

Hacettepe University
Faculty of Letters
Department of English Language and Literature

SYLLABUS

Title of the Course: İDE 6/777 Nineteenth-Century British Novel

Course Status: Elective

Semester: Spring 2017

Instructor: Dr. Sinan Akilli

Office Hours: To be announced.

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Class Schedule: Thu. 13:00-16:50– Seminar Room

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION (Aim and Content):

The aim of this course is to help the student gain the knowledge, skills and competence to analyze the nineteenth-century British novel, literary, social, historical, philosophical and theoretical developments of the novel in this century, and to illustrate the significance of the Industrial Revolution in the literary and historical transformation of the novel, to recognize the basic characteristics of the nineteenth-century British novel, to comment on the conflict between the individual and the society as well as social institutions in addition to the identity problems of the individual and the moral concerns via the novels written in this period.

In addition to the conventional “Humanities” approach to the selected texts, a “Posthumanities” approach will also be adopted to integrate the most recent and paradigm-changing theoretical and philosophical developments in the fields of literary and cultural studies into the course design. Moving the analyses of the selected texts beyond the confines of commentaries on human characters and human society, a significant part of the lectures and class-discussions will focus on the nonhuman entities, as well as the relationships between humans and nonhumans in the novels. As such, students will also be expected to develop an informed understanding of contemporary animal studies and thing studies.

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES: Upon the successful completion of the course work, the students will be able to,

1. recognize, evaluate, and discuss the social, economic, political and philosophical features of the English novel in the nineteenth century.
2. recognize the devices of nineteenth-century social realism and compare them with eighteenth-century formal realism.
3. compare and contrast the literary and socio-cultural aspects of the Victorian novels with the eighteenth-century novels.
4. illustrate the socio-cultural movements and the philosophical changes of the period in the novels.
5. recognize and compare types of 19th century novels and discuss the social and literary reactions.
6. approach and engage the selected literary texts by using the theoretical and conceptual tools offered by posthuman theory in general, and contemporary animal studies and thing studies, in particular.

III. COURSE OUTLINE

Week I (Feb. 16) Introduction: 18th-century origins and rise of the novel, 19th-century historical-social-cultural background, social realism; literary art as presentation/representation.

Required theoretical reading:

- "Plato's Aesthetics" <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/plato-aesthetics/>
- "Aristotle" <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle/>
- "Aristotle on Causality" <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle-causality/>
- Stuart Hall's "Introduction" and "The Work of Representation" in *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* (SAGE, 1997).
- Karen Barad, "Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* (2003) 28.3: 801-831.
- From Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*, (Duke University Press, 2007); "The Science and Ethics of Mattering."

Week II (Feb. 23) Introduction: Posthumanism, Animal Studies, Thing Studies

Required theoretical reading:

- From Pramod K. Nayar, *Posthumanism*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014; Ch1: "Revisiting the Human: Critical Humanisms" and Ch4: "Absolute Monstrosities: The 'Question of the Animal.'"
- From Cary Wolfe, *What Is Posthumanism?* Ed. Cary Wolfe, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010; Introduction: "What is Posthumanism?"
- From Donna Haraway, *When Species Meet*. Minneapolis: Minneapolis UP, 2007; "Introduction: When Species Meet."

Week III (Mar.02) Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein* (1818) – Science-fiction novel

Required theoretical reading:

- Bill Brown. "Thing Theory." *Critical Inquiry* 28.1 (2001): 1–22.
- From Mark Blackwell, ed. *The Secret Life of Things: Animals, Objects, and It-Narratives in Eighteenth-Century England*. Cranbury, NJ: Bucknell University Press, 2014; Mark Blackwell's "Introduction: The It-Narrative and Eighteenth-century Thing Theory" and Barbara M. Benedict's "The Spirit of Things."
- Tim Morton, "Frankenstein and Ecocriticism," Ed. Andrew Smith, *The Cambridge Companion to Frankenstein*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016: 128–142.

Week IV (Mar. 09) Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey* (1818) – Bildungsroman

Required theoretical reading:

- Marcello Barbieri, "What is Biosemiotics?" *Biosemiotics* (2008) 1:1–3.
- Thomas A. Sebeok, "Biosemiotics: Its Roots, Proliferation, and Prospects." *Semiotica* 134 (2001): 61–78.
- From Wendy Wheeler. *The Whole Creature: Complexity, Biosemiotics and the Evolution of Culture*. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 2006; "Introduction: A Very Long Revolution."

Week V (Mar. 16) Benjamin Disraeli, *Vivian Grey* (1826) – Silverfork novel

Week VI (Mar. 23) Emily Brontë, *Wuthering Heights* (1847) – (Emily is her own animal)

Week VII (Mar. 30) Charles Dickens, *Hard Times* (1854) – Industrial novel

- **From** Tamara Ketabgian. *The Lives of Machines: The Industrial Imaginary in Victorian Literature and Culture*. Ann Arbor: The U of Michigan P, 2011. (Open Access Source available at <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?cc=dcbooks;c=dcbooks;idno=9544598.0001.001;rgn=full%20text;view=toc;xc=1;>

[g=dculture](#)); “Introduction” and Chapter 2: “Melancholy Mad Elephants”: Affect and the Animal Machine in *Hard Times*.

Week VIII (Apr. 06) George Eliot, *Silas Marner* (1861) – Pastoral novel

Week IX (Apr. 13) Thomas Hardy, *Tess of the d’Urbervilles* (1891) – Provincial novel

Week X (Apr. 20) Henry Rider Haggard, *King Solomon’s Mines* (1885) – Imperial romance

Week XI (Apr. 27) Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891) – Gothic novel

Week XII (May 04) Bram Stoker, *Dracula* (1897) – Horror novel

Week XIII (May 11) Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (1899) – Colonial novel

Week XIV (May 18) George Bernard Shaw, *The Irrational Knot* (1905) – Social problem novel, overall evaluation

Final Exam Date: May 25, 2017

IV. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION: Lectures, readings, class discussions, student presentations, and in-class work.

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND STUDENT CONDUCT: Class attendance is obligatory and failure to attend more than two sessions (8 hours) will result in an F1. As this class will combine lectures, discussion and other in-class work, students are expected both to attend every session and to take an active part in class—joining in discussions and raising questions. Questions, discussion, and disagreement are all encouraged in this class.

Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. This includes all forms of plagiarism, failing to appropriately represent and document sources, fabricating information or citations etc.

VI. ASSESSMENT: Student performance will be assessed based on the following:

Research Papers	(30 %) (MA level students 2 papers-15% each; doctoral students 3 papers – 10% each)
Response Papers	(5% + 5%)
Class Participation	(10 %)
Final Exam	(50 %)

Research Papers will be first orally presented in class on the designated week and then submitted to the instructor within two weeks of the presentation.

The topics for response papers (5 % each) will be assigned by the instructor during the semester. Response papers will be short essays (about 6 pages long or 1500 words) reflecting critical and interpretive arguments about the assigned topics.

All research papers, in addition to descriptive parts, should display sufficient secondary research. All papers must be written in compliance with *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 7th ed. and submitted in hard copy form on or before the due dates.

Class participation and contribution (excluding oral presentations of papers) are expected and will make up 10 % of the end-of-term grade.

VI. REQUIRED READING: In addition to the reading list given in the “Course Outline” section, students are asked to consult with the following secondary sources for a background to the nineteenth-century British novel:

L.C.B. Seaman. *Victorian England: Aspects of English and Imperial History 1837-1901*. London: Routledge, 1973.

Louis James. *The Victorian Novel*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006.

Patrick Brantlinger and William Thesing, eds. *A Companion to the Victorian Novel*. Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing, 2002.

William Baker, and Kenneth Womack, eds. *A Companion to the Victorian Novel*. Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 2002.

“It matters what thoughts think thoughts; it matters what knowledges know knowledges; it matters what relations relate relations. No one can just state definitely what is or what matters; all semiosis makes meanings through other meanings, in the flesh, in time, in relentless contingency, in the muddle of ongoing living and dying. It matters which worlds world worlds and which stories tell stories. Whoever and whatever we were/are/will become, we think, act, narrate, metabolize and come into and out of existence through each other, within each other, at stake to and with each other.”

From Donna Haraway, “Cosmopolitical Critters: Preface for Cosmopolitan Animals.” *Cosmopolitan Animals*, eds. Nagai, K., Rooney, C., Landry, D., Mattfeld, M., Sleigh, C., Jones, K. (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).