

Monsters & Madness: Secret Lives in Victorian Literature

English 101-07: Dickinson College, Spring 2016

M/W/F 9:30-10:20; East College 405

Class website: www.blogs.dickinson.edu/secretlives

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Course Description

Evil alter-egos, soul-sucking vampires, and detective thrillers—all have their roots in the literature of the nineteenth-century. From *Dorian Grey* to *Dracula* and the *Hound of the Baskervilles*, the sensational literature of the Victorian era sought to stimulate the mind and awaken emotion. This course will examine how monsters, mad scientists, and secret identities rose in the public imagination alongside of a rapidly-changing nation. The nineteenth century saw unprecedented growth of industry and leaps in scientific discovery; new and rapid global communication as well as transport; tenuous relationship of commodities, consumers, and economic stability; as well as changing conceptions of class, gender, and what it meant to be an individual.

This course is intended to be an introduction to Victorian literature in a variety of genres, including poetry, the novel, and non-fiction prose by authors such as Robert Browning, Christina Rossetti, Oscar Wilde, Mary Elizabeth Braddon, Bram Stoker, Robert Louis Stevenson, and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

Course Materials ¹

The following texts are required for the course and are available at the college bookstore:

- *Lady Audley's Secret* by Elizabeth Braddon (ISBN: 978-0-14-043584-8)
- *The Hound of the Baskervilles* by Arthur Conan Doyle (ISBN: 978-0-14-043786-7)
- *Goblin Market and Other Poems* by Christina Rossetti (ISBN: 978-0-486-28055-4)
- *Dracula* by Bram Stoker (ISBN: 978-0-14-143984-6)
- *Writing Analytically* by David Rosenwasser and Jill Stephen (ISBN: 978-0-495-91008-4)*
- Additional readings are available on our class website unless otherwise specified in the syllabus.

*There is a copy of *Writing Analytically* on reserve at the library. If you chose it use that copy, you must photocopy the pages assigned for class so that you can have them with you in class.

Course Objectives

As per the English Department's Learning Goals, by the end of this course students will be practiced in:

- 1) the ability to read texts closely in a sensitive way (based on the presence of germane summary, accurate paraphrase, and/or careful attention to patterns and details of language).

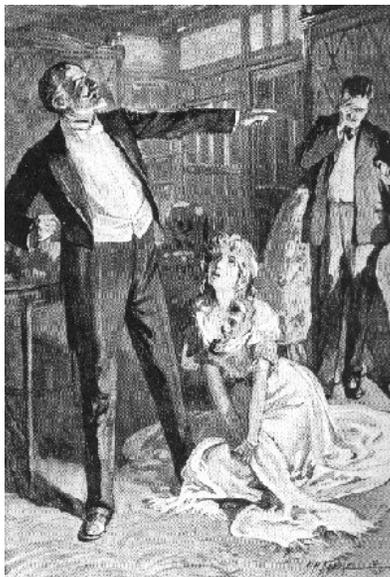
¹ **Content Note:** Some of the texts presented in this course are explicit in their treatment of sex, of bodies, and of violence. Reading and discussing these texts can be demanding in ways that are often unexpected, and your success in this class will require an open engagement with the material. I will make every effort to work with students who have difficulty; however, if you feel you are not inclined or able to work with explicit material, I encourage you to think about other course options.



"Carmilla" by David Henry Friston

2) the understanding of the relationship(s) between text and context in the generation of meaning (“context” to include at least one of the following: portions of a text other than the one under prime examination, other texts, literary genres, history, biography, literary theory).

3) the ability to formulate a powerful critical argument (characterized by an arguable thesis, the convincing marshaling of evidence, and grammatically and mechanically correct prose).



"Lucy! tell me that this man is a madman!"

Lady Audley's Secret; Tinsley Bros. 1862

Class Participation and Attendance:

This class is a workshop/seminar and therefore depends on the participation of its members. Failure to attend undermines the class as a whole. Attendance, therefore, will be a substantial part of your participation grade. You may miss *up to three* class periods without penalty. I do not distinguish between “excused” and “unexcused” absences, so please use these judiciously. If you miss the class for any reason, you are responsible for what went on in the class, including changes of assignments. I will not answer emails asking me to describe what went on in class. You are responsible for contacting one of your classmates to find out what went on, including changes of any assignments. **If you miss more than three classes, for whatever reason, your grade will decrease per missed class.** If you have extenuating circumstances, please contact me as soon as possible.

I also expect you to read the assigned material and prepared to ask questions and offer opinions about it during class. Attendance alone with little or no contribution will only earn you approximately a C in participation. I recognize that some students are hesitant to speak in front of class. If this is the case, please come talk with me during office hours early in the semester.

Requirements and Grading

Beyond participation, your grade will be based on weekly response paper and two more formal papers. The relative weight of each component is as follows:

Attendance and Participation	10%
Midterm Exam	15%
Final Exam	20%
Short Essay	10%
Blog Posts, comments, and other writing	25%
Final Paper	20%

Final letter grades will be assigned in the following way:

A = 93-100	B- = 80-82	D = 60-69
A- = 90-92	C+ = 77-79	F = 0-59
B+ = 87-89	C = 73-76	
B = 83-86	C- = 70-72	

Grade Calculations:

I use an excel worksheet to calculate my grades. If you would like to discuss graded work, please take at least two days to review my comments, along with the grading criteria for the assignment. While I don't negotiate grades, I am happy to discuss strategies for improving your writing.

Extra Credit:

If you attend any Dickinson College screening, workshop, or lecture and write a 1-2 page reflection stating how the event related to this class and what was interesting about it for you, I will award 1 point extra credit. You may complete up to 5 extra credit reflections. These points will be added to your lowest paper grade at the end of the semester. I will reject any reflection I feel is insufficient or unsuitable.

Lateness, Cell Phones, and Other Disruptions:

Please make an effort to be on time. Class begins promptly and if you are more than ten minutes late, I will record you as absent. If you have a reason that may cause you to be late from time to time, please let me know. Please remember to turn OFF all cell phones unless otherwise directed. If you are a student athlete or member of a student group that requires you to miss class for a university-sanctioned event, please let me know as soon as possible.

Electronics:

I do not like for students to use laptops for general note taking in class. Since thoughtful listening and responding will be instrumental to the success of our course, I prefer students not rely on a laptop in class. Of course, there are always exceptions, so please come to speak with me if you might need to use a laptop in class. Tablets for textbooks are fine, as long as you refrain from surfing the web, checking Facebook, etc.

Deadlines:

Deadlines are firm. Unless you have asked for and received prior permission to extend the deadline or you have a signed medical excuse, late assignments will lose one grade increment per day late. I cannot accept assignments more than one week late.

“How can I know what I think until I see what I say?” – E.M. Forster

Blog Posts:

You will complete a number of blog posts over the course of the semester as well as comment on other posts made by your classmates. These posts will be in response to prompts handed out in class or of your own direction. Over the course of the posts, I expect you to engage with the readings and discussions and not simply summarize them. I also expect you to make connections to other sources, media, and class texts so please add quotations, images, links, videos, etc that relate to the week's topics and your interpretation of them. We will explore these skills in class.

Privacy

I request you all create a screenname under which you blog for our class. Part of our class will be trying out new and different perspectives and positions. I recognize that these positions can change and grow; by using screennames we give ourselves the room to experiment. **I am happy to remove any blog posts at the end of the term and/or you may remove your own writing. I ask that you let me know.**

Norman M. Eberly Writing Center:

Writers of all levels and abilities need feedback in order to develop their ideas and grow as writers. Dickinson's trained writing tutors can help you generate ideas, begin drafting, revise a rough draft, figure out your professor's preferred documentation style, understand and respond to professor feedback, edit your writing – among other things. You can walk in or call and make an appointment at (717) 245-1620 (or 245-1767 for foreign language writing). For more information about hours and procedures, visit the web:

<http://www.dickinson.edu/academics/resources/writing-program/content/Writing-Center/>

Academic Integrity

With respect to all assignments in this course, I expect you to do your own work. You are certainly encouraged to discuss course content and readings with your fellow classmates, but your work in papers must be your own. Regarding outside sources, you will need to cite all of your sources. We will discuss ways of doing this before your first paper is due. If you have any questions about what constitutes cheating or plagiarism, please feel free to ask. From Dickinson College's Community Standards:

Respect for ideas — our own and others' — is a hallmark of academic integrity. We show respect by acknowledging when we have used another's words or ideas in our work. We expect others to acknowledge when they use our ideas or words in their work. Students are expected to do their own work on quizzes, papers, examinations, class assignments, etc.

(https://www.dickinson.edu/download/downloads/id/963/community_standards)



Accommodations

I am committed to including all students in this course and am happy to discuss accommodations with students, provided that this conversation happens **early** in the semester and definitely before any papers/projects are due. From Dickinson College's Disability Services:

Dickinson College makes reasonable academic accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Students requesting accommodations must make their request and provide appropriate documentation to the Office of Disability Services (ODS) in Dana Hall, Suite 106. Because classes change every semester, eligible students must obtain a new accommodation letter from Director Marni Jones every semester and review this letter with their professors so the accommodations can be implemented. The Director of ODS is available by appointment to answer questions and discuss any implementation issues you may have. ODS proctoring is managed by Susan Frommer (717-254-8107 or proctoring@dickinson.edu). Address general inquiries to 717-245-1734 or e-mail disabilityservices@dickinson.edu. For more information, go to www.dickinson.edu/ODS.

Other Needs:

If you have a concern or issue regarding this class, your ability to participate in it, or the material we are covering, please stop by my office hours or email me to set up an appointment. The sooner we can talk about your concerns, the better I will be able to help you negotiate a solution.

I am committed to providing equal educational opportunity to all students.

NOTE: The policies, procedures, schedules, and requirements in this syllabus are subject to change— should any occur I will make every effort to give you plenty of notice.

Class Contacts:

If you miss class for ANY reason it is YOUR responsibility to contact another member of the class to see what you may have missed. Please make sure you have at least three contacts:

1. name: _____ cell: _____
2. name: _____ cell: _____
3. name: _____ cell: _____

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NOTE: This COURSE SCHEDULE MAY CHANGE.
Please see our class website for more up-to-date information

Course Schedule: Reading and Writing assignments are due in class on the date they are listed.
(underlined assignments are writing assignments due in class)

Week 1	
M 1/25	~ No Class
W 1/27	~ Class Introduction ~ Robert Browning's "My Last Duchess"
F 1/29	~ complete: <u>Writing Questionnaire</u> ~ Read Coleridge's "Christabel"
Week 2	
M 2/1	~ read pp 23-25 in <i>Writing Analytically</i> ~ read <i>Lady Audley's Secret</i> , chapters: 1-2
W 2/3	~ read pp 26-32 in <i>Writing Analytically</i> ("The Method") ~ read <i>Lady Audley's Secret</i> , chapters: 3-6
F 2/5	~ read <i>Lady Audley's Secret</i> , chapters: 7-13 ~ <u>blog post#1 due: Group A</u>
Week 3	
M 2/8	~ read <i>Lady Audley's Secret</i> , chapters: 14-18 ~ <u>Comments due: Group B</u>
W 2/10	~ read <i>Lady Audley's Secret</i> , chapters: ~ <i>Writing Analytically</i> , pp 94-99, "Reformulating Binaries"
F 2/12	~ read <i>Lady Audley's Secret</i> , chapters: ~ <u>blog post#1 due: Group B</u>
Week 4	
M 2/15	~ read <i>Lady Audley's Secret</i> , chapters: 8- end of vol II ~ <u>Comments- Group A</u>
W 2/17	~ read <i>Lady Audley's Secret</i> , chapters: 1-3 of vol III ~ <i>Writing Analytically</i> pp 5-10
F 2/19	~ read <i>Lady Audley's Secret</i> , chapters: 4-7 of vol III ~ <u>Blog Post #2- Group A</u>

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Week 5	
M 2/22	~ finish <i>Lady Audley's Secret</i> ~ Comments- Group B
W 2/24	<i>The Hound of the Baskervilles</i> (chaps 1-5)
F 2/26	<i>The Hound of the Baskervilles</i> (chaps 6-9) ~ Blog Post #2- Group B
Week 6	
M 2/29	<i>The Hound of the Baskervilles</i> (finish ~ Comments- Group A
W 3/2	~ article on <i>The Hound of the Baskervilles</i> TBA
F 3/4	<i>The Hound of the Baskervilles</i>
Week 7	
M 3/7	Midterm Review
W 3/9	Midterm Exam
F 3/11	TBA
Week 8	SPRING BREAK
Week 9	
M 3/21	~ <i>Dracula</i> ; chapters 1-3
W 3/23	~ <i>Dracula</i> ; chapters 4-7
F 3/25	~ <i>Dracula</i> ; chapters 8-10 ~ Blog Post #3- Group A
Week 10	
M 3/28	~ <i>Dracula</i> ; chapters 11-13 ~ Comments on post #3- Group B

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W 3/30	~ <i>Dracula</i> ; chapters 14-16 ~ <i>Writing Analytically</i> : "Reasoning from Evidence and Claims" (165-189)
F 4/1	~ <i>Dracula</i> ; chapters 17-19 ~ Blog Post #3- Group B
Week 11	
M 4/4	~ <i>Dracula</i> ; chapters 20-22 ~ Comments on post #3- Group A
W 4/6	~ <i>Dracula</i> ; chapters 23-25 ~ <i>Writing Analytically</i> : "Making a Thesis Evolve" (223-236, 261-263)
F 4/8	~ <i>Dracula</i> ; finish novel ~ Blog Post #4- Group A
Week 12	
M 4/11	~ Comments on post #4- Group B ~ read Emily Gerard's "Transylvanian Superstitions" (handout) ~ section of article "The Occidental Tourist: <i>Dracula</i> and the Anxiety of Reverse Colonization" (handout)
W 4/13	~read Christina Rossetti's "Goblin Market" (pp 1-16) ~ <i>Writing Analytically</i> : "Paraphrase X 3" (36-39)
F 4/15	~ read Christina Rossetti's "A Triad," "Echo," "No Thank you, John'," "A Pause of Thought," and "The World" ~ Blog Post #4- Group B
Week 13	
M 4/18	~ article on poetry (TBA) ~ Comments on post #4- Group A
W 4/20	~ Alfred Tennyson's " The Lady of Shalott "
F 4/22	~ John Keat's " La Belle Dam San Merci " ~ Blog Post #5- Groups A and B
Week 14	
M 4/25	~ Robert Louis Stevenson's <i>The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde</i> ; pp 1-21 ("The Story of the Door" through "Incident of the Letter")
W 4/27	~ finish <i>The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde</i>

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F 4/29	~ peer review for final paper (Prompt TBA)
Week 15	
M 5/2	~ article on <i>The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde</i> (TBA)
W 5/4	~ TBA
F 5/6	~ Final paper Due
Tues 5/10	~ Final Exam