

English 202
Spring, 2011
S. Slote

Office Hrs: MWF 11-12,
2:30-3:30; TTH 11-12 & by appt
Odd Fellows 229; x4327

Studies in Later British Literature: "The Shadows of Change"

The subtitle for our course is taken from an 1833 essay by Edward Bulwer, who reflected, with some anxiety, on the enormous upheavals confronting British society at that time. It was, as he explains, "an age of visible transition—an age of disquietude and doubt—of the removal of timeworn landmarks, and the breaking up of the hereditary elements of society—old opinions, feelings—ancestral customs and institutions [were] crumbling away..." Bulwer's list is appropriately all-encompassing: for those living during the period we will be studying (roughly 1795 to 1915), change touched every aspect of life. Significantly, of course, literature was part of that change, acting not just to reflect but to catalyze and criticize it. Literary forms were invented or renovated; claims for or rejections of an activist literary artist were made; new notions of the role of art itself were forged in confrontation with a newly urban, industrialized world. In becoming students of the literature of this period, our job is to explore its transformations by

- examining the complex interrelationship between the age and its literature, to understand how writers of the period bore witness to the age and helped create it;
- gaining familiarity with many of the central historical upheavals that occurred in England and Europe between the time of the French Revolution and World War I;
- investigating changing conceptions of the role of the literary artist and of literature, as a result of social and historical change
- further refining skills as thinkers, writers and speakers about literature.

Course Requirements:

2 Essays (15% each)	30%
Romanticism Exam	15%
3 Quizzes (5% each)	15%
Presentation	5%
Class Participation	15%
Final Exam	20%

Required Texts:

Austen, *Persuasion* (Penguin Classics)
Dickens, *Hard Times* (Penguin Classics)
English Romantic Poetry, ed. Appelbaum (Dover)
English Victorian Poetry, ed. Negri (Dover)
Forster, *Howard's End* (Penguin Classics)
Joyce, *Dubliners* (Dover)
Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Dover)

Course Policies:

Attendance and Participation: Your presence, preparation and active participation in class discussion are crucial to your success in the course. Although any unexcused absence necessarily adversely affects your class participation, you are permitted two unexcused absences. For each unexcused absence beyond these two, you will lose two points from your *final* course grade (an 85 will become an 83, etc.). At the end of the syllabus, you will find a copy of the guidelines I follow in evaluating class participation.

Late Essays: Essays that are turned in late without prior excuse will be penalized one grade for each day late (a "B" paper turned in a day late becomes a B-, etc.). Please note that all written work must be completed in order to qualify to pass the course.

Plagiarism: Obviously a bad idea. All your work must be your own, and outside sources must be properly cited according to MLA guidelines. If you have any questions about the proper use and acknowledgement of sources, please ask. I, like you, am bound by the Honor Code and will refer any plagiarism to the Honor Committee.

Please Note: Students with disabilities who believe they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact Disability Services at (814) 332-2898. Disability Services is part of the Learning Commons and is located in Pelletier Library. Please do this as soon as possible to ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

Schedule:

1/19 W Introductions

Romanticism: The Poet as Prophet of the Age

1/21 F "London, 1802" (ERP); Wordsworth, excerpts from *The Prelude* (handout)

1/24 M Wordsworth, "Resolution and Independence," "The Solitary Reaper" (ERP)

1/26 W Wordsworth, "Lines Written ... Above Tintern Abbey" (ERP)

1/28 F Wordsworth, "Ode: Intimations of Immortality..." (ERP)

1/31 M Coleridge, "Kubla Khan" (ERP); "Frost at Midnight" (ERP)

2/2 W Coleridge, "Dejection: An Ode" (ERP)

2/4 F Keats, "La Belle Dame Sans Merci" (ERP)

2/7 M Keats, "Ode on a Grecian Urn"; "Ode to Melancholy" (ERP)

2/9 W Keats, Sonnets: "When I Have Fears..." (ERP); "Ode to a Nightingale" (ERP)

2/11 F **Romanticism Exam**

2/14 M **Presentations; Begin Austen, *Persuasion***

2/16 W *Persuasion*

2/18 F *Persuasion; Quiz*

2/21 M *Persuasion*

2/23 W **Writing Workshop**

"Half Sick of Shadows": The Burden of the Victorian Writer

2/25 F Tennyson, "Ulysses;" "Tithonus" (EVP)

2/28 M Tennyson, "The Lady of Shallot;" "Break, Break, Break;" **essay 1 due**

3/2 W **Presentations, Tennyson, Selections from *In Memoriam* (EVP; handout)**

3/4 F Selections from *In Memoriam*, cont.

3/7 M **Presentations; Dickens, *Hard Times***

3/9 W *HT*

3/11 F **Presentations, *HT***

3/14	M	<i>HT</i>
3/16	W	<i>HT</i> ; Quiz
3/18	F	<i>HT</i>
3/19-27 Spring Break		
3/28	M	Visit from the Alexander String Quartet
3/30	W	Browning, "My Last Duchess;" "Porphyria's Lover" (EVP)
4/1	F	Browning, "Andrea Del Sarto" (EVP)

The Move into Modernism

4/4	M	Arnold, "Dover Beach;" Hopkins, "God's Grandeur;" "(Carrion Comfort)" (EVP) essay 2 due
4/6	W	Presentations; Wilde, <i>The Importance of Being Earnest</i>
4/8	F	<i>Earnest</i>
4/11	M	Presentations; Yeats, Selections (handout)
4/13	W	Joyce, "Araby;" "Eveline;" "A Painful Case" (<i>Dubliners</i>)
4/15	F	"The Dead" (<i>Dubliners</i>)
4/18	M	"The Dead"
4/20	W	Presentations; Begin Forster, <i>Howard's End</i>
4/22	F	<i>HE</i>
4/26	M	Presentations, <i>HE</i>
4/28	W	<i>HE</i> ; Quiz
4/30	F	<i>HE</i>
5/3	M	Course Review

Final Exam: Saturday, May 7th, 7 PM

Criteria for grading class participation:

While it is difficult to quantify the success of a student's contributions to class discussion (at our best we all contribute differently), here are the general standards I will use to grade participation:

A range: Participation at this level is marked by its active nature, its consistency, and its quality. When A participants read an assignment, they prepare to participate in a class discussion; they read the assignments fully, carefully and critically enough to be ready not just to respond to my questions but also to initiate discussion with comments and questions of their own. Such participants will also come to class ready to make and argue assertions about the reading and to think out loud about a text's relation to its contexts; they will attend to the comments of others in class, agree, elaborate or civilly disagree with them, bring our attention to passages from the reading to make their point and at times connect such thinking with earlier readings or previous class discussion. In short, students who by their engagement in class discussion throughout the semester show themselves to be true students of the course material—persistently conscientious and inquiring—will get an A for their efforts. They will also make the course a lot better. (By the way, substituting quantity of participation for quality will not work.)

B range: Students who come to every class, have almost always done all the reading, and consistently respond to the questions of others in a way that demonstrates their command of the reading will earn a B participation grade. What separates this effort from an A one is not so much quantity (teachers are remarkably good at detecting bs) as the level of preparation—one's reading and thinking—that has gone on before one gets to class, especially the kind that enables students to *initiate* discussion. But you can't get a B participation grade by just showing up, either, or by talking every once in a while.

C range: A C participant comes to almost all the classes (no more than four unexcused absences), usually has done most of the reading most of the time, but not with the energy necessary to demonstrate through participation their ongoing engagement with the material. Such a discussant contributes infrequently, maybe one time every other class.

D range: Automatic pilot mode. You were physically there most of the time; spoke a few times maybe, but that was it.

F: Not coming to class is the traditional route.