during the final exam period.

ATTENDANCE: Regular class attendance is essential. Students are allowed four absences. On the fifth absence, you will be dropped from the class with a W if before midterm or a WF if after midterm. Students may not exceed the allowed number of absences, and all absences will be treated the same, i.e. no differentiation between "excused" or "unexcused" absences. Even if you are absent, you are responsible for all material covered and all announcements.

MAKE-UP POLICY: No late assignments will be accepted. Each student is held responsible for all assignments, regardless of her/his class attendance on the day the assignment is made. If a previously scheduled event coincides with an exam or paper due date, a written request for an extension or make-up date will be considered. All such requests must be submitted prior to the date in question. Any requests based on illness or family emergency must be accompanied by written documentation from Student Affairs. All make-ups and extensions are at the instructor's discretion.

COMPUTER ACCESS: Students are expected to check email daily and the course webpage several times a week or as indicated on the daily schedule. Students are responsible for securing working computer equipment; numerous labs are available on campus. Please note that since "The printer wouldn't work," "Something's wrong with my disk," and "I don't know what happened—I saved it but now it's not there" have become the 21st century versions of "The dog ate my homework," computer, software, or printer malfunction/failure of any kind will not constitute a valid excuse for missed, late, or incomplete work.

CONFERENCES: Office hours are Tuesday and Thursday from 12:15-1:45. While you are always welcome to stop by during office hours, it is generally best to schedule an appointment, or at least let me

know you'll be stopping by, so that you won't be kept waiting if I'm with someone else. If this time is not convenient, please schedule an appointment.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: All students are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of honesty and integrity in every phase of their academic careers. Any instance of suspected plagiarism will be reported to the Office of the Vice President of Instruction.

ACCESS STATEMENT: If you need adaptations or accommodations because of a disability (i.e., physical, mental, psychological, learning), have emergency medical information to share with me, or need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible. Students with the option of testing at either of the disability services centers will be required to do so.

GRADING:

In-class writings	10%
Memorization Project	10%
Annotation Project	20%
Critical Essay (see revision procedure above)	20%
Midterm	20%
Final Exam	20%

DAILY SCHEDULE: The most up-to-date version will be available online. See course URL above.
(M&T) = reading(s) found in *Victorian Literature*, edited by Mermin & Tucker
(p) = reading(s) found in course packet, available from Bel-Jean

Thursday, January 8: The Victorian Era

Introduction to class

Tuesday, January 13: The Dramatic Monologue

Required: Robert Browning, "Porphyria's Lover," "My Last Duchess" (M&T)

Recommended: Browning, "Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister," "Caliban Upon Setebos," "Andrea del Sarto," "Fra Lippo Lippi" (M&T)

Thursday, January 15: The Sonnet Sequence

Required: EBB, *Sonnets from the Portuguese* 1-22 (M&T)

Recommended: "Sonnet" information in packet

Tuesday, January 20: The Sonnet Sequence

Required: EBB, *Sonnets from the Portuguese* 23-end (M&T)

Thursday, January 22: The Sonnet Sequence

Required: George Meredith, *Modern Love* (M&T)

Tuesday, January 27: The Sonnet Sequence (Memorization due this week)

Required: Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *House of Life* (M&T)

Recommended: "The Stealthy School of Criticism" (M&T); Robert Buchanan, "The Fleshly School of Poetry" (M&T)

Thursday, January 29: The Sonnet Sequence

Required: Christina Rossetti, *Monna Innominata* (M&T)

Recommended: Christina Rossetti, "A Birthday," "Up-Hill," "Winter: My Secret," "The Convent Threshold" (M&T)

Tuesday, February 3: The Role of Poetry

Required: John Stuart Mill, "What is Poetry?" (M&T); Arnold, "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time," "Preface" to *Poems, 1853* (M&T); Gerald Massey, Preface to *Babe Christabel* (p)

Recommended: "Poetic Forms" information in packet

Thursday, February 5: Verse of Social Protest

Required: Thomas Hood, "The Song of the Shirt" (p); EBB "The Cry of the Children" (M&T); Gerald Massey, "Cry of the Unemployed" (p)

Recommended: Eliza Cook, "Song for the Workers," (p); Caroline Norton, "Voice from the Factories" (p); Janet Hamilton, "A Lay of the Tambour Frame" (p); *The People's Charter* (M&T)

Tuesday, February 10: Progress and Anxiety (Annotation 1 Due)

Required: Tennyson, "Locksley Hall" (M&T); Matthew Arnold, "Dover Beach" (M&T)

Recommended: Thomas Carlyle, excerpt from *Signs of the Times*, "Gospel of Mammonism" from *Past and Present* (M&T)

Thursday, February 12: "Womankind"

Christina Rossetti, *Goblin Market* (M&T); Coventry Patmore, "The Angel in the House" (M&T); Gerald Massey, "Womankind" (p)

Recommended: Sarah Stickney Ellis, excerpt from *The Women of England* (M&T)

Tuesday, February 17: "Womankind"

Required: Amy Levy, "Xantippe" (M&T); excerpt from Louis Ruprecht, *Symposia* (p)

Recommended: "James Thomson: A Minor Poet" (p)

Thursday, February 19: The Fallen Woman

Required: Dante Gabriel Rossetti, "Jenny" (M&T); Augusta Webster, "A Castaway" (M&T)

Recommended: The Ladies' National Association for the Repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act (M&T); Eliza Cook, "Song of the Ugly Maiden" (p)

Tuesday, February 24

Midterm Exam

Thursday, February 26: Patriotism and Nationalism

Required: Felicia Hemans, "Casabianca" (p); E.B.B., "Mother and Poet" (M&T); Tennyson, "Charge of the Light Brigade" (M&T)

Recommended: Kipling, "Tommy," "Ballad of East and West" (M&T); Hardy, "Drummer Hodge" (M&T)

Tuesday, March 2: Patriotism and Nationalism (midterm; last day to withdraw, 3/5)

Required: Tennyson, *Maud* (M&T)

Recommended: Arthur Henry Hallam, from *On Some of the Characteristics of Modern Poetry* (M&T)

Thursday, March 4: Patriotism and Nationalism

Required: Tennyson, *Maud* (M&T)

Tuesday, March 9: SPRING BREAK

Thursday, March 11: SPRING BREAK

Tuesday, March 16: The Verse Novel (Memorization Due this week)

Required: Elizabeth Barrett Browning, *Aurora Leigh* Books One-Five

Recommended: Ellen Moers, "The Myth of Corinne" from *Literary Women* (p. 449 in *Aurora Leigh*)

Thursday, March 18: The Verse Novel

Required: Elizabeth Barrett Browning, *Aurora Leigh* Books Six-Nine

Recommended: Cora Kaplan, “The Right to Write” (p. 453 in *Aurora Leigh*); any of the other critical essays in the back of *Aurora Leigh*, particularly that by Susan Gubar and Sandra Gilbert, Deirdre David, Dorothy Mermin, and Angela Leighton; the “Contemporary Critical Reception” section (p. 391)

Tuesday, March 23

Library orientation

Thursday, March 25

TBA

Tuesday, March 30: Art and Artists

Required: Christina Rossetti, “The P.B.R.,” “In an Artist’s Studio” (M&T); Dante Gabriel Rossetti, “The Blessed Damozel” (M&T)

Thursday, April 1: Poets and Painters (Critical Essay Due)

Required: Tennyson, “The Lady of Shallot” (M&T)

Recommended: Michael Field, “A Pen Drawing of Leda”; William Butler Yeats, “Leda and the Swan” (M&T)

Tuesday, April 6: Past and Present

Required: Tennyson, “Ulysses” (M&T)

Recommended: William Morris, “The Defense of Guenevere” (M&T)

Thursday, April 8: Past and Present

Required: Browning, “ ‘Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came’ ” (M&T)

Recommended: Arnold, “The Scholar Gypsy” (M&T)

Tuesday, April 13: Romantic Re-visions

Required: John Keats, “Ode to a Nightingale” (p); Thomas Hardy, “The Darkling Thrush” (M&T); Samuel Taylor Coleridge, “Christabel” (p); Mary Coleridge, “The Witch” (M&T); William Wordsworth, “Resolution and Independence” (p); Lewis Carroll, “The White Knight’s Ballad” (M&T)

Thursday, April 15: Elegy

Required: Tennyson, *In Memoriam* 1-65 (M&T)

Tuesday, April 20: Elegy (Annotation Part 2 Due)

Required: Tennyson, *In Memoriam* 66-end (M&T)

Recommended: Algernon Charles Swinburne, “Ave Atque Vale”; Gerard Manley Hopkins, “Felix Randal”; Matthew Arnold, “Thyrsis” (M&T)

Thursday, April 22: Dialect Verse

Required: Ellen Johnston, “The Last Sark,” “Nelly’s Lament for the Pirnhouse Cat,” (p); Ben Brierley, “The Weaver of Welbrook” (p); William Barnes, “The Hwomestead”; “The Defence of the Dialect” (p)

Recommended: Rest of Barnes in M&T

Tuesday, April 27: Nonsense Rhyme; Review for Final Exam

Required: Lear and Carroll, all poems in M&T

Final Exam: Tue, May 4, 2004 from 12:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Due Dates:

Tuesday, January 27: Memorization Due

Tuesday, February 10: Annotation 1 Due

Tuesday, February 24: Midterm Exam

Tuesday, March 16: Memorization Due

Thursday, April 1: Critical Essay Due
Tuesday, April 20: Annotation Part 2 Due