**DETAILS OF ASSIGNMENTS TO BE PROVIDED**

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Office hours: T 2:00-4:00, or by appointment MW 2:00-3:15

**SPRING 2012**

**ENGLISH 322 A: THE VICTORIAN NOVEL:**

# BILDUNGSROMAN

We shall focus our study on the many varieties of Victorian Bildungsroman—the novel of self-development, male and female—and through it examine issues pertaining to self-perception and identity formation, gender dynamics and gender difference, women’s rights and the woman question, relationship between self and work, between the provincial locale and the metropolis, between England and the Empire, between art and artistic pursuit, and explore the effects of industrialization, scientific and technological innovation, and social and political change on society and the individual. Texts include works by Charles Dickens, W.M. Thackeray, Charlotte Brontë, George Eliot, George Meredith, and Thomas Hardy.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

Jan. 18 Introduction, syllabus, course requirements

23 *David Copperfield*, Chapters I-XX

25 *David Copperfield*, Chapters I-XX

30 *David Copperfield*, Chapters XXI-XLII

Feb. 01 *David Copperfield*, Chapters XXI-XLII

06 *David Copperfield*, Chapters XLIII-LIV

08 *David Copperfield*, Chapters XLIII-LIV

13 *Jane Eyre*, Chapters I-XXII

15 *Jane Eyre,* Chapters I-XXII

20 *Jane Eyre*, Chapters XXIII-XXXVIII

22 *Jane Eyre*, Chapters XXIII-XXXVIII

27 *The Mill on the Floss*, first 4 books

29 *The Mill on the Floss*, first 4 books

Mar.05 *The Mill on the Floss*, Books 5-7

07 *The Mill on the Floss*, Books 5-7

# SPRING BREAK (March 10-18)

19 *Pendennis*, Chapters 1-37

21 *Pendennis*, Chapters 1-37

27 *Pendennis*, Chapters 38-60

28 *Pendennis*, Chapters 38-60

Apr. 02 *Pendennis*, Chapters 61-75

04 *Pendennis*, Chapters 61-75

09 *Jude the Obscure*, first 4 parts

11 *Jude the Obscure*, first 4 parts

16 *Jude the Obscure*, complete

18 *The Egoist*, Chapters 1-10

23 *The Egoist*, Chapters 11-40

25 *The Egoist,* Chapters 40-50

30 Summing up

**ASSIGNMENTS:** All work turned in should be typed or printed on a computer letter-quality printer. It should be double-spaced (unless specified otherwise) and properly proofread for typographical and spelling errors before it is submitted for evaluation. Last minute corrections of minor spelling mistakes or errors of punctuation may be made by hand. Be sure to follow the conventions of the MLA stylesheet for print format, quotation, citation, and referencing. Students must obtain the approval of their professor for topics of their research papers and presentations.

**CLASS PARTICIPATION:** You are expected not only to attend your classes punctually and regularly but also to generate and actively participate in class discussions. Your comments should clearly show that you have read the assigned material carefully and reflected upon it seriously enough to warrant the positions you adopt and the opinions you offer.

**GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR READING LITERARY TEXTS AND WRITING THESIS-DRIVEN ANALYTICAL PAPERS:** Read critically. Identify key ideas, foundational concepts, latent suggestions, hidden agendas along with the overt and manifest sense. Whether responding orally to a text or in writing, remember that you should not be just paraphrasing the surface sense. Try to access and translate what lies behind the words and their obvious dictionary meanings, the connotations, the deeper design or intent, the ironies. Ask questions as you proceed with reading and/or writing about the text: What narrative choices has the author made and why? How do they influence, or intend to influence, the reader’s attitudes, responses, projections, and interpretations? What kind of tone is being used? Is the narrator’s voice earnest, ironic, satirical, serious, morose, pleasant, playful, flippant, clever, cunning, and so on? Is the narrator reliable or unreliable, and why? Is historical context accurately presented? Does it matter? What intellectual or philosophical positions are presented through the narrative? Is there a political stance that the author takes? If so, do you agree with it or not, and why? If the author does not take an overt political stance, what is the implicit design? How are the aesthetic, political, and historical concerns configured in the text? Do they support each other or is their a tension and resistance among them? What do the gender dynamics between characters tell us about the position and role of women and men in society? How are older characters treated in the text? What is the position of children in the narrative? How does the text deal with issues of disability? What does the text have to say about suspicions and discrimination based on race, class, gender, sexual orientation, behaviors deemed deviant, ab- or para-normal, and so on? These are just sample questions to get you thinking. You will have many more. Don’t be afraid to articulate and explore them.

Choose a topic keeping in mind the length of the paper you are assigned to write. Be sure to have a definite thesis or argument you want to present in the paper. Express your thesis clearly. Find and organize material that supports and illustrates your thesis. Take into account also details and material that don’t quite support your thesis and tell your reader why they don’t, or how they do, effect your thesis. Develop your thesis and argument to lead your reader to a greater understanding of the subject or a valuable insight into it.

Always prepare a rough draft. Edit, revise, and, if necessary, reorganize your material to give your final version a beginning, middle, and end, each part leading to and evolving into the next. Make your conclusion strong, noticeable for the idea it offers, perhaps opening up new possibilities for further investigation and research, but do not restate or repeat your thesis at the end when you have already stated it in an earlier part of your paper.

The several short papers on texts for this course should each reflect that you have read the entire book or work from which you have chosen your subject for response and/or analysis. This means, that your views and opinions should have been formed after taking into consideration the entire narrative or play and that your argument is not based on a partial and localized reading that disregards the events of the text as a whole.

**RESEARCH PAPER:** Keep in mind the general guidelines for the shorter analytical papers. Make sure you choose a subject that interests you. If you are not interested in the subject you choose, it is unlikely that you will be motivated to do the scholarly research this assignment require or to produce a superior paper. Be sure to have a clear idea of your topic and the thesis you wish to advance in your paper. It may be helpful to think of this assignment as an opportunity to tackle a problem or a question your reading of the text poses that you would like to explore or investigate in some depth. Consult both conventional library as well as digital resources to locate background and contextual information, critical views, articles, and books on your subject. Use a variety of sources, and do not rely for more than 50% of your secondary sources from internet and digital databases.

Incorporate in your paper only the relevant portion of the information gathered. Enter into a dialogue with the critics and scholars you cite and do not quote passively, i.e., just for the sake of quoting or ornamentation. Ascribe within the text of your paper the quotation and any paraphrased source material you use to the author from whom it originates. Integrate the quoted material into the structure of your argument and exposition. Generally speaking, you are expected to use at least eight diversified sources for your final research paper.

These are guidelines and suggestions. Use them intelligently and imaginatively.

**INDIVIDUAL ORAL PRESENTATIONS:** Each of you is expected to make one oral presentation (10-15 minutes) on a text of your choice from the assigned material. Please select your text and preferred day of presentation, to correspond with the day/s reserved for your chosen text, by the end of the first week of class. Set up a conference with your professor at least a week before your presentation to finalize the specific topics you will cover and to discuss your research plans. Your presentation will be followed by a ten-minute question and answer session.

The presentations must reflect an informed view of the subject arrived at after careful appraisal of the text and selected topic supplemented by scholarly research. You are encouraged to be innovative in conceiving of and making your presentations. You are encouraged to use interdisciplinary approaches and strategies, enacted performance, skits, or mime, and supplementary materials such as slides, photographs, film and video excerpts, or music to illustrate your points in an effective manner. A two-page synopsis of your presentation identifying the text and topic, your initial view of the subject, the research that you conducted on it (bibliography), and how that research helped you revise or advance your view on the subject should be submitted to your professor at the end of your presentation.

TURN IN YOUR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS IN FOLDERS, AND KEEP A FULL DUPLICATE RECORD OF YOUR WORK WITH YOU AS A RULE.

**LATE PAPERS, ATTENDANCE, PUNCTUALITY:** The college policies prescribe penalization of 1/3rd of a letter grade for each day an assignment is late beyond its due date. All work is due strictly on the day designated for its submission or completion. An extension may be granted only under exceptional circumstances that constitute a clear and unexpected emergency. Class attendance and punctuality are mandatory. Six missed classes without compelling cause or prior notice (and permission from your professor) will result in “F” for the course.

Five percentage points will be deducted for each unauthorized absence, three points for each instance of habitual tardiness. Joining the class later than five minutes after the scheduled time more than twice during the semester will be considered habitual tardiness.

**CONFERENCES:** Students are encouraged to set up individual conferences with their professor or with the course tutor for discussing their work and planning their assignments. Two conferences are compulsory for each course participant.

**THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH REQUIRES THAT ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE COMPLETED IF A STUDENT IS TO RECEIVE CREDIT FOR THE COURSE.**

**GRADES:** THE FINAL GRADE SHALL BE CALCULATED IN THE FOLLOWING MANNER: 1) TYPED RESPONSES, 10%; 2) ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN CLASS DISCUSSIONS, 10%; 3) INDIVIDUAL ORAL PRESENTATION, 10%; 4) GROUP PRESENTATION, 10%; 5) FOUR 3-PAGE PAPERS, 40%; 6) RESEARCH PAPER, 6-8 PAGES, 20%.

**TEXTS**

Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre*. Norton Critical Edition.

Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield.* Norton Critical Edition.

George Eliot, *The Mill on the Floss*. Norton Critical Edition.

Thomas Hardy, *Jude the Obscure*. Norton Critical Edition.

George Meredith, *The Egoist*. Norton Critical Edition.

W. M. Thackeray, *Pendennis*. Penguin.

## MOVIES

To be announced.

You must come prepared every class day, starting Jan. 23 and ending April 25, with a one-page printed response to the assigned readings or topics for the day, generating issues and ideas for discussion, or raising questions you feel are relevant to your understanding of the text. You will be asked occasionally to read them out aloud in class to start a discussion and must submit them in 4 sets, with each entry dated for the day it was made, on Feb. 15, March 07, April 02 and April 25.

**Right to modify the syllabus reserved.**

**General Course Objectives:**

To develop an understanding of Victorian Bildungsroman in the context of its historical production.

To chart and appreciate how interpretations of and approaches to these texts have changed over the years providing us with new readings and new insights.

To fine-tune close-reading skills necessary for the analysis and understanding of the assigned texts.

To educate ourselves about the background and context of the works—the life and times of the author, the politics in play, the social and economic conditions, traditions and customs, private anxieties and public engagements, domestic life, social roles and expectations for men and women, the role of parents and persons in authority in the life of children and pupils and wards during Victorian times, Victorian ideas about education, nurturing, and character development, issues relating to the “new woman” and the “woman question,” attitudes toward the colonies, towards art, architecture, and religion, intellectual currents, scientific inventions and breakthroughs, new ideas and theories, etc.

To learn to discuss the literary, political, social, and cultural issues related to the period in an informed and mature way.

To investigate and explore how the issues and concerns of the writers of the period remain relevant to us in our times and circumstances.