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ENGL 355-01, Nineteenth-Century British Novel, Spring 2008

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English 355
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Spring 2008
Palmer 316
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Nineteenth-Century British Novel

One could easily make the argument that the nineteenth century witnessed a much more cataclysmic transformation in the shape of human life than the twentieth. In the England of 1800, the vast majority of the population lived in rural communities, where nearly all work was connected with agriculture. Home and work were interconnected.

Communication with other places could only move as fast as a person, or horse, could walk. Newspapers were expensive to produce, and postage was high because travel was slow. Clocks were very expensive, and for most people sunset concluded the day.

On a given morning in 1900, most people woke up according to a schedule based not on the seasons, but on the business day. Most woke up in cities or in suburbs that had not existed a century before. They read an inexpensive morning newspaper, printed on cheap, factory-made paper. All over the country, news in these papers was almost exactly the same, since major events were reported overnight by telegraph. These people commuted to a separate workplace, often by train or subway, or they stayed home, not to continue the weaving or the work of the farm, but to pursue a newly defined realm of human activity: housekeeping.

This course has two purposes. The first is to study the literature of this century, a literature which chronicles and examines the massive changes I have described, as well as the more ineffable changes in thought and style that accompany them. The second purpose is to build skills in literary interpretation, first by writing a series of short papers employing different methods of formal analysis, then by developing an extended research project which will incorporate historical and critical reading.

Books:

Elizabeth Gaskell *Mary Barton*
Charles Dickens *Bleak House*
George Eliot *Middlemarch*
Anthony Trollope *Phineas Finn*
(Additional reading in class handouts)

Writing:

- 3 short papers (1000 words or roughly 3 pages), each employing a different method of textual analysis.
- 1 final research paper (4000 words or roughly 12 pages) working with critical and historical material.

All writing turned in for the course must be entirely your own work, in conformity with the plagiarism standards outlined in the Rhodes Honor Code. All quoted and paraphrased

material in your papers must be properly documented according to the guidelines in the *MLA Handbook*. If you have any concern or question about plagiarism and documentation, please raise it with me immediately. All writing must be double-spaced, with standard font and margins. Unless prior arrangement is made, no papers may be submitted via email.

Late Papers will be penalized one third of a grade per day late. For example, a “B” paper, if turned in one day late, would earn a “B-,” if two days late a “C+,” etc.

History Presentations:

Once during the semester you will make an oral presentation during the class to talk about a historical event or trend or movement which has relevance to our reading. You may work alone on your presentation, or, because there are not quite enough presentation topics to cover all the students in the course, you may work in a pair. To begin researching your topic, there are several excellent online sources you should consult.

- The Victorian Web: An online store of short articles about Victorian literature and history. Superb. <http://www.victorianweb.org/index.html>
- The Victorian Dictionary (Exploring Victorian London): A little random, but has a great selection of historical materials. Excellent searchable maps of London. <http://www.victorianlondon.org>
- The Voice of the Shuttle: An enormous clearing-house of online information literary studies. <http://vos.ucsb.edu/>

Presentations should last at least 5 and no more than 10 minutes. They should present information in clear and well-organized ways, and they should focus on information most relevant to our readings.

Grades

Keyword Analysis on <i>Mary Barton</i> (3 pages)	10%
Tropology on <i>Bleak House</i> (3 pages)	15%
Narrative Analysis on <i>Middlemarch</i> (3 pages)	15%
Research paper (12 pages)	40%
Research Proposal & Key Passage Compilation	5%
Annotated Bibliography	5%
All work in Class	10%

Absences and Late Arrivals:

You may miss up to 3 classes without excuse or penalty. More than three absences will lower your grade and may be grounds for failing the course. If you are repeatedly late or unprepared for class, you will be counted as absent.

Schedule of Assignments

<u>Date</u>	<u>Reading Due</u>	<u>Presentation Topic</u>
1/14	<i>Mary Barton</i> Chapters 1-12 Handouts on Keyword Analysis	Manchester
1/16	<i>MB</i> Chs. 13-21	Chartism
1/21	<i>MLK Jr. Holiday</i>	---
1/23	<i>MB</i> Ch. 22 -End	Women and Work
1/28	<i>Bleak House</i> Monthly Numbers 1, 2 and 3 Handouts on Trope/Motif Analysis	Chancery
1/30	<i>BH</i> Numbers 4, 5, and 6	London & London Slums
Friday, February 1: <i>MB</i> Keyword Analysis Due by Noon at Palmer 316		
2/4	<i>BH</i> Number 7-10	Police
2/6	<i>BH</i> Numbers 11-13	Evangelicalism
2/11	<i>BH</i> Numbers 14-16 In Class: <i>Bleak House</i> TV Adaptation	---
2/13	<i>BH</i> Numbers 17 and 18	Prostitution/Unwed Mothers
2/18	<i>BH</i> Numbers 19 and 20	Married Wmn Property Act
2/20	<i>Middlemarch</i> Prelude and Book 1 Handouts on Narrative Theory/Analysis	St. Theresa of Avila
2/25	<i>MM</i> Book 2	Vatican Art
2/27	<i>MM</i> Book 3	1834 Reform Bill
Friday, February 29 (Leap Day): <i>BH</i> Trope Analysis Due by Noon at Palmer 316		
3/3 - 3/5	<i>Spring Break</i>	---
3/10	<i>MM</i> Books 4 and 5	Medicine
3/12	<i>MM</i> Book 6 In Class: <i>Middlemarch</i> TV Adaptation	---
3/17	<i>MM</i> Book 7	Pawnbrokers
3/19	<i>MM</i> Book 8	Poland

3/24	Phineas Finn Chapters 1-19	1800 Act of Union/Ireland
3/26	<i>PF</i> Chs. 20-32 (Quiz)	1867 Reform Bill

Friday, March 28: *MM* Narrative Analysis Due by Noon at Palmer 316

3/31	<i>PF</i> Chs. 33-53	Secret Ballot
4/2	<i>PF</i> Chs. 54-Conclusion (Quiz)	Dueling

Friday 4/4 Passages and Research Proposal

4/7	Class Discussion of Passages Exercise
4/9	Class Discussion of Passages Exercise

Monday 4/14 Annotated Bibliography Due by Noon at Palmer 316

4/14	No Class Meeting: Extended Office Hours
4/16	No Class Meeting: Extended Office Hours

Friday 4/18 Draft First Page of Research Paper Due by Noon at Palmer 316

4/21	Workshop First Pages
4/23	Workshop First Pages

(Classes End Friday, April 25)

Research Paper Due Tuesday, April 29, 1PM at Palmer 316

Department of English Expectations and Policies

A college course is more than simply a set of assignments; it is an intellectual process, one which requires active engagement from beginning to end in order to achieve its intended results. With this in mind, the Department of English has formulated a number of expectations and the policies that support them. If you have questions about how these policies relate to the syllabus for a particular course, you should address them to the instructor.

Attendance: The success of a course depends to a significant extent upon the presence of students alert and prepared to address the subject under discussion. Unavoidable absences should be discussed with the instructor, ideally before they occur. Excessive absences will result in a lowering of grade, in some cases to an F.

Deadlines: Writing assignments, test, etc., are carefully scheduled as stages toward the fulfillment of the course's goals and cannot be indefinitely deferred without frustrating those goals. Brief extensions for good reasons may be permissible with the instructor's prior approval; otherwise, late assignments will be penalized and may result in their not being accepted for credit.

Submission of all work: All major assignments are integral to the goals of the course. Failure to complete any major assignment will result in a grade of F for the course.

Intellectual honesty: All work is assumed to be the student's own and produced exclusively for the course in which it is submitted. Papers written for one course, even if revised, are not to be submitted in another without the instructor's prior approval.

Borrowing of ideas or language from other sources (including published material, other student papers, the internet or other electronic resources, etc.) must be carefully documented. Students are advised against posting their work on the internet since doing so may lead to suspicion of plagiarism. Students are advised to maintain drafts of their work to verify its originality. Cases of suspected plagiarism will be referred to the Honor Council, and the student if convicted will receive a grade of F in the course in addition to sanctions assigned by the Council. Carelessness in documenting sources, even if not technically plagiarism, will be penalized as the instructor deems appropriate. If you are uncertain about how or whether to document sources, consult your teacher.

Keywords in *Mary Barton*

Home/Homely

Bubble

Work

Union

Blindness/Sight

Word

Speak

Write/Written

Nature

Sample Keyword Analyses:

Neil Stephenson, *Pulse*

