ENGL 460-01 Love, Sex, and Gender: Victorian Poetry

Kristen Renzi
renzik@xavier.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://www.exhibit.xavier.edu/english_syllabi_spring_2015

Recommended Citation
http://www.exhibit.xavier.edu/english_syllabi_spring_2015/32
ENGL 460: Love, Sex, and Gender
Victorian Poetry

Course Policies

Instructor: Dr. Kristen Renzi
Phone: 513-745-3267
Email: renzik@xavier.edu
Office Location: Hinkle Hall 226
Office Hours: Mondays 1-3 p.m., Wednesdays 10:30-11:30 a.m., and by appointment

Required Texts:

- The Broadview Anthology of Victorian Poetry and Poetic Theory (Edited by Thomas J. Collins and Vivienne J. Rundle)
- Courtship and Marriage in Victorian England (Jennifer Phegley)

Course Blog: http://hisheartisaplacewiththelightsgoneout.blogspot.com/

**You will need to give me a gmail address so that I can give you access to the course blog asap**

Course Description:

You may have heard the rumors—that the Victorians were all prudishness and chastity. Far from it! In fact, the major Victorian poets (as well as quite a few minor ones) all treat the interrelated subjects of love, sex, and gender. This course will put these poets into conversation with one another and use scholarship on gender and sexuality in the Victorian era to contextualize and deepen our understanding of these poems. We will treat longer poetic sequences/series, including Browning’s Love Among the Ruins, Barrett Browning’s Aurora Leigh, C. Rosetti’s Goblin Market, D. Rosetti’s House of Life, and Meredith’s Modern Love, as well as shorter works by Hopkins, Wilde, Siddal, Arnold, Webster, and Mew. Also approved elective for Gender and Diversity minor.

Reading Assignments—Class Blog:

We will work together this semester to develop a wide familiarity with Victorian poetry, both historically and as a field of study. Accordingly, we will read extensively, and you will need to keep up with daily reading assignments throughout the semester. Reading for this course involves not only scanning your eyes across the words on each page of the literature we will study but also thinking about these words and coming to class with your own questions, opinions, thoughts, and feelings about what you’ve read.

To help to facilitate these active reading practices, as well as your own comprehension of difficult textual material, you will need to post to, and read, our CLASS BLOG regularly throughout the course. This blog will be a place for you to record your thoughts regarding course readings in advance of class.

You are required, each week, to compose one post and one comment to our readings. Posts and comments on a specific day’s readings MUST BE POSTED BY 10AM on the day that the reading is due. We will use your blogging in class to prompt discussion, and your blogging grade will be based on whether or not you keep it thoroughly and up-to-date.

Writing Assignments—Responses (4)

Every third week in the course, for the first twelve weeks, you will be responsible for producing a short (3 page) response to our course readings. You are expected to develop your response from your postings to our course blog, especially given comments from your peers and subsequent class discussion. Each response should have a clear, analytical thesis in its first paragraph and should support its thesis through close, textual
reading. Responses should focus on one, or at maximum two, course texts; both primary and secondary readings are possible texts to treat in your responses.

**Final Project:**

For the course’s final project, you will complete a medium-length paper (7-9 pages) that draws on your own theoretical, creative, and critical insights about our course topic of “love, sex, and gender” that shows significant engagement with/understanding of the texts we have treated throughout the semester. **You will propose a final project well in advance of the end of the semester, complete an annotated bibliography of five sources you plan to use in your final project, engage in peer review of your thesis and the paper itself, and turn in the final project during finals week.** More detailed information on this assignment will be distributed during the semester.

**Grading:**

Your final grade in this course will be calculated based on the grades that you receive on each assignment (so there should be no surprises!). A C in this course is considered satisfactory work that meets all requirements. An A is exemplary, while a D or an F would mean you fell significantly short of requirements. Further description of what each letter grade means can be found on the attached “Grading Rubric”.

Grades will be determined according to the following scale, and decimals will be rounded up to the next whole number beginning at .5 (so an 85.5 becomes an 86):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>88-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>78-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>68-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>63-67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60-62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grade Breakdown will be as follows:**

- 15% Class Blog/Commentary
- 40% Written Responses (4/ 10% each)
- 40% Final Project
  - Final Project Proposal (5%)
  - Annotated Bibliography (10%)
  - Peer Review Participation (5%)
  - Final Project (20%)
- 5% In-class Participation

**Late Assignments:**

Work is to be submitted in class on the day it is due. **You will be penalized five percent for every day a paper is late (calendar day, not class meeting).** I will only grade physical copies of a paper. I DO NOT accept emailed papers. **I will also allow you, ONCE during the semester, to take a no-questions asked, 48 hour extension on an essay or response assignment,** provided you let me know in advance of the due date that you will be using your extension option (Exceptions: peer reviews are only to be completed on the day they’re scheduled).

Technical difficulties (printer failure, data recovery issues, etc.) **DO NOT constitute a valid excuse for missing an assignment deadline.** Please take the proper precautions—save your work often, and to a disk, CD, USB device, or your school account in case your computer crashes. Also, printers are often busy at this school, and so make sure to provide yourself with enough time to print out your paper and still arrive at class on time to turn it in.
Attendance and Participation:
Attendance in this class is mandatory, in the hopes that being here will allow you to take full advantage of the class and also gain the skills necessary to complete all assignments. I expect you to come to class on time with your reading and your writing assignments completed and in hand, prepared to participate in discussion and group work.

**NOTE:** Since we will spend much of our class time working with the texts you are reading, you are required to bring in hard copies of the readings assigned for each day. This means that should a reading be accessed electronically, you will need to print a hard copy and bring it with you to class. Failure to bring your texts with you to class will adversely affect your participation grade.

If you start regularly coming in late to class, I'll talk to you; if you continue to come in late, I'll begin to count late arrivals as absences. **You are allowed three absences in this course without penalty; your final grade will be dropped by 1/3 of a letter grade for each absence after three.** I recommend saving your absences for illness or family emergencies. If you have an emergency or serious illness throughout the semester, it is your responsibility to contact me as soon as possible regarding your issue and remain in contact with me by e-mail. We will determine together what steps to take.

**NOTE:** Anyone text-messaging, using i-pods, or other electronics during class (unless required for special needs) will be counted absent for the day. No laptops are allowed in class.

The classroom is a place for the exchange of ideas and for respectful debate. While you are expected and encouraged to express your opinions in class, please do so respectfully. In order to foster a respectful and comfortable environment for class discussion, please refrain from the use of offensive language when expressing your opinion, even in jest.

Religious Holidays:
If, upon reviewing this syllabus, you find that a religious holiday that you observe falls on one of our class days, please let me know as soon as possible if you plan to absent yourself from class on that day. There is no absence penalty for missing class for religious holiday observation (thus, it doesn’t count as one of your absences) **AS LONG AS YOU LET ME KNOW IN ADVANCE AND MAKE ARRANGEMENTS WITH ME FOR YOUR ABSENCE.**

Paper Format:
Unless otherwise stated, all papers will be typed in 12 pt., Times New Roman font, with standard margins (1 in.) and double-spacing. The paper should include a heading, a title, page numbers, and a staple, if necessary. I will read no papers sent to me via email.

Plagiarism:
All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course. Any paper with your name on it signifies that you are the author—that the work and ideas it contains are yours, with exceptions indicated by quotation marks and citations. Plagiarism, the unacknowledged use of others’ materials (words **AND/OR** ideas), is a serious offense, and considered so by the University. If I find that you have plagiarized on any part of an assignment, you will receive, at minimum, a “0” on the assignment and may potentially fail this course. If you have questions about citation or what constitutes plagiarism, please see the university’s definition at [http://www.xavier.edu/library/xututor/plagiarism/](http://www.xavier.edu/library/xututor/plagiarism/) or consult with me.

Disability Accommodations:
I am committed to providing opportunities for all to participate in all programs, services, and activities; as such, I am more than happy to talk about alternative classroom accommodations for those with disabilities. If
you would like to request an accommodation due to disability, please speak with me about the specifics at the start of the term or as soon as possible and I will do my best to accommodate your requests.

Conferences and E-mail:
Email is the best way for us to communicate outside of class (my email address: renzik@xavier.edu) Please feel free to contact me with questions or concerns about the course or your own work, either by email or during office hours. I do check my email often, but do not expect an immediate response to an email – especially the night before an assignment is due. Please stop by my office hours and/or make an appointment to meet with me if you have any questions about the course or would like to discuss your work with me—including your essays at any stage of the writing process.

In addition, if you find you would like to discuss your writing with someone other than me, feel free to take advantage of the Glen Writing Center’s services. Located in the Learning Commons, the center is free to all Xavier students: www.xavier.edu/writing_center/.

Schedule of Daily Assignments

Week 1
Tues 1/13 Intro to the course, etc.

Thurs 1/15 Dowden, “Leonardo’s ‘Monna Lisa’” (1035)
    Ingelow, “Remonstrance” (664)
    Critical Reading: Phegley, *Courtship and Marriage in Victorian London* (1-5)

Theories of Love

Week 2
Tues 1/20 R. Browning, “Love Among the Ruins” (318-319) and “Two in the Campagna” (400-401)
    Critical Reading: Phegley, *Courtship and Marriage in Victorian London* (5-17)

Thurs 1/22 Landon, “Sappho’s Song” (34-35)
    C. Brontë, “Reason” (541)
    Wilde, “Hélas!” (1106)

Week 3
Tues 1/27 Tennyson, “In Memoriam A.H.H.” (read only the prologue (204-205), I (205), VI (207), VIII (207-208), XXVII (214), CXXIX (250) and CXXX (250))

Thurs 1/29 Arnold, “Dover Beach” (722-723) and “To Marguerite—Continued” (699-700)
    Assign reading division for Tuesday
    Response One Due
Loving Relationships

Week 4

Tues 2/3  Reading in Groups: either Bronte, Eliot, or Webster (as assigned on 1/29)

Thurs 2/5  Barrett Browning, from *Sonnets from the Portuguese* (read all four, 77-78)
  Critical Reading: Phegley, *Courtship and Marriage in Victorian London* (31-39)

Week 5

Tues 2/10  D. Rosetti, from *House of Life*: read “Nuptial Sleep” (828), “The Portrait” (828),
  “Silent Noon” (828), “Willowwood” (828-829)
  Critical Reading: Phegley, *Courtship and Marriage in Victorian London* (107-116)

Thurs 2/12  D. Rossetti, from *House of Life* (continued): read “Soul’s Beauty” (831-832) and
  “Body’s Beauty” (832)
  Critical Reading: Phegley, *Courtship and Marriage in Victorian London* (136-142)

  Gender Roles, Part One

Week 6

Tues 2/17  Barrett Browning, “A Man’s Requirements” (77)
  Cook, “Song of the Ugly Maiden” (556-557)
  Kipling, “If” (1152-1153)

Thurs 2/19  Proctor, “A Woman’s Question” (774-775), “A Woman’s Answer” (775), and “A
  Woman’s Last Word” (775-776)
  Response Two Due

  Gender Roles, Part Two

Week 7

Tues 2/24  Barrett Browning, “Lady Geraldine’s Courtship” (56-69)

Thurs 2/26  C. Rossetti, “No, Thank you, John” (857)
  Webster, “Circe” (1010-1013)

Week 8

Tues 3/2  SPRING BREAK

Thurs 3/5  SPRING BREAK

Week 9

Tues 3/10  C. Rossetti, “Monna Innominata” (866-870)
  Critical reading: Robins, “Woman’s Secret” (1434-1440)
Thurs 3/12  Barrett Browning, from *Aurora Leigh*. “First Book” (82-98)
Response Three Due

**Week 10**

Tues 3/17  Barrett Browning, from *Aurora Leigh* “Second Book” (98-115)

Thurs 3/19  Barrett Browning, from *Aurora Leigh*. “Fifth Book” (115-133)

**Unhappy Love**

**Week 11**


Thurs 3/26  Siddal, “Worn Out” (845) and “Love and Hate” (846)
Mew, “The Farmer’s Bride” (1165)
Assign Critical Reading for Tuesday

**Week 12**

Tues 3/31  Hardy, “Neutral Tones” (1029) and “A Broken Appointment” (1029)
Critical Reading: Phegley, *Courtship and Marriage in Victorian London* in groups (on advice columns, personal ads, or matrimonial newspapers)

Thurs 4/2  EASTER HOLIDAY

**Love and Violence**

**Week 13**

Tues 4/7  R. Browning, “My Last Duchess” (309-310), “Pophyria’s Lover” (312-313), and “The Laboratory” (317-318)
Response Four Due

Thurs 4/9  R. Browning, “The Statue and the Bust” (340-345)
Final Project Proposal Due

**Week 14**

Tues 4/14  C. Rossetti, “Goblin Market” (848-855)

Thurs 4/16  C. Rossetti, “Goblin Market” (848-855), continued
Critical Reading: Phegley, *Courtship and Marriage in Victorian London* (151-157; 162-164)
Final Project Thesis Peer Review in-class
Final Project Annotated Bibliography DUE
### Special Issues (Gender)

**Week 15**
- Tues 4/21  
  Landon, “Infanticide in Madagascar” (47-48)
  Norton, “The Creole Girl” (141-145)
  Critical Reading: Phegley, *Courtship and Marriage in Victorian London* (59-64)

- Thurs 4/23  
  Mew, “Madeleine in Church” (1171-1175)

**Week 16**
- Tues 4/28  
  **Final Project Rough Draft DUE**/ Peer Review

- Thurs 4/30  
  Course wrap up
  Critical Reading: Phegley, *Courtship and Marriage in Victorian London* (165-174)

**During Finals Week: Final Project Due**