

**ENGLISH 3230-A90:**  
British Texts, Mid-19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> Century  
Online, Summer A-Term  
May 13-June 20, 2019



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**Office Hours:** TR 3:15-4:15 p.m.

### Course Description:

#### **Gender, Nation, and Empire in Victorian, Modern, and Postcolonial Literature**

This course provides an introductory survey to British literature from the mid-1800s through the beginning of the 21st century, with particular focus on literary representations of gender, nation, and empire. Assigned readings will cover a broad range of literary genres: essays, poetry, short fiction, one play, and two novellas. Students will learn about predominant issues, concerns, and historical shifts that played a significant role in shaping British politics, society, and culture from the Victorian period to the present day. In the first half of the semester, we will explore gendered themes and tropes in nineteenth-century literature, including the angel in the home, the fallen woman, and fin-de-siècle masculinities. The domestic ideology of “separate spheres” deeply influenced representations of gender, race, class, and ethnicity in Victorian literature, and in readings of modernist texts, we will examine how early twentieth-century writers continued to reinforce or challenge Victorian ideologies. We will also read canonical modernist texts that respond to the impact of the First World War by questioning the politics of gender and sexuality in the contexts of wartime tensions and post-war anxieties about a nation in decline. In the second half of the semester, we will continue to explore the intersections of gender and nation, but our focus will shift to reading twentieth-century texts by writers from Commonwealth nations and/or former British colonies who explore the legacies of British imperialism. Lastly, we'll extend this focus on the inheritance of Empire by reading contemporary British writers whose emphases on hybrid identities attempt a re-imagining of gender, class, race, and nation in a postmodern, postcolonial, and multicultural Britain. This is a **reading-intensive online course**; basic computer literacy is recommended. Throughout the semester, students will create their own websites and write blogs in response to the readings. You will also need to access Pilot for submitting copies of your blogs, tracking your grades, and checking the newsfeed for course updates. **Course Prerequisite:** ENG 1100.

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### Required Text

Greenblatt, Stephen, et al. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature, 10<sup>th</sup> Ed., Vol. E & F.*

**ISBN:** 9780393603064 (vol. E); 9780393603071 (vol. F)

### Course Evaluation and Assignment Guidelines (1,000 pts. total)

<b>Blogs (8x50 pts each)</b>	400
<b>Research Web Pages</b>	300
<b>Finalized Website Design</b>	100
<b>Online Participation</b>	200

#### Grading scale:

90-100%	A
80-89%	B
70-79%	C
60-69%	D
0-59%	F

**NB:** Beyond reviewing the syllabus summaries of the required components for your final grade, you should read the detailed “**Website Project Guidelines**” available in Pilot. These provide directions and resources for setting up your website, expectations for blogs and responding to peers, suggestions for how to approach the two research web pages, and rubrics/grading criteria for all components or sections of the website. Also see detailed “Guidelines and Tips for Writing & Responding to Blogs” and other relevant handouts in Pilot. **You are expected to read and follow these guidelines; if you have any questions do not hesitate to contact me.**

**Finalized Website Design (10%)**: Students will create a personalized website that explores critical and creative approaches in responding to the assigned readings. By Friday of Week 1, you will need to set up your website with a public URL and a clearly designed homepage that will serve as your blog page. The finalized website is due at the end of Week 6 and will be assessed for its design components (as opposed to content, assessed separately).

**Blogs (40%)**: Beginning in Week 1, you will provide reflective blog posts that respond to each week's assigned readings. You must write a minimum total of eight (8) blog posts (50 points each) and each post must be a minimum of 300-500 words. Keep in mind, as well, that blogs are a form of public writing, so you will want to ensure your writing is as clear and free of errors/typos as possible; in other words, blogs (and peer responses, discussed below) must meet the general evaluation criteria for academic writing (see below). There will be one blog post due Friday of Weeks 1 and 4, and two blogs in Weeks 2, 3, and 5, each one due Wednesday and Friday. Blogs must be posted on your website **and** submitted to the dropbox folder in Pilot by the deadline (see class calendar)—this is to ensure all students are meeting academic standards of integrity (see below); any blog posts that are posted on your website but not in Pilot will remain ungraded until a copy is submitted to Pilot (both website and dropbox copies must be exactly the same). Late submissions will receive deductions in points and I will not grade any blog posts submitted more than two days late (after 48 hrs).

**Online Participation (20%)**: Each week you will engage with peers online by reading and providing comments on their blog postings. Your peer responses will be assessed according to the grading criteria of full credit, partial credit, no credit, with the final grade being the average of points earned. You are required to provide a minimum of ten (10) peer responses, one for each set of weekly blog posts (Weeks 1-5), and another five of your choice. Peer responses should be about 3-4 sentences providing substantive feedback or engagement with each other's ideas. At least five of the required peer responses must be provided to a different student (in other words, you may not always respond to just one or two people in the class). Peer responses may be submitted to each other's websites any time after the blogs have been posted but are due by the Sunday of that same week (see class calendar). You are more than welcome to provide comments on each other's blogs beyond the required minimum, and for each additional peer response that is meaningful and substantive you will earn five points extra credit (same for responding to comments on your own post). You **may not** earn these extra credit points by writing a bunch of comments at the end of the semester as a last-ditch effort to boost your grade. Blog writing is intended to be interactive writing, and so extra credit points for additional comments will only be earned if posted within the week each blog set is posted.

**Research Web Pages (30%):** By the end of the semester, you will create two additional pages for your website, each worth 150 points; these will involve some research and use of text, image, and/or audio. The Gender/Nation page should explore any theme/topic from the Victorian and/or Modernist periods covered in Weeks 1-3 and the Postcolonial Britain page should explore issues, texts, and themes related to the contemporary readings from Weeks 4-5. Because the Week 4 reading, *Heart of Darkness*, is a modernist text that deals with themes of gender, colonialism, and the legacy of empire, you may explore this text in either page (but not both). These pages are not intended to be the equivalent of a literary research analysis paper; rather they are thematic explorations of cultural, social, and historical contexts for the literary time periods that we are studying in this class. Although online research is required, the pages are a space and opportunity for you to explore topics in British literary history through a more creative approach; visual media and/or images should be included in these pages. Week 6 will be dedicated to working on this part of your website; the completed research pages along with your finalized website design are due by the end of that week (Fri 11:59 pm). Like your blog posts, you must submit a copy of all written components in a Word document to the Pilot dropbox.

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#### **General Tips for Reading/Reviewing Topic Overviews and “Lectures”**

It is recommended that you complete the assigned literary readings for each thematic unit before you review the Prezi topic overview. In Weeks 1-3 and 5 there are two thematic units and topic overviews per week. I suggest breaking up the assigned readings/topics according to a typical summer class schedule: do the first set of readings and topic overview on Mon/Tues and then the second set on Wed/Thurs. In Week 4, there is only one topic overview on *Heart of Darkness*, and in Week 6 there are no readings/topic overviews since this week will be dedicated to finalizing your website and research pages.

Links for topic overviews are available on our class webpage (via my website not Pilot); click on the topic you want to read and the link will connect you to the corresponding Prezi (you will need to log in with a free Prezi or other social media account). In each Prezi you will find author introductions, suggested reading/critical approaches, study questions, videos, and other visual resources. There are two topic overviews that introduce each of the two units on Victorian and Twentieth-Century British Literature, plus one PowerPoint on 20<sup>th</sup> Century Britain that provides relevant images and summaries of major social, cultural, and political touchstones, from the Edwardian Era to the Brexit Crisis. You should treat the topic overviews as equivalent to lectures that will help prepare you for writing your blogs and you may also use any of the study questions provided in the Prezis to help prompt ideas for your blogs and research pages.

After the class has submitted their blogs for each week, I will post my own readings of the texts—not all of them but those that I think are perhaps the most difficult and challenging. My posts will be similar to informal lectures that I would provide in a face-to-face classroom discussion and are also available on my website in a sub-section under Teaching/Summer 2019 where I have dedicated a page to “Brit Lit Blog.” You are encouraged to post questions or comments you might have in response to my reading or any other assigned texts for that thematic unit. It is not required, however, that you read or respond to my posts; I simply offer these as an opportunity to interact with me directly by exploring the readings further with insights that might not be

immediately available in the Prezi lectures. Think of this as our virtual classroom discussion space. If you have a question about something you would like to discuss with me individually (not pertaining to the assigned readings), then it is recommended that you do so by email; or, since I'm also teaching a face-to-face class on Tuesdays and Thursdays, you are more than welcome to make an appointment to see me on one of those days, either during my office hours (3:15-4:15 pm) or in the morning before I teach class (10:30-11:30 am).

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#### **General Evaluation Criteria for All Written Work**

- A = Demonstrates advanced critical thinking skills and outstanding knowledge of the readings and other course content. Ideas are original and depth of analysis is excellent. Writing is clear, concise, free of basic errors, easy to follow **and** shows excellent command of language and disciplinary style.
- B = Demonstrates solid critical thinking skills and familiarity with readings and other course content; provides interesting illustrations and examples. Writing is coherent, concise, easy to follow, and **nearly** free of basic errors.
- C = Demonstrates basic understanding of the readings and other course content and can provide a good summary of material but only provides superficial analysis and support for issues raised. Writing is coherent and easy to follow but wordy, repetitious and/or marred by numerous errors.
- D = Demonstrates minimal understanding of readings and course content; ideas are vague or not supported by any analysis and shows overall lack of effort. Writing lacks general coherence and shows little to no command of the English language.
- F = Demonstrates serious lack of understanding of readings and other course content; serious lack of analysis and/or effort. Writing is incoherent and impossible to follow.
- X/0 = Incomplete or Missing.
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#### **ACADEMIC HONESTY GUIDELINES & POLICY**

All work submitted by you must be your own. All outside sources must be properly acknowledged and documented. Consult the 8th edition of the *MLA Handbook* for citation and documentation guidelines. **Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Penalties for academic dishonesty can be severe, usually resulting in a failing grade for the course.** Penalties for academic dishonesty and student procedure in academic dishonesty prosecution are clarified in the *Wright State University Student Handbook* and on the Office of Community Standards & Student Conduct website at: <http://www.wright.edu/students/judicial/integrity.html>.

**INSTRUCTOR POLICY:** If any portion of submitted work is plagiarized, you will receive a "0" on that assignment; if you commit a second offense, regardless of circumstances, you will receive an F for the entire course and may be subject to disciplinary action.

## COURSE POLICIES & GENERAL CONDUCT

**NB:** Failure to follow these guidelines may lead to dismissal from the class.

- You are expected to compose yourself as if in a professional environment. Your behavior in an online classroom should be no different than in a face-to-face class. Unprofessional behavior will imperil your ability to get a good grade, but also your ability to receive a letter of recommendation from me should the need arise. In all email communications, I request that you address me as Dr. Jennings and not by first name. For some of the contexts and reasons behind this general preference and standard of professional etiquette, I recommend reading this *New York Times* essay: "[U Can't Talk to Ur Professor Like This](#)".
- Even if your views differ from those of the instructor or your peers, or from the assigned texts, you are expected to refrain from bigotry and intolerance toward others. Your individual opinions about the texts and issues explored in this class are encouraged, but you must be able to present your interpretations or stance through an informed lens, using critical thinking and/or verifiable evidence beyond personal beliefs or anecdotal experiences (such as reference to textual examples, reliable secondary sources, or socio-cultural, historical, and political contexts).
- You are expected to follow the class calendar and all assignment guidelines (available above in syllabus and in Pilot). If you are confused about any of these it is your responsibility to ask for clarification, and NOT the night before something is due. I do not accept late submissions and any missing assignment will receive a zero. All submission deadlines are posted in the class calendar below as well as in Pilot.
- Extensions are granted ONLY in extreme cases of illness or emergency, which must be documented and, if possible, communicated to me *before* the due date and not after the missed deadline. Regardless of circumstances, I reserve the right to deny any requests for extensions and will only grant incompletes to students who have consistently attended class and are missing no more than 1-2 assignments. I do not offer individual extra credit opportunities; extra credit is only provided as an option available to the entire class.
- Raider Mail is the best way to communicate with me (do not use Pilot except for posting suitable or pertinent questions related to discussion board topics). You can expect to receive a reply within a 24-hour period on weekdays; I normally do not respond to e-mail on weekends (Sat-Sun). Please follow general rules of e-mail etiquette; if you don't know what this is then learn it. When asking a question, make sure it is concise, calm, and coherent (i.e. not rambling, vague, panicked or full of spelling and grammatical errors); this will make a much more favorable impression and I should be more willing to provide the help you need.
- Regularly check the newsfeed on the course homepage in Pilot for any class updates or info. If I make changes to the syllabus or class calendar, I explain these in class and post them in Pilot. Be tech savvy, or, learn how to be; don't expect me to provide you with this kind of training. Wright State has excellent learning resources for technology-related questions.

## USEFUL CAMPUS & ONLINE RESOURCES

**University Writing Center:** The Writing Center (031 Library) provides individualized writing consultation at no cost to students. If you meet with a writing tutor, be sure to bring a copy of your assignment with you. For more information, call 775-4186. Or visit the Writing Center's Web page: <http://www.wright.edu/uc/success/services/writing-center.html>

**University Libraries:** The University Libraries are the scholarly information center for the University. In support of the University's mission of educational excellence, the Libraries collect, organize, preserve, and facilitate access to scholarly resources in all formats; support teaching, learning, and research in an intellectually open environment; and provide instruction in the use of traditional and new information resources and technologies. The libraries' online catalog, databases, and interlibrary loan service is essential for conducting research. Web page: <https://www.libraries.wright.edu/>

**OWL at Purdue:** The Online Writing Lab (OWL) at Purdue University houses writing resources and instructional material and provides these as a free service to assist with many writing projects. Resources include teaching and tutoring, guidelines on general and subject-specific writing tips, and how to conduct, use, and cite research.

- OWL Home Page: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>
- MLA Style guidelines: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

**Counseling and Wellness Services:** If you are suffering from depression or have any other mental health concerns, please be aware that counseling services are available on campus. Counseling and Wellness offers a wide range of services to the Wright State University community, including the following: group, individual, couples, and family counseling, crisis intervention, and outreach. They offer specialized services on a variety of mental health, multicultural, diversity, and wellness issues. Location: the bottom level of the Student Union off the Atrium and below the Admissions Office in suite 053. Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Call 775-3407 or stop by to set an appointment. Web page: <http://www.wright-counseling.com/>

**Disability Services:** If you require course accommodations due to a disability, please inform me so we can make arrangements early in the quarter. For more information about support services offered by Disability Services (E186 Student Union), call 775-5680; TTY: 775-5844. Or visit their Web page: [http://www.wright.edu/students/dis\\_services/](http://www.wright.edu/students/dis_services/)

**CATS:** Faculty are not experts in trouble shooting Pilot or computer programs of any type. The quickest way to resolve technical issues is by using the resources at the HELP Desk: 937-775-4827 or 1-888-775-4827; for Pilot-related issues, contact the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL): 937-775-2885 or <http://www.wright.edu/ctl/>

## READING ASSIGNMENTS & CLASS CALENDAR

**NB:** Thematic units for each week are identified in bold and correspond with titles of topic overviews or lectures available in Prezi; you should complete the unit readings and topic overviews by the suggested days; see below for website, blog, and peer response deadlines.

### **Victorians and Modernists (Mid 19<sup>th</sup> to Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century)**

#### **WEEK 1**

##### **Domestic Ideology and the Theory of Separate Spheres, Parts I & II (Mon/Tues)**

- The “Woman Question”(pp. 1607-30): Sarah Stickney Ellis, *The Women of England: Their Social Duties and Domestic Habits*; Coventry Patmore, *The Angel in the House*; John Ruskin, “Of Queen’s Gardens”; Florence Nightingale: *Cassandra*
- John Stuart Mill: *The Subjection of Women*, Chap. 1 (pp. 1105-15)
- Alfred, Lord Tennyson, “Mariana”(pp. 1159-61) and *The Princess*: “Tears, Idle Tears”, “Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal”, and “The woman’s cause is man’s” (pp. 1183-85)
- Elizabeth Gaskell, “The Old Nurse’s Story” (pp. 1260-74)

##### **The “Fallen Woman”: Silenced Voices and Sexual Transgressions (Wed/Thurs)**

- Robert Browning, “My Last Duchess” (p. 1282)
- John Ruskin, “Letter to The Times” (pp. 1466-68)
- Dante Gabriel Rossetti, “The Blessed Damozel” (pp. 1472-76) and “Jenny”(pp. 1478-87)
- Christina Rossetti, “In an Artist’s Studio” (1493) and “Goblin Market” (pp. 1496-1508)
- Mary Elizabeth Coleridge, “The Other Side of a Mirror” and “The Witch” (pp. 1849-51)

#### **WEEK 2**

##### **Late Victorians: “Failed” Marriages and “Other” Sexualities (Mon/Tues)**

- William Morris, “The Defence of Guenevere” (pp. 1514-22)
- George Meredith, *Modern Love*, Sonnets 1, 16, 17, 49, 50 (Ebook)
- Algernon Charles Swinburne, “Hymn to Proserpine” and “Hermaphroditus” (pp. 1526-31)
- Michael Field (K. Bradley & E. Cooper), “Maids, not to you my mind doth change” (p. 1672)

##### **Fin-de-Siècle Masculinities: Monsters, Doubles, and Male Friendships (Wed/Thurs)**

- Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (pp. 1677-1719)
- Oscar Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest* (pp. 1733-77)

#### **WEEK 3**

##### **Gender, Modernism, and War (Mon/Tues)**

- Voices from World War I: Siegfried Sassoon, “Glory of Women” (p. 2025); Isaac Rosenberg, “Break of Day in the Trenches” (p. 2030); Wilfred Owen, “Strange Meeting” (p. 2038)
- W.B. Yeats, “The Second Coming” (p. 2099)
- T.S. Eliot, *The Waste Land* (pp. 2529-2543)
- Mina Loy, *Songs to Joannes* (pp. 2078-82; full poem available in Pilot)

##### **Modernist Perspectives on Sexuality and Desire (Wed/Thurs)**

- Virginia Woolf, from *Mrs. Dalloway* [Chap. 1 & 2] (pp. 2155-82)
- James Joyce, from *Ulysses* [Penelope] (pp. 2474-80)
- E.M. Forster, “The Other Boat” (pp. 2122-42)

## **Gender, Nation, and Imperial Legacies (Twentieth Century to Contemporary)**

### **WEEK 4**

#### **Constructing the Colonial Subject: “Savage” Men and Silenced Women**

- Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (pp. 1953-2011)

### **WEEK 5**

#### **Paternal Legacies: Twentieth-Century Perspectives on the Inheritance of Empire (Mon/Tues)**

- Jean Rhys, “The Day They Burned the Books” (pp. 2592-96)
- Seamus Heaney, “Punishment” (pp. 2955)
- Eavan Boland, “The Dolls Museum in Dublin” (pp. 2997-3000)
- Nadine Gordimer, “The Moment before the Gun Went Off” (pp. 2790-93)
- Margaret Atwood, “Death by Landscape” (pp. 2969-81)

#### **Hybrid Identities: Race, Class and Gender in Postcolonial/Multicultural Britain (Wed/Thurs)**

- Salman Rushdie, “The Prophet’s Hair” (pp. 3002-11)
- Hanif Kureishi, “My Son the Fanatic” (pp. 3034-41)
- Kiran Desai, “The Sermon in the Guava Tree” (pp. 3047-56)
- Zadie Smith, from *White Teeth* [The Waiter’s Wife] (pp. 3058-68)

### **WEEK 6**

- **Finalized Website with Gender/Nation and Postcolonial Britain Research Pages**

WEEK	DATE	CLASS CALENDAR—Website, Blogs, and Peer Response Deadlines
ONE	5/17	<b>Website: Set-up w/ Blog Homepage</b> (Fri 11:59 pm)
	5/17	<b>Blog 1:</b> Domestic Ideology, Separate Spheres, and/or “Fallen” Women (Fri 11:59 pm) <i>For this first blog you only need to respond to one of the two thematic units.</i>
	5/19	<b>Peer Responses (2)</b> (Sun 11:59 pm)
TWO	5/22	<b>Blog 2:</b> Late Victorians (Wed 11:59 pm)
	5/24	<b>Blog 3:</b> Fin de Siècle Masculinities (Fri 11:59 pm)
	5/26	<b>Peer Responses (2)</b> (Sun 11:59 pm)
THREE	5/29	<b>Blog 4:</b> Gender, Modernism, and War (Wed 11:59 pm)
	5/31	<b>Blog 5:</b> Modernist Perspectives on Sexuality and Desire (Fri 11:59 pm)
	6/2	<b>Peer Responses (2)</b> (Sun 11:59 pm)
FOUR	6/7	<b>Blog 6:</b> Constructing the Colonial Subject (Fri 11:59 pm)
	6/9	<b>Peer Responses (2)</b> (Sun 11:59 pm)
FIVE	6/12	<b>Blog 7:</b> Paternal Legacies (Wed 11:59 pm)
	6/14	<b>Blog 8:</b> Hybrid Identities (Fri 11:59 pm)
	6/16	<b>Peer Responses (2)</b> (Sun 11:59 pm)
SIX	6/21	<b>Website: Finalized Design and Completed Research Pages</b> (Sun 11:59 pm)