

# AML4453.4G80: Studies in American Literature & Culture

## American Victorianism

TUR 2336: MTWRF, period 3

Summer B 2016

*“Europe and America are united by telegraph. Glory to God in the highest. On earth peace and good-will toward men.”*

This message, relayed between Queen Victoria and President Buchanan on August 17, 1858, illustrates several key aspects of Victorian America: political alliances between England and the United States, joint efforts in technological advances, and global communication and economies. With the advent of new technology like the telegraph, ideas of social and domestic reform spread more rapidly between the nations. Because of this exchange, similar questions and concerns developed on both sides of the Atlantic: race relations, women’s rights, national identity, and a push to modernize.

In the spirit of the telegraph that increased communication between both countries, this course will examine direct and indirect conversations among 19<sup>th</sup>-century literary figures like Eliot, Stowe, Doyle, Poe, Alcott, Douglas, Brown, Fuller, and more. We will read works that were popular on both sides of the Atlantic. And, using reviews written by both their English and American contemporaries, we will consider how these works were received in the general public and what issues/stances the reviews emphasized. These texts will help us better see the impact of historical/social events (e.g. Women’s Suffrage, Civil War) on literature as well as how literature and transatlantic communication influenced public opinions of those events.

### **Contact Information:**

**Instructor:** Sabrina Gilchrist

**Email:** gilchrsm@ufl.edu

**Office Hours:** Thursday periods 8 & 10, and by appointment

**Office:** Turlington 4106

### **Class Texts:**

- Required Texts:
  - *The Norton Anthology American Literature, Volume B (8<sup>th</sup> Edition)*
    - ISBN 978-0-393-93477-9
  - *Little Women, Norton Critical Edition* by Louisa May Alcott
    - ISBN: 978-0-393-97614-4
  - *A Study in Scarlet* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle
    - ISBN: 978-0140439083
- Recommended Text:
  - *Critical Theory: A Reader for Literary and Cultural Studies* by Robert Dale Parker; ISBN: 978-0199797776

## **Course Objectives:**

1. Explore several notable authors who contributed to and helped shape the broader literary, social, religious, and political conversations in the period.
2. Familiarize ourselves with contemporary literary scholarship that can help to investigate these authors and their works so that we might effectively join that ongoing conversation.
3. Create well-researched and thoughtfully-constructed arguments.
4. Consider how the messages of these nineteenth-century authors still speak to the social and political injustices that we see today

## **Class Requirements:**

Requirements include regular attendance and participation, 4 short responses (approximately 1-2 pages), regular reading quizzes, 1 presentation, and 1 major research paper. Your overall grade will be calculated (out of 1,000 points) based on your completion of the following:

Attendance, Participation, Presentations, Group Work → 320 points total

Four Critical Reading Responses (approx. 1-2 pages each) → 60 points each

Reading Quizzes → 150 points total

Final Essay (7-8 or 9-10 pages, depending on option selected) → 250 points

Letters to Sabrina (>500 words each) → 20 points each

### *Attendance and Participation*

The attendance policy is outlined below. This course is an *active* course, by which I mean that it is in large part based on in-class discussions. While I will lecture sparingly, the majority of each class will involve critical conversations, which will help us to explore each text and period in greater depth. Each student must contribute to discussions whenever we meet as a class in a considerate and collegial fashion. *Attendance does not equate to participation.* If you do not actively participate in discussions, group activities, conferences, peer reviews, etc., you will not receive participation points.

### *Group Presentation*

In this group presentation, you will work to contextualize a theme from a provided list (found on prompt). You will

1. provide the class with some pertinent historical background for what was happening in England and the US and/or related world events that may have shaped the assigned theme.
2. unpack the assigned scholarly article that will help explore this theme.
3. seek out notable reactions/responses/reviews to the author's work that were made by the author's contemporaries in *both* England and America.
4. explain some key elements and/or poetic devices used to highlight that assigned theme. For example, if you have "detective fiction," you could tell the class several common tropes (devices/motifs/clichés) that are typically used in detective fiction.

As part of the presentation, you will: 1) provide the class with either a handout or PowerPoint that addresses the main points within your presentation and 2) create an activity that will review the presentation and/or prompt discussion of the text. The winning team/individual of your activity will be awarded an extra credit point. All of these materials must be emailed to Sabrina at least 48 hours before the presentation (which will allow time to review the presentation materials and provide feedback before the official presentation in class).

### *Reading Quizzes*

We will have regular unannounced reading quizzes. I do not envision these as a means to test obscurities, but rather to ensure that everyone is reading and understanding the central themes and/or plot points for each text. They might be short answer, True/False, multiple choice, or a mixture of all three.

### *Critical Reading Responses*

Each reading response will be in direct dialogue with a text or idea we have addressed in the class. They must be thoughtful interactions, in which you develop a central idea by engaging (especially using close readings) with the text(s). The critical response will be short (1-2 pages max), and two parts: 1) propose a thesis for the final paper and 2) give a sample paragraph that demonstrates your close-reading of a passage for that thesis.

### *Final Essay*

It is expected that this paper will be a revision and continuation of one of your critical reading responses, but that is not mandatory. (If you would like to start from scratch, you can. However, your new paper must be at least eight pages). If you choose to revise a reading response, there must be at least six pages of new material. If you choose to revise your critical reading response, please bold the text that was in the original. Without the revisions and the minimum six new pages, you will not pass the final.

### *Letters to Sabrina*

You will write two letters (>500 words each). Each letter will detail what you struggled with while writing the paper, what you felt you excelled in, specific things you would like feedback about, etc. In other words, these letters will provide you an opportunity for self-assessment and will create an open dialogue between the two of us about your writing.

### **Essays and Mode of Transmission:**

Your essays should follow MLA Guidelines which are detailed on the Owl at Purdue website. (If you are not an English major/minor, please see me about acceptable alternative citation styles). Accordingly, your essays should be double-spaced with 1 inch margins. Your text should be Times New Roman, size 12. You will not include a heading, but you will have in-text citations and a separate page for a properly formatted Works Cited page.

Each assignment should be uploaded to the proper Canvas folder *before the deadline*. If you do not submit the assignment on time, you will receive an automatic zero. The papers must be submitted as .doc or .docx files. The PowerPoint presentations should be .ppt, .pptx, or .pdf.

### **Essay Assessment**

Essays are assessed based on criteria set out in this rubric, a scaled assessment of Thesis, Organization, Evidence, and Style/Mechanics:

*Thesis High Score: Author presents a clear and creative argument. The argument is supported by a logical purpose/ valid "so what." Both the thesis and purpose/"so what" are supported throughout the essay in the topic sentences, evidence, and analysis.*

5 – Excellent thesis. See above.

4 – Good thesis. Has a clear argument, but is not creative. Or does not tie purpose in throughout the essay.

3 – Basic thesis that may lack a depth of engagement or a full connection of ideas. See above.

2 – Needs significant improvement to be comprehensible as an argument; does not address all aspects of the assignment.

1 – Does not meet the requirements of the assignment

*Organization High Score: Ideas are logically developed and directly linked to an analytical thesis. Ideas are connected at the sentence and paragraph levels. Paragraphs are clearly focused on the development of the thesis.*

5 – Excellent. See above.

4 – Good organization that contributes to the understanding of and relationship between ideas.

3 – Sufficient organization that may have some problems and a need for more internal organization.

2 – Organization needs improvement in order to help reader understand connections between ideas. Problems in transitions contribute to reader's confusion.

1 – Lack of organization and transitions makes reading essay confusing or unreadable.

*Evidence High Score: Student incorporates and analyzes evidence that is significant, sufficient, and relevant to each point that is made in the argument. When incorporating outside scholarship, student engages with the scholars (rather than relying on the scholar to make the point).*

5 – Excellent and thorough. See above.

4 – Very good. Incorporates a sufficient amount of relevant evidence, but does not fully engage the source.

3 – Adequate evidence. May lack some needed evidence/analysis that could strengthen argument.

2 – Insufficient or extremely uneven evidence/analysis.

1 – Lack of evidence/analysis. Does not meet the requirements of the assignment.

*Style and Mechanics High Score: Student articulates ideas clearly, making use of language that is both concise and sophisticated. Writing is free of grammatical error. MLA documentation is used properly throughout. 5 – Excellent.*

4 – Very good. Need for minor corrections

3 – The basic requirements are met, but there is a need for several corrections.

2 – Mechanical errors hamper understanding and are below the standards of a college level writing assignment.

1 – Unacceptable, unreadable.

### **Grading Scale**

A	4.0	93-100	930-1000	C	2.0	73-76	730-769
A-	3.67	90-92	900-929	C-	1.67	70-72	700-729
B+	3.33	87-89	870-899	D+	1.33	67-69	670-699
B	3.0	83-86	830-869	D	1.0	63-66	630-669
B-	2.67	80-82	800-829	D-	0.67	60-62	600-629
C+	2.33	77-79	770-799	E	0.00	0-59	0-599

### **General Class Policies:**

#### **Attendance**

Attendance is required. While a certain number of absences will be excused (3), every absence counts, in that every absence removes you from an ongoing, emergent conversation that is essential to understanding the course materials and argument. Therefore, you will be unable to earn participation points for any missed classes and your final grade will drop by a letter with each subsequent absence after your first three. If you reach seven absences, you will automatically fail the course. Habitual tardiness will also impact your overall grade.

Absences involving court-mandated events, such as jury duty or court testimony, military service, and university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, and religious holidays are excused, but you must notify me of your absence prior to the date that will be missed.

## **Technology Use**

Turn cell phones to silent before you come into class. Using a cell phone and/or other electronic devices during class will count as an absence. You may use your kindles/kindle apps to discuss scholarly articles; however, I expect you to get paperback copies of the primary texts used for the class.

## **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the Student Honor Code. The Honor Code prohibits plagiarism and defines it as follows:

*Plagiarism*—A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

1. Quoting oral or written materials including but not limited to those found on the internet, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.
2. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student.

(University of Florida, Student Honor Code, 8 July 2011)

University of Florida students are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the entire Student Honor Code.

## **Statement of student disability services**

The Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office provides information and support regarding accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>.

Please contact me directly and immediately if you have a learning disability so that we might make special arrangements/accommodations for you during this class.

## **Statement on harassment**

UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/sexual/>.

## **Course Evaluations**

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

## Tentative Homework Calendar

### **Week 1: June 27-July 1**

M: In class—intro to theme, Syllabus, Class Introductions

For Monday:

- No assignment

T:

For Tuesday:

- Read “American Victorianism as a Culture” by Daniel Walker Howe (on Canvas)
- Last day of Drop/Add period

W:

For Wednesday:

- “Slavery, Race, and the Making of American Literature” and Thomas Jefferson segment (NA 787-791)
- William Wells Brown’s bio (NA 942-943)
- Brown’s *The Narrative of the Life and Escape of William Wells Brown* segment (NA 944-948)
- Brown’s *Clotel* segment (NA 948-960)
- Punch cartoons about Civil War and slavery (on Canvas)
  - Everyone read links “Punch Civil War” 1 and 2
  - 4 Groups for Analyzing 4 rows of cartoons in link “Punch Civil War 3”

R:

- For Thursday:
- Frederick Douglas bio (NA 1170-1174)
- *The Heroic Slave* (NA 1254-1282)
- Create thesis statement for first reading response

F: In class, we will look at the “Preface” to *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (look at language of *UTC* vii-ix)

For Friday:

- “What to the Slave is the Fourth of July” (NA 1251-1254)
- Levine’s article on Stowe and Douglas (on Canvas, *UTC* 562-582)
- Reading Response #1 due no later than 11:59pm
  - This first reading response will be a *short* 1 page, double-spaced close reading to demonstrate that you can create a creative argument and illustrate that point with unpacking evidence from the text

## Week 2: July 4-July 8

M: 4<sup>th</sup> of July, no class

For Monday: start reading Stowe

T: Group presentation on Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Sophia Cantave's and Susan M. Ryan's articles on Canvas; theme=double consciousness vs. appropriation

For Tuesday:

- Cantave's and Ryan's articles (on Canvas, from Norton Critical edition 582-610)
- Stowe's bio (NA 805-807)
- *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (NA 807-827)

W:

For Wednesday:

- *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (NA 828-876)

R:

For Thursday:

- *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (NA 876-904)
- George Eliot's "Silly Novels by Lady Novelists" (178-181, 195-199)
  - <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/28289/28289-h/28289-h.htm#page178>
- Bring thesis statement and two topic sentences for Reading Response #2

F:

For Friday:

- Watch first episode of *Daniel Deronda*
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j-GoyUbPkt4>
- Read segment of Chapter 3 in *George Eliot U.S.: Transatlantic Literary and Cultural Perspectives* (click [here](#) to read pages 151-155)
- **Reading Response #2 due no later than 11:59pm**
  - Your second reading response will likely be *slightly* longer. 1-2 pages, double-spaced. You do not need outside research. You will introduce your thesis and provide 2 main points. Those points should have an organization and transitions with distinct topic sentences and evidence.

## Week 3: July 11-July 15

M: Group Presentation on Suffrage Movement, "The Great Lawsuit", image of Blue Stocking Woman and Suffragist

For Monday:

- Fuller's bio (NA 740-743)
- Fuller's "The Great Lawsuit" (NA 743-777)→this will be divided
  - Create brief outline for your half
- George Eliot and "Margaret Fuller and Mary Wollstonecraft" (excerpt from *NA Victorian* 1353-1360, on canvas)→same file as the Wollstonecraft excerpt
- Excerpt from Wollstonecraft (on Canvas) (Same file as Eliot piece)
- *Little Women* xi-51

T:

For Tuesday:

- *Little Women* 52-100

W:

For Wednesday:

- *Little Women* 100-151

R:

For Thursday:

- *Little Women* 152-203

F:

For Friday:

- *Little Women* 203-253
- **Reading Response #3 due no later than 11:59pm** (see description for RR#2 above)

#### **Week 4: July 18-July 22**

**M:** Group presentation on *Little Women*, Edgeworth, and Estes & Lant; theme: American women & American children as seen by England and how they differ from English women and children (Feel free to reference *Punch*, the nineteenth-century criticisms in the Alcott text, and any criticism at the end of the novel, 554-556),

For Monday:

- Edgeworth's "The Purple Jar" (in Alcott 466-470)
- Estes and Lant's "Dismembering the Text: The Horror of Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*" (Alcott 564-583)
- *Little Women* 253-313

T:

For Tuesday:

- *Little Women* 313-380

W:

For Wednesday:

- Read 1-2 sources you plan to use for your final paper (# depends on page length. If the article is 25+ pages, you only need one)
- Create brief annotations and full citations
- Post annotations in discussions tab, use subject line to identify which text you are researching

R:

For Thursday:

- Skim through the titles of texts to find a source that would work for your own research purposes
  - Reply to that source and explain how you will use it
- Read 1 more source for research, annotate, and post in discussion tab

F: Peer review, Brainstorming, and Lit Reviews

For Friday:

- Bring outline of final paper (Thesis and topic sentences for at least 5 paragraphs + the quotations you plan to use for each of the 5 topic sentences)—**OR**— Bring one page of new material (either printed or on tablet/laptop) along with the thesis and purpose of paper
- Skim the section titled “*Little Women* and Feminist Criticism” (174-176) in Hollinger and Winterhalter’s “A Feminist Romance” on Canvas

### **Week 5: July 25-July 29**

M: Presentation on Detective Fiction; Edgar Allan Poe’s work (especially “The Purloined Letter” and “The Raven”)

For Monday:

- Read Dickens’ influence on Poe
  - Just read the short Dickens entry
- Read “The Mysterious Tale of Charles Dickens’s raven”
- Poe’s biography (NA 629-633)
- Expand 3 points to body paragraphs or add 2 pages to essay

For Tuesday:

- Read “The Raven” (NA 637-640)
- Poe’s “The Purloined Letter” (NA 701-714)
- Add 1 body paragraph

W:

For Wednesday:

- Read Collins’ “The Lawyer’s Story of a Stolen Letter”
- Add 1 point to body paragraph

R:

For Thursday:

- Bring at least 4 pages of final essay

F: Peer Review

For Friday:

- Bring at least 6 pages of final essay
- Research paper due no later than 11:59pm

### **Week 6: August 1-August 5**

M: Group Presentation on Sherlock Holmes (American and English reception), “How Sherlock Changed the World” video; theme: technology and criminology/forensic science

For Monday:

- Read *A Study in Scarlet* 6-35
- Watch “How Sherlock Changed the World”

T:

For Tuesday:

- Read *A Study in Scarlet* 36-67

W:

For Wednesday:

- Read *A Study in Scarlet* 68-92

R:

For Thursday:

- Read *A Study in Scarlet* 93-127

F: Sherlock Holmes (American vs. English) → *House, Castle*, Sherlock Holmes (starring Robert Downey Jr.), tv series (*Elementary* vs. *Sherlock*)

For Friday:

- Read Introduction of *A Study in Scarlet* vii-xxi
- Final Critical Reading Response due no later than 11:59pm
- Submit Evaluations before class!! (If every student submits an evaluation, you all get extra credit!)