

## ENL 3122: Reading and the Nineteenth-Century English Novel

Section: 02DH  
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Course website: <http://enl3122.wordpress.com/>

### Course Description

This is a course about reading. Ostensibly, it is a reading intensive survey of nineteenth-century English novels, but it is also a study of practices of reading itself in the nineteenth century.

The early-nineteenth century and the Victorian era saw remarkable and rapid changes in the literary marketplace, with a wider circulation of and readership for newspapers, magazines, and books. The novel in particular emerged as the dominant popular form of literature throughout the century, but this development was not without friction. The press, religious leaders, parents, poets, and even novelists themselves held the novel with suspicion, deeming it (at turns) frivolous, addictive, and scandalous; inferior to established forms of literature like poetry; a mass-market commodity of mere entertainment; and both dangerously removed from reality and too real, invasive and inappropriate in its representation of politics and private lives. Today, comparable criticisms are directed at popular fictional forms such as television, film, comic books, and video games, even as they are increasingly reevaluated as art forms in their own rights. We will examine the nineteenth-century English novel as it underwent a similar process of contestation and reevaluation.

Of particular interest for us will be the representation of this hyperconsciousness of reading within the novels themselves. As Mikhail Bakhtin notes in *The Dialogic Imagination* (1981), the “ability of the novel to criticize itself is a remarkable feature of this ever-developing genre” (6). Some of the texts we will study address anxieties about the novel form, the eroticism of reading, the instability of narrative, how reading influences identity formation, the functions of art and literature, and how narratives can be read onto the criminal, racial, gendered, and sexualized body. We will also examine how these novels construct the process of reading in their manipulation of genre conventions and narrative form, and in studying Dickens in particular, we will investigate the relationship between author and audience and the material conditions of the novel. In an effort to reconstruct the sense of reading as a Victorian, alongside the assigned novels we will study essays providing historical context as well as polemics, defenses, and reviews of novels from contemporary periodicals.

This course provides upper-division credit in the major, and will be taught with that in mind; therefore, students will be expected to know how to do research in the field and to attempt the application of critical frameworks. Due to the nature of the material being

examined, there is a considerable amount of reading. Carefully consider your reading speed and the requirements of the other courses you are taking before committing to this course.

Note: The course website at <http://enl3122.wordpress.com/> will be used for course information (including this syllabus), weekly reading schedules, blog prompts, detailed assignment descriptions, and other resources. The course page on e-Learning at <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/> will allow you to track your grades throughout the semester and access additional readings.

## Required Texts

The following texts are available at the UF Bookstore at the Reitz Union:

Austen, Jane. *Northanger Abbey, Lady Susan, The Watsons, Sanditon*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008. (ISBN: 9780199535545)

Braddon, Mary Elizabeth. *Lady Audley's Secret*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012. (ISBN: 9780199577033)

Dickens, Charles. *Oliver Twist*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1992. (ISBN: 9780393962925)

Wilde, Oscar. *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2006. (ISBN: 9780393927542)

You may purchase your textbooks elsewhere, but you **must** purchase these editions. Use the provided ISBN number for reference on sites such as Amazon.

## Course Assignments

*Short Response Essays/Blogs*, 500 words, 5 total @ 50 points each (250 points): At the beginning of the semester, you will create a WordPress blog that you will use to share your writing as well as to read and comment upon the writing of your peers. A prompt will be provided each Wednesday; you must post your response by the end of the day the next Monday. These prompts will correspond to the readings, discussions, and themes of the class and vary from week to week. The purpose of this assignment is to facilitate dynamic reading experiences, critical thinking, and an engaged and interactive discourse community. Blog posts are not to be confused, however, with free-form, hastily drafted works; they must follow the same academic writing style and conventions required of your other essays.

*Class Discussion Prompts*—10 total @ 5 points each (50 points): A typed insight about the text (2–3 sentences) and a discussion question that you will print out and bring to the

week's class meetings. You may be called upon in class to share your insight or question, and you will turn these in to me at the end of the period for credit.

*Reading Quizzes* (100 points): Any quizzes will cover the reading assigned for that day. Quizzes are not announced beforehand and cannot be taken or retaken at a later date.

*Midterm Exam*, 1000 words (200 points): A take-home exam with multiple essay questions intended to measure your comprehension of the course material and its contexts and themes.

*Final Paper*, 2000 words (300 points): An analytical essay on a topic of your choosing that engages with the themes of the course. Your essay must incorporate both primary and secondary texts and demonstrate your critical thinking and interpretive abilities.

*Class participation* (100 points): In order to develop an open, engaging community of critical thinkers, we must all actively participate in the learning process. By meeting attendance requirements and completing course assignments, you fulfill half of your commitment to the class. The other half consists of your participation in class discussions and activities and blog commentary.

Total: 1000 points

*Note:* I am always available to discuss your papers with you during the writing process, and it is my duty as your instructor to provide you with useful feedback on each assignment that you turn in. If you have any questions or concerns about your work, please feel free to contact me via e-mail, visit during office hours, or schedule an appointment with me. You may also choose to visit the Reading and Writing Center (RWC) for concerns regarding grammar, punctuation, or style. Visit their site at <http://www.at.ufl.edu/rwcenter/> for more information.

### **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

### **Attendance**

ENL 3122 is largely discussion-based, which means that much of the learning that takes place is spontaneous and difficult to reproduce outside of class. Attendance is therefore key to your success in this course and your participation in it as an active member of a learning community. In order to benefit from the knowledge and insight that your peers

have to offer, you must be present in class. (Further, in order to receive participation points, you must be present in order to participate!)

Consequently, **if you miss more than 2 classes during the semester, your grade will drop considerably.** Each absence beyond two will lower your overall grade by 50 points. However, **if you miss 6 or more classes, you will fail the course automatically.**

Exempt from this policy are only those absences involving university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, court-imposed absences, and religious holidays, for which you must provide appropriate documentation. Absences for illness or family emergencies **will** count toward your three allowed absences. I advise that you save your absences for when you are truly ill. (If you develop a medical condition or other serious problem that prevents you from coming to class, see me as soon as possible to discuss options.)

*Note:* If you are absent, whether excused or unexcused, it is still your responsibility to make yourself aware of all class discussions and activities as well as any new developments, such as assignments and due dates. You are still responsible for turning assignments in on time. Unless your absence(s) meet(s) the strict conditions of UF's "Twelve Day Rule" (<http://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>), you cannot make up any in-class assignments. I will NOT approach you regarding absences and missing or late assignments; it is your responsibility to speak to me and keep track of your own attendance and assignments.

**Tardiness:** Please do not come late to class; arriving late disrupts everyone. If you are more than 15 minutes late, you will be marked absent. Being tardy 3 times (5 or more minutes late) will equal 1 absence.

Additionally, please note that roll will be called at the beginning of each class period; if you arrive late and do not inform me of your attendance at the end of the period, you will be marked absent.

### **Classroom Behavior**

The texts we will discuss and write about will likely elicit varying opinions and interpretations. You are expected to demonstrate respect for ideas that may differ from your own. Show both me and your fellow students proper attention and courtesy at all times. **Any student who is disrespectful toward me or another student or otherwise disrupts the class will be asked to leave and will receive an absence for the day.**

**\*\*\* All laptops, tablets, and other electronic devices should be turned off during class time** (cell phones may be switched to the silent setting), unless prior accommodations have been made, it is to access e-Learning readings, or I designate otherwise. Failure to comply may result in dismissal from the class, resulting in a day's absence.

## **Preparation**

You are expected to be prepared for every class, including completing all reading and writing assignments on time. You should take notes on every reading and be ready with at least 1 discussion point and 1 question prepared if you are called upon in class (as per the assignment instructions above). Be sure to bring your textbook(s) or print-outs with you to discuss the reading assigned for that day. Failure to be prepared for or to contribute to in-class activities and discussion will lower your participation grade.

Assignments are due at the beginning of class. Failure of technology is not an excuse.

*Note:* Class discussion and collaborative work will be an integral part of this course. It is in your best interest to come prepared and participate in class; the alternative is a dry lecture or a pop quiz. The choice is yours.

## **Mode of Submission**

All papers must be formatted according to MLA style in 12-point Times New Roman font and double-spaced. The top left-hand corner of the first page of any assignment should include your name, the course number, my name, and the date.

Assignments must be submitted via [e-Learning](#) as an .rtf, .doc or .docx file, excepting short response essays, which are to be posted on your blog, and the weekly discussion prompts, which are to be typed, printed, and turned in at the end of class.

Points will be subtracted for documents that do not meet professional standards. Save and back up all of your projects regularly; “my computer crashed” or “my printer broke” are not valid excuses.

## **Deadlines**

Deadlines are provided on the syllabus and on each assignment sheet. **NO late submissions will be accepted.**

## **Plagiarism**

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

- a. Quoting oral or written materials, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.
- b. 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, 15 Aug. 2007)

All students must abide by the Student Honor Code. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php>

*Important Tip:* You should never copy and paste something from the Internet without providing the exact location from which it came.

**\*\*\*All acts of plagiarism will result in failure of the assignment** and may result in a report to the Dean of Students Office, which will then investigate the case and may apply additional penalties. Plagiarism can occur even without any intention to deceive if you fail to understand and employ proper documentation techniques. When in doubt, ask for help!

### **Graded Materials**

You are responsible for maintaining original copies of all work submitted in this course and retaining all returned, graded work until the semester is over. Should the need arise for a re-submission of papers or a review of graded papers, it is your responsibility to have and to make available this material.

### **Sexual 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/>

### **Students with Disabilities**

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/>

The office will provide you with appropriate documentation, and you must then provide this documentation to me when requesting accommodation. Please schedule a meeting with me to discuss any accommodations within the first week of classes

## Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online 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/>.

## Course Schedule

Note: This schedule is tentative and subject to revision. All readings and assignments are due on the date indicated. Readings noted as located on e-Learning can be accessed by logging in at <http://lss.at.ufl.edu/>. Check the course blog regularly for any updates to the weekly schedule and links to additional materials (ie. art, songs, other references, etc).

### **Week 1: May 12-16**

#### Monday

Course Introduction

#### Tuesday

Patrick Brantlinger, "Introduction: The Case of the Poisonous Book" on e-Learning

#### Wednesday

#### **"About Me" Blog Post Due**

Patrick Brantlinger, "Gothic Toxins: The *Castle of Otranto*, *The Monk*, and *Caleb Williams*" on e-Learning

Marilyn Gaull, "Gothic Romance, Sensibility, and the Sublime" on e-Learning

#### Thursday

"Rank and Social Class" in *Northanger Abbey* (p. 347-351)

Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, Volume I, Chapter I – IX (p. 3-49)

#### Friday

Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, Volume I, Chapter X - XV (p. 49-92)

### **Week 2: May 19-23**

#### Monday

Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, Volume II, Chapter I – XI (p. 93-158)

### Tuesday

Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, Volume II, Chapter XII – XVI (p. 159-187)

“Reviews of *Northanger Abbey*” on e-Learning

Claudia L. Johnson, “Introduction” in *Northanger Abbey* (p. vii-xxv)

### Wednesday

Robert L. Patten, “When is a Book Not a Book? *Oliver Twist* in Context” at <http://web-static.nypl.org/exhibitions/booknotbook/index.html> (Introductory Overview - Section 5)

“Table of Installments and Chapter-Division in Different Editions of *Oliver Twist*” in *Oliver Twist* (p. 379-381)

### Thursday

Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, Author’s Preface – Chapter V (p. 3-50)

“The Poor Law Debate” and “The Poor Law Riots” in *Oliver Twist* (p. 365-374)

### Friday

Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, Chapter VI – XV (p. 50-108)

Harry Stone, “Dickens and the Jews” in *Oliver Twist* (p. 448-454)

## **Week 3: May 26-30**

### Monday

**Holiday – No Class**

### Tuesday

Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, Chapter XVI – XXVIII (p. 109-193)

### Wednesday

Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, Chapter XXIX – XXXVII (p. 193-247)

### Thursday

Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, Chapter XXXVIII – XLVII (p. 247-317)

### Friday

Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, Chapter XLVIII – LIII (p. 317-360)

Charles Dickens, “Letters about *Oliver Twist*” in *Oliver Twist* (p. 374-378)

“Early Reviews” in *Oliver Twist* (p. 399-415)

#### **Week 4: June 2-6**

##### Monday

##### **Midterm Exam Due**

Robert Tracy, “‘The Old Story’ and Inside Stories: Modish Fiction and Fictional Modes in *Oliver Twist*” in *Oliver Twist* (p. 557-574)

John O. Joran, “The Purloined Handkerchief” in *Oliver Twist* (p. 580-593)

##### Tuesday

Winifred Hughes, “The Sensation Novel” on e-Learning

##### Wednesday

Mary Elizabeth Braddon, *Lady Audley’s Secret*, Volume I, Chapter I-VII (p. 1-60)

##### Thursday

Mary Elizabeth Braddon, *Lady Audley’s Secret*, Volume I, Chapter VIII – XVIII (p. 61-143)

##### Friday

Mary Elizabeth Braddon, *Lady Audley’s Secret*, Volume I, Chapter XIX – Volume II, Chapter VII (p. 144-226)

#### **Week 5: June 9-13**

##### Monday

Mary Elizabeth Braddon, *Lady Audley’s Secret*, Volume II, Chapter VIII – Chapter XIII (p. 227-306)

##### Tuesday

Mary Elizabeth Braddon, *Lady Audley’s Secret*, Volume III, Chapter I – V (p. 309-381)

##### Wednesday

Mary Elizabeth Braddon, *Lady Audley’s Secret*, Volume III, Chapter VI – IX (p. 382-447)

Lynette Felber, “The Literary Portrait as Centerfold: Fetishism in Mary Elizabeth Braddon’s *Lady Audley’s Secret*” on e-Learning

Thursday

Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, The Preface - Chapter IV (p. 3-53)  
“Preface” and “A Note on the Texts” in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (p. ix-xv)  
“Introduction to the Aesthetes and Decadents” on e-Learning

Friday

Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Chapter V - X (p. 53-105)

**Week 6: June 16-20**

Monday

Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Chapter XI – XIV (p. 105-145)  
Joris-Karl Huysmans, excerpt from *Against Nature* in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (p. 309-317)

Tuesday

Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Chapter XV – XX (p. 145-184)

Wednesday

“Reviews and Reactions” in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (p. 351-374)  
“Art Versus Morality: *Dorian Gray* on Trial” in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (p. 382-390)  
comparison of selected passages from the 1890 and 1891 texts of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

**Final Paper Due**

Thursday

Michael Patrick Gillespie, “Picturing Dorian Gray: Resistant Readings in Wilde’s Novel”  
in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (p. 393-409)

Friday

Course Wrap-up