

HL 205 / 2005 Victorian Literature

Victorian Literature provides an introduction to some of the best literary works of the nineteenth century, while drawing attention to neglected aspects of this extremely versatile, fast changing, and intriguingly self-conscious age. The course aims to foster excitement about the indeterminacies, doubts, and fissures that shaped the Victorian period's greatest cultural achievements. At the same time, we shall critically reconsider the many legacies of the shifts it saw in epistemological, cultural, and specifically literary conceptualisations. The material discussed this semester will include novels by Charles Dickens, Charlotte Brontë, and Wilkie Collins, one of Arthur Conan Doyle's *Sherlock Holmes* stories, a play by Oscar Wilde, as well as a selection of poems and paintings.

Essential requirement: A love of reading,
especially of very long novels.



Core Texts:

Novels:

Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre*

Wilkie Collins, *The Moonstone*

Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield*

Play:

Oscar Wilde, *An Ideal Husband*.

Short Story:

Arthur Conan Doyle, "The Speckled Band"

Provisional Lecture Schedule

Week No.	Topics	Readings
14 Jan	Introduction: The Rise of the Victorian Novel	
21 Jan	Novel Subgenres I: The Orphan and the Governess	Charlotte Brontë, <i>Jane Eyre</i>
28 Jan	Novel Subgenres II: Other Outsiders and Colonial Subtexts	Charlotte Brontë, <i>Jane Eyre</i>
4 Feb	Novel Subgenres III: More Victorian Orphans	Charles Dickens, <i>David Copperfield</i>
11 Feb	Novel Subgenres IV: Bildungsroman versus Panoramic Novel	Charles Dickens, <i>David Copperfield</i>
18 Feb	Quiz	Charles Dickens, <i>David Copperfield</i>
25 Feb	Victorian Topics I: Science, Doubt, & Poetry	Selection (<i>Norton Anthology</i>)
3 March	<i>Recess</i>	
10 March	Novel Subgenres V: The Sensation Novel	Wilkie Collins, <i>The Moonstone</i>
17 March	Novel Subgenres VI: Detective Fiction	Arthur Conan Doyle, "The Speckled Band"
24 March	Victorian Topics II: A Play with Moral Economies	Oscar Wilde, <i>An Ideal Husband</i>
31 March	The Victorians in Contemporary Culture	tbc
7 April	Revision	Q&A