

Late 19th Century British Literature & Culture: Aesthetes, Libertines, & Dandies

English 341-03: Dickinson College, Fall 2023
M/R 3:00-4:15; East College 301
Class website: www.blogs.dickinson.edu/britishlit

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Office Hours: Tuesday 2:00-3:00,

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Course Description

The fin de siècle—French for ‘the end of the century’— is a period of literature and culture that has been portrayed as being “caught between two ages, the Victorian and the Modern” (Ledger and Luckhurst). This in between period is perhaps known best for its cry of “art for art’s sake” and the suggestion that morality is relative. Because it usually is characterized by decadence and questions of immorality, the end of the nineteenth century is too often overlooked as a period of enormous technological, political, social, and intellectual change in British literary and cultural life. In this course, we will examine literature, and art more broadly, in the context of discourses on urban problems, ‘The New Woman,’ imperialism and socialism, as well as place it in conversation with a number of developments in science, psychology, and sexology.

We will read a range of different works of fiction, drama, and poetry by authors such as Oscar Wilde, Michael Field, Mona Caird, H.G. Wells, George Bernard Shaw, Bram Stoker, and William Morris.

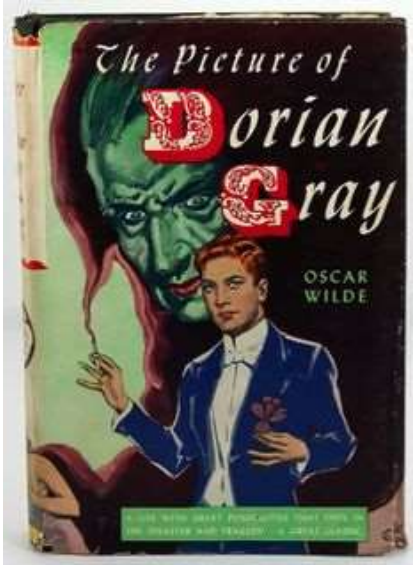
Course Materials¹

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

- *Six Great Sherlock Holmes Stories* by Arthur Conan Doyle (ISBN 978-0-486-27055-5)
- *Dracula* by Bram Stoker (ISBN- 978-0-14-143984-6)
- *Late Victorian Gothic Tales* (ISBN: 978-0-19-953887-4)
- *The Romance of a Shop* by Amy Levy (ISBN: 978-1-55111-566-5)
- *Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde (ISBN: 978-0-14-143957-0)
- Additional readings are available on our class website unless otherwise specified in the syllabus.
- **Recommended: Writing Analytically, 8th ed.* by David Rosenwasser and Jill Stephen
- *Other readings will be available via our class website*

*There is a copy of *Writing Analytically* on reserve at the library and PDFs on our class website. If you choose to use that copy, you must photocopy the pages assigned for class so that you can have them with you in class.

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.



Attendance and Participation

Preparation, attendance, and participation are crucial to this course and your success in it.

This class will be heavily discussion based 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. However, if you feel sick please **DO NOT** come to class. 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 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 thoughts 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 and we can create a participation strategy.

Just showing up for class, however, is not enough to guarantee a high participation grade. Your participation grade will be calculated based on the following criteria:

- You come to class having done the day's reading.
- You prompt discussion and/or respond to your peers when asked.
- You enter the conversation without dominating or silencing others.
- You offer more than just personal opinion or anecdote – that is, you root your comments in the text we are discussing. (In other words, people who try to comment on things they have not read will lose points.)
- You attend peer review sessions with a complete rough draft.
- You work collaboratively with people to achieve learning goals when you are placed in a small group.
- You do your best to be present and engaged in every class. This means preparing for each class meeting, joining class meetings with your video feed active, and following along so you are ready to participate when asked.

In addition, if extenuating circumstances arise that are interfering with your ability to attend and/or participate in this class or others, let me know. Dickinson has many resources available to you that might help you navigate a challenging a time or situation and I can help you locate those resources. As a general rule of thumb, if you are struggling in some way, let me know.

Papers & Other Writing

We will practice the writing process in this class including, but not limited to: in-class writing, oral prewriting/brainstorming, low-stakes writing, and blog posts, as well as more formal papers and drafts. All papers (first and final versions) must be word-processed and meet standard format practices (in Word please double-spaced, 12 point font, pages numbered in the right hand corner, title and name on first page, and date of submission OR on the blog please follow prompt directions). Throughout the paper, the citations and documentation style should be consistent. Late papers will be penalized one full letter grade.

Evaluation Policies for Writing Assignments

In general, I will evaluate your writing by considering how well you have achieved the following goals (developed by the Writing Program):

1. The author crafts an introduction that identifies a question, frames the question, and states a thesis.
2. The author organizes the writing, demonstrates a progression of ideas, and maintains a consistent focus or thread.
3. The author contextualizes the question and supports it with evidence.
4. The author sustains analytical inquiry throughout the assignment.
5. The author effectively incorporates relevant outside information.
6. The author engages the intended audience with a consistent, distinctive voice appropriate to the task.
7. The author adheres to appropriate standards for language use.
8. The author conforms to appropriate formats for citation of source material.

Requirements and Grading

Beyond participation, your grade will be based on regular short writing assignments as well as a prospectus and annotated bibliography, and a final paper (of about 8-10 pages). The relative weight of each component is as follows:

Attendance and Participation	10%
Blog Posts, Comments, and other short writing	45%
Annotated Bib and Prospectus	20%
Final Paper	25 %

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	

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 what the event was and what was interesting about it for you, I will award extra credit. You may complete up to 5 extra credit reflections. These points will be added in 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 silence 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.

Deadlines:

Deadlines are firm. Unless you have asked for and received prior permission to extend the deadline or you have extraneous, extenuating circumstances.

Physical Access to Our Classroom & to My Office

Our classroom is located on the 3rd floor of East College and my office is located on the 4th floor of East College. East College has an elevator, located in NW the corner of the building closest to Stern and Old West. If you require the use of an elevator to access either our classroom or my office, please let me know. If there is ever a malfunction with the elevator, I will gladly arrange to meet you at an alternative location or via Zoom.

Electronics:

- This class may be recorded for accommodation purposes
- Laptop use needs permission from the instructor (a quick email or question at the beginning of class is just fine)
- Tablets for textbooks are fine, as long as you refrain from surfing the web, etc.

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

Blog Posts and Privacy

I request you all create a screen name 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 without fear that our experiments will come back to hurt us through future google searches. Please know that our screennames give us some privacy, but that they are not completely anonymous within our classroom. **I am happy to remove any blog posts at the end of the term and/or you may remove your own writing. I simply ask that you let me know before you do so.**

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. Make appointments online here: <https://dickinson.mywconline.com/>. For more information about hours and procedures, visit the writing center’s website.



*Cover image of
Michael Field's Works
and Days*

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.

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 ADS:

“Dickinson values diverse types of learners and is committed to ensuring that each student is afforded equitable access to participate in all learning experiences. If you have (or think you may have) a learning

difference or a disability – including a mental health, medical, or physical impairment – that would hinder your access to learning or demonstrating knowledge in this class, please contact Access and Disability Services (ADS). They will confidentially explain the accommodation request process and the type of documentation that Dean and Director Marni Jones will need to determine your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. To learn more about available supports, go to www.dickinson.edu/ADS, email access@dickinson.edu, call (717) 245-1734, or go to the ADS office in Room 005 of Old West, Lower Level (aka "the OWLL").

If you've already been granted accommodations at Dickinson, please follow the guidance at www.dickinson.edu/AccessPlan for disclosing the accommodations for which you are eligible and scheduling a meeting with me as soon as possible so that we can discuss your accommodations and finalize your Access Plan. If test proctoring will be needed from ADS, remember that we will need to complete your Access Plan in time to give them at least one week's advance notice."

Other Needs and Additional Resources:

If you have a concern or issue regarding this class, your ability to participate in it, or the material we are covering, please come to my virtual 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.** Please note I do not usually check email after 5:00 pm or on weekends. I am committed to providing equal educational opportunity to all students.

- Learning and Study Skills at Dickinson: www.dickinson.edu/LearningSkills
- Online Writing Lab (for citations, etc): <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>

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: _____

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.

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NOTE: This COURSE SCHEDULE MAY CHANGE.

Please see our class website for more up-to-date information

Class website: <http://blogs.dickinson.edu/everythinginbetween/> (password: Kersh)

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

Week 1

M 8/28

~ Class Introduction

R 8/31

~ Ledger and Luckhurst's introduction to *The Fin de Siècle: A Reader in Cultural History, c. 1880-1900* (handout) *Note: read this text imagining that it is the introduction to our class. Bring with you 3 points you find interesting, revealing, or strange.

~ *Writing Analytically*, 8th ed Chapter 1 pp 10-21

Week 2

M 9/4

~ read poems by Amy Levy, Arthur Symons, and John Gray (handout) *come ready with three points in the poems that connect with the reading by Ledger and Luckhurst (in other words, if L&L describe the fin de siècle, then how do these poems fit that description?)

~ introductory material from *The Longman Anthology of British Literature: The Victorian Era* (handout)

R 9/7

~ *Dracula* (chapters 1-3)

~ complete: **Writing Questionnaire**

Week 3

M 9/11

~ *Dracula* (chapters 4-9)

~ read Emily Gerard's "Transylvanian Superstitions" (handout)

R 9/14

~ *Dracula* (chapters 10-14)

~ **blog post#1 due**

Week 4

M 9/18

~ *Dracula* (chapters 15-19)

~ read excerpt from Eve Sedgwick's *Between Men* (handout)

R 9/21

~ Read *Dracula* (chapters 20-24)

~ **Comment on at least 2 of your peers' blog posts.** Comments should be about 75-100 words and work to make connections across posts or to other moments in the book.

Week 5

M 9/25

~ *Dracula* (chapters 25-end)

~ read your assigned article from the Norton Critical edition (Senf, Moretti, or Craft)

R 9/28

~ Amy Levy, *Romance of a Shop*; chaps I-VII~ **blog post #2 due****Week 6**

M 10/2

~ Amy Levy, *Romance of a Shop*; chaps VIII-XV

~ TBA critical article

R 10/5

~ Amy Levy, *Romance of a Shop*; chaps XVI-end~ **Comment on at least 2 of your peers' blog posts.** *Comments should be about 75-100 words and work to make connections across posts or to other moments in the book.***Week 7**

M 10/9

~ Conan Doyle's "A Scandal in Bohemia" and "The Adventure of the Empty House" in *Six Great Sherlock Holmes Stories*

R 10/12

~ read Vernon Lee's "Dionea" in *Late Victorian Gothic Tales*~ Read/watch the video on the British Library's website: [Gothic Motifs](#)~ **blog post #3 due****Week 8**

M 10/16 – FALL PAUSE; no class

R 10/19

~ read Jean Lorrain's "Magic Lantern" and B. M. Croker's "The Dak Bungalow at Dakor" in *Late Victorian Gothic Tales***Week 9**

M 10/23

~ Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (chapters 1-3)

R 10/26

~ *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (chapters 4-8)~ **blog post #4 due****Week 10**

M 10/30

~ *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (chapters 9-13)

~ read Mona Caird "On Marriage" (handout)

R 11/2

~ *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (chapters 14-end)~ **Comment on at least 2 of your peers' blog posts.** *Comments should be about 75-100 words and work to make connections across posts or to other moments in the book*

Week 11

M 11/6

~ Michael Field: read “about” and *Sight and Song* volume through “Venus and Mars” (Access the poems here: <https://michaelfield.dickinson.edu/>)

~ These additional pages might be useful as you read: Key to names in the MF diaries and letters and Contemporary Reception of MF (handouts)

R 11/9

~ finish volume of *Sight and Song*

~ read Michael Field additional information including introduction, selections from diaries, selected letters, and review of *Sight and Song* (handout)

~ **blog post #5 Due**

Week 12

M 11/13

~ read Swinburne, Gray, Beardsley, and Raffolovich poetry (handout)

R 11/16

~ read John Addington Symonds poetry (handout)

~ read Havelock Ellis essay on Symonds (handout)

~ **Comment on at least 2 of your peers' blog posts.** *Comments should be about 75-100 words and work to make connections across posts or to other moments in the book*

Week 13

M 11/20

~ **In-class Peer Review: prospectus and source analysis**

R 11/23

No Class- Thanksgiving

Week 14

M 11/27

~ Jean Lorrain's “The Spectral Hand” and Rudyard Kipling's “The Mark of the Beast” in *Late Victorian Gothic Tales*

R 11/30

~ **prospectus and source analysis due**

Week 15

M 12/4

~ final class wrap up

R 12/7

~ **In-class Peer Review: Final Paper**

Final Paper Due with Writer's Memo Due: by 12:00pm on Friday, December 15th