ENG 5344.001: Studies in Victorian Literature and Culture:  
Change and the Victorian Body  
Fall 2013  
Directed Independent Study for Elizabeth Holscher  

Professor Molly Engelhardt  
Office Hours:  W/F 1-3  
Office: Faculty Center 277  
Email: molly.engelhardt@tamucc.edu,  
Phone: 361/825-3537  

“It is only in the present that we can know the future; it is only through the present that it is in our power to influence that which is to come.”  John Stuart Mill (1831)  

Course Description:  
When you think of a country on the move it’s hard to not think Victorian England. Population growth, immigration/migration, industrialization, revolutions raging at every border, colonial expansion, new discoveries in science and technology, so much change occurring so fast that John Stuart Mill advises his readers in the above epigraph to get busy knowing the present world in order to manage it and direct its future. In this course we will read novels alongside non-fictional prose and cultural theory to study the Victorians’ preoccupation with the body in its many manifestations---physiological, psychological, social, and imperial. By knowing the body Victorians hoped to control change. As we read we will consider this assumption, but we will also challenge it. Can a body—literal or metaphoric— even be known? Did the Victorians want to control change, really, or were they up to something else?  

Student Learning Outcomes: After completion of the course students will be able to:  

• Analyze literature and cultural/theoretical texts at a graduate level;  
• Facilitate class discussion at a graduate level;  
• Make connections between social forces contributing to the production and reception of Victorian literature;  
• Produce a scholarly paper that builds on research skills and contributes to the study of Victorian literature and culture.
Required Readings:

Books to Purchase:

Bronte, Charlotte. *Villette*
Haggard, J. Rider. *King Solomon’s Mines* (Penguin)
Ruskin, John. *Sesame and Lilies* (Yale UP)
Shelly, Mary. *Frankenstein*
Stevenson, Robert Louis. *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*

Readings posted on blackboard:
* Allen, Michelle. “The London Sewer” (*Cleansing the City*)
* Carlyle, Thomas. “The Signs of the Times.”
* Doane, Janice. “Demonic Disturbance of Sexual Identity”
* Ellis, Sarah Stickney. From *The Daughters of England*
* Gilmour, Robin. From *The Victorian Period: The Intellectual and Cultural Context of English Literature, 1830 – 1890* (intro.).
* Hall, Donald. “Queering the Self: Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde”
* Lewis, Reina. From *Rethinking Orientalism: Women, Travel and the Ottoman Harem.*
* Mayhew, Henry. Excerpts from *London Labour London Poor*
* Moers, Ellen. “Female Gothic”
* Roberts, Mary. Excerpt from *Intimate Outsiders: The Harem in Ottoman and Orientalist Art and Travel Literature*
* Said, Edward. Intro, *Orientalism*
* Shuttleworth, Sally. “Reading the Mind: Physiognomy and Phrenology”
* Stallybrass, Peter and Allon White. “The Sewer, the Gaze and the Contaminating Touch” (from *Politics and Poetics of Transgression*)
* Stott, Rebecca. “The Dark Continent: Africa as Female Body in Haggard’s Adventure Fiction”

Grade Break-down:

**Weekly Meetings:** 10%
**Writing Projects:**
* 10 reading responses 30%
* 8-page exam essay 20%
  * 12 - 15-page research paper 40%
A = 90-100 points; B = 80-89 points; C = 70-79 points; D = 60-69 points; F = below 60 points

Overview of Student Responsibilities:

**Discussion sessions: (10%)** We will meet weekly to discuss the readings. You will be responsible for directing these sessions. To that end, you will complete the reading and writing assignments and have a list of questions and/or observations prepared to direct our discussion.

**Writing Assignments:**

- **Textual/contextual analyses:** You will produce 10 responses (500 words each) to the assigned readings that incorporates at least one scholarly source.
- **Exam Essay:** You will be given an essay prompt and asked to respond in an argumentative format using primary and secondary sources from the syllabus or outside reading (8 pages, one week turn around).
- **Research paper:** A polished paper that identifies a problem in Victorian literature and/or culture and uses primary and secondary sources to first complicate, then resolve the problem (12 – 15 pages). The idea here is to join the scholarly conversations in the field of Victorian studies.

**Late Papers:** I will not accept late writing assignments unless you have made previous arrangements (“previous” means at least 48 hours before the due date).

**Academic Honesty:** Plagiarism, “the presentation of work of another as one’s own work,” is only one form of academic dishonesty. Plagiarism also includes falsification (the intentional alteration of information), fabrication (the intentional invention of information), multiple submission (using the same material for two separate assignments or courses without permission from the instructors), and abuse of academic materials (the intentional destruction of resource materials.) Plagiarism is a serious offense, particularly at this advanced level, and will result in expulsion from the class and the program.

**Notice to Students with Disabilities:** Texas A&M University—Corpus Christi complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you suspect that you may have a disability (physical impairment, learning disability, psychiatric disability, etc.) please contact the Services for Student with Disabilities Office, located in CCH 116, 119, at 825-5816. If you need disability accommodations in this class, please see me as soon as possible.
**Grade Appeal Process:** As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site [http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html](http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

**Reading Schedule:** (reading are to be completed on the days indicated. * texts are available on blackboard)

- **Week One (Sept. 4):**
  - * Introduction to *The Victorian Period* (Gilmour)
  - * “Signs of the Times” (Carlyle)

- **Defining/Regulating the Social Body**
  - **Week Two (Sept. 11):** The Gendered Body
    - *Sesame and Lilies* (Ruskin 27 - 93)
    - “How the Victorians Read Sesame and Lilies” (Koven, in Nord,113).
    - * Excerpt from *The Women of England* (Ellis)

- **Week Three (Sept 18):** The Reproductive Body
  - *Frankenstein*
  - * “Making a Monster (Moers)
  - Additional scholarly source of choice

- **Week Four (Sept. 25) The Urban Body**
  - * London Labour, London Poor (Mayhew)
  - * “The London Sewer” (Allen)
  - * “The Sewer, the Gaze and the Contaminating Touch” (Stallybrass and White)

- **Week Five (Oct. 2)):** *Bleak House*

- **Week Six (Oct. 9):** *Bleak House*
**Victorian Science and the Medical Eye:**

**Week Seven:** (Oct. 16): *Villette*
* “Reading the Mind: Physiognomy and Phrenology” (Shuttleworth)
* Sexual Science readings

**Week Eight:** (Oct. 23): *Villette* (to end)

**Exam Essay due**

**Resistance to the Social/Natural Body**

**Week Nine:** (Oct. 30): *Mill on the Floss*

**Week Ten:** (Nov. 6): Reading Day

**Week Eleven:** (Nov. 13): *Jekyll and Hyde*
“Queering the Self: Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde” (Hall)
“Demonic Disturbances of Sexual Identity” (Doane)
Scholarly source of choice

**The Imperial Body**

**Week Twelve (Nov. 20):** Haggard’s *King Solomon’s Mines*
* “The Dark Continent: Africa as Female Body” (Stott)

**Week Thirteen (Nov. 27):**
* Travel Narratives
* intro to *Orientalism* (Said)
* Excerpt from *Rethinking Orientalism*
* Intimate Outsiders (Roberts)

**Week Fourteen (Dec 4):** Presentation of research findings

**Description of Assignments:**

**Reading Responses:** (30%)  
The purpose of these responses is to help you synthesize the readings and identify a few areas of interest that you work with more deeply and fully. You will write ten of these, each 750 words. While I want you to work closely with the literature, i.e., “textual analysis,” I also want you to work with secondary sources. On the days that secondary sources are not included, you will identify a scholarly source on your own and use it to frame your response.
Short Studies:  (20%)
You will identify a passage or scene from one of our primary works—prose or fiction—and write a 3 – 4 page analysis that works closely with the language of the text to make explicit some idea, theme, insight that would otherwise go unnoticed by the lay reader. While text-based—meaning that the text is where you will find your substance—feel free to use theory and/or historical/cultural scholarship to help you complicate your reading. These studies are designed to help you identify topics for further research. You may use one or both as springboards for your final research project.

Research Paper:  (40%)
From the first day of class, you should be thinking about topics, texts, authors, concepts you would like to work with for your research paper. By narrowing early on, you can work more efficiently during the semester to produce a quality paper containing readings and ideas that you’ve worked through in earlier assignments. Feel free to work with any aspect of Victorian literature and culture that interests you: the laboring poor, Victorian medicine, religion, Dickens and fairy tales, Eliot and psychology, influence of the railroads, theatre, demi-monde, crime, pollution, prostitution, empire, well, the list just goes on and on. You may want to work with a particular writer or text and that’s fine too. You will turn in a detailed proposal with a working bibliography, a draft, and a polished essay, which is due on May 7.