

Course Description

This course explores how contemporary adaptive media appropriate the nineteenth century to address our own preoccupations with gender, sexuality, race, class, science, technologies, religion, imperialism, and consumerism. The aim of the course is to familiarize students with the theoretical, social, and political contexts and critical discourses of this neo-Victorian enterprise. The course incorporates a variety of cultural products from postmodern fiction and graphic novels, through films, to exhibition spaces and theme parks. These texts are mainly approached via literary and cultural studies, utilizing further interdisciplinary frameworks of trauma, adaptation and memory studies that draw on a wide range of fields including psychology, film studies, philosophy, and history. This course investigates reasons and trajectories of post-millennial connections to the Victorian age, ways in which different cultural concepts are transposed and transformed, and the critical consciousness of our own investment into the mediation and dissemination of historical narratives.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will understand Neo-Victorianism as a dynamic cultural formation, the critical issues it is concerned with, and the scholarly debates that surround it. Students will be able to establish significant connections between literary passages and representations in visual culture, such as films or exhibitions. They will possess the critical apparatus to read and analyze these neo-Victorian (con)texts in an interdisciplinary framework.

Requirements and Assessment

Attendance and Participation in Seminar Discussions	10%
Leading a Group Presentation	30%
Presenting a Reading	20%
Paper Proposal (300-500wds)	10%
Term Paper (2000-2500wds)	30%

Weekly Topics and Readings

1. What is Victorianism?

Matthew Sweet, *Inventing the Victorians*. London: Faber & Faber, 2001, "Introduction: Inventing the Victorians," ix-xxiii.

J.B. Bullen, "Introduction." In *Writing and Victorianism*, edited by J.B. Bullen, 1-6. London & New York: Longman, 1997.

Simon Joyce, "The Victorians in the Rearview Mirror." In *Functions of Victorian Culture at the Present Time*, edited by Christine L. Krueger, 3-17. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2002.

Excerpts from Alasdair Gray's *Poor Things*. London: Bloomsbury, 2002 (c.1992).

2. What is Neo-Victorianism?

Dianne F. Sadoff and John Kucich, "Introduction: Histories of the Present." In *Victorian Afterlife: Postmodern Culture Rewrites the Nineteenth Century*, edited by John Kucich and Dianne F. Sadoff, ix-xxx. Minneapolis: University Press of Minnesota, 2000.

Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*. Cambridge: CUP, 1992 (c. 1989), "Our Victorian Contemporaries," 393-418.

3. Gender and Sexuality

Marie-Luise Kohlke, "The Neo-Victorian Sexsation: Literary Excursions into the Nineteenth Century Erotic." In *Probing the Problematics: Sex and Sexuality*, edited by Marie-Luise Kohlke and Luisa Orza, 345-356. Oxford: Inter-Disciplinary Press, 2008.

Helen Davies, *Gender and Ventriloquism in Victorian and Neo-Victorian Fiction: Passionate Puppets*. Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012, "Talking to Ourselves? Ventriloquial Criticism and Readership in Neo-Victorian Fiction," 139-156.

Excerpts from A. S. Byatt's *Possession*. New York: Vintage, 2002 (c. 1990).

4. (Post)Colonial Traumas

Jennifer Gribble, "Portable Property: Postcolonial Appropriations of *Great Expectations*." In *Victorian Turns, NeoVictorian Returns: Essays on Fiction and Culture*, edited by Penny Gay, Judith Johnston, and Catherine Waters, 182-192. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008.

Dianne F Sadoff, "The Neo-Victorian Nation at Home and Abroad: Charles Dickens and Traumatic Rewriting." In *Neo-Victorian Tropes of Trauma: The Politics of Bearing After-Witness to Nineteenth-Century Suffering*, edited by Marie-Luise Kohlke and

Christian Gutleben, 163-190. Amsterdam & New York: Rodopi, 2010.

Excerpts from Peter Carey's *Jack Maggs*. Queensland: University of Queensland Press, 1997 and Lloyd Jones's *Mister Pip*. London: John Murray, 2006.

5. Science and Religion

John Glendenning, *Science and Religion in Neo-Victorian Novels: Eye of the Ichthyosaur*.

London & New York: Routledge, 2013, "Paradises Lost: *The Voyage of Narwhal* and *English Passengers*," 79-108.

Excerpts from Matthew Kneale's *English Passengers*. London: Hamish Hamilton, 2000.

6. Darwin's Missing Link: "The Gentleman Monkey"

Angela Schwarz, "Evolution for Better or for Worse? Science Fiction Literature and Film and the Public Debate on the Future of Humanity." In *Reflecting on Darwin*, edited by Eckart Voigts, Barbara Schaff and Monika Pietrzak-Franger, 129-144. Farnham: Ashgate, 2014.

Virginia Richter, "Displacing Humans, Reconfiguring Darwin in Contemporary Culture and Theory." In *Reflecting on Darwin*, edited by Eckart Voigts, Barbara Schaff and Monika Pietrzak-Franger, 147-164. Farnham: Ashgate, 2014.

Excerpts from Liz Jensen's *Ark Baby*. London: Penguin, 1998.

7. History, Technology, and Defamiliarization: Steampunk Comics

Steffen Hantke, "Difference Engines and Other Infernal Devices: History

According to Steampunk." *Extrapolation* 40.3 (1999): 244-254.

Annalisa Di Liddo, *Alan Moore: Comics as Performance, Fiction as Scalpel*. Jackson:

University Press of Mississippi, 2009, "Moore and the Crisis of English

Identity/Facing Imperial Legacy," 102-111.

Excerpts from Allan Moore and Kevin O'Neill's *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*

Vol. 1. La Jolla, CA: WildStorm/DC Comics, 2000-2007 and Jess Nevins's

"Annotations to *League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*,"

<http://www.enjolrasworld.com/Jess%20Nevins/League%20of%20Extraordinary%20Gentlemen/LoEG%20index.htm>

8. Serialized fiction into TV Series: The Case of Sherlock Holmes

Benjamin Poore, "Sherlock Holmes and the Leap of Faith: The Forces of Fandom and

Convergence in Adaptations of the Holmes and Watson Stories." *Adaptation* 6.2 (2012):

158-171.

Antonija Primorac, "The Naked Truth: The Postfeminist Afterlives of Irene Adler." *Neo-Victorian Studies* 6.2 (2013): 89-113.

Excerpts from the BBC-Series *Sherlock* created by Mark Gatiss and Steven Moffat 2010-2014, the CBS-Series *Elementary* created by Robert Doherty 2012-2014 and the Russian *Шерлок Холмс* created by Andrey Kavun in 2013.

9. A Film without a Source-Text: Jane Campion's *The Piano*

Cora Kaplan, *Victoriana: Histories, Fictions, Criticism*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007, "Retuning *The Piano*," 119-153.

Excerpts from Jane Campion's *The Piano*. Bac Films (France) Miramax Films (US) Entertainment Film Distributors (UK), 1993.

10. Museum Culture to Theme Park

Robert Hewison, "Commerce and Culture." In *Enterprise and Heritage: Crosscurrents of National Culture*, edited by John Corner and Sylvia Harvey, 162-77. London & New York: Routledge, 1991.

Marty Gould and Rebecca N. Mitchell, "Understanding the Literary Theme Park: Dickens World as Adaptation." *Neo-Victorian Studies* 3.2 (2010): 145-71.

Dickens World. <http://www.dickensworld.co.uk/>.

Excerpts from Julian Barnes's *England, England* London: Jonathan Cape, 1998.

11. Exhibitions, Cultural Memory, and Cultural Policy

Judith Roof, "Display Cases." In *Victorian Afterlife: Postmodern Culture Rewrites the Nineteenth Century*, edited by John Kucich and Dianne F. Sadoff, 29-48. Minneapolis: University Press of Minnesota, 2000.

Ronald R. Thomas, "The Legacy of Victorian Spectacle: The Map of Time and the Architecture of Empty Space." In *Functions of Victorian Culture at the Present Time*, edited by Christine L. Krueger, 18-33. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2002.

Excerpts from Gillian Armstrong *Oscar and Lucinda* United States, Australia, United Kingdom: Fox Searchlight Pictures, 1997 (based on Peter Carey's *Oscar and Lucinda* New York: Vintage, 1988).

12. Conclusion, Discussion of Seminar Projects

This syllabus is subject to change