

Novel by Michel Faber

Presentation by Preston Smith

*The Crimson Petal and the White, Part I*

# Characters in the Novel

- Sugar
- William
- Agnes
- Clara
- Caroline (disappears?)

# A Few Themes

- Women and bodies
- Metafiction
- Place
- Politics/money

# You & I: Roles in the Novel

- Faber employs the use of both “you” and “I” in the novel, inserting both an omniscient narrator and you, the reader, into his world. What role do you see Faber playing in the novel? Do we as the reader play a role?
- Faber mentions that his novel is set a world similar to what we know but different nonetheless. What, so far, makes this world different? Does the novel stick to or stray from (neo-)Victorian conventions that we’ve been introduced to so far in this course?

# The Novel & Society

- On page 68, Bodley says, “There’s a simply thundering call nowadays for books that destroy the fabric of our society.” How might this be a meta reference to this novel? Does this novel challenge either then-society or our current society (or both)?

# Women in the Novel

- Simply, how are women treated in this novel? How does this treatment relate to (or differ from) the other texts we've read in this course?
- We have narrations such as calling whores mediocre, and we have William thinking he could kill Sugar if she doesn't do what he "requires" her to do (97). Where William thinks the latter, sentiments like mediocre whores are written by the "I" figure—the narrator. How do you all see this narration working in the novel, and how might it inform this world we have been taken to and its prejudices?

# Women in the Novel, continued

- On page 72, Faber writes, “Morally it’s an odd period, both for the observed and the observer: fashion has engineered the reappearance of the body, while morality insists upon perfect ignorance of it” (72). How do these roles of the observer and the observed function in the novel so far? How do these contrasting ideals function?

# Works Cited

Faber, Michel. *The Crimson Petal and the White*. Harcourt, Inc., 2002, pp. 3-124.