

# Monsters & Madness: Secret Lives in Victorian Literature

English 101-01: Dickinson College, Fall 2021

T/R 10:30-11:45, Denny 203

Class website: [www.blogs.dickinson.edu/secretlives](http://www.blogs.dickinson.edu/secretlives)

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Office Hours: 1-2 Wed, 11:30-12:30 Fri, and by appt  
Zoom [link](#) and ID: 486 206 4937 (Passcode: zt85F2)  
Office phone: 717-254-8952

## 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.



*The Lady of Shalott (1888) by John William Waterhouse*

## Course Materials \*

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)
- *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson (ISBN: 978-0486266886)
- Additional readings are available on our class website unless otherwise specified in the syllabus.
- *Writing Analytically*, 8<sup>th</sup> ed by David Rosenwasser and Jill Stephen (ISBN: 978-1337559461)\*. If you have another edition, it is imperative you let me know.

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

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\* **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.

## Course Objectives

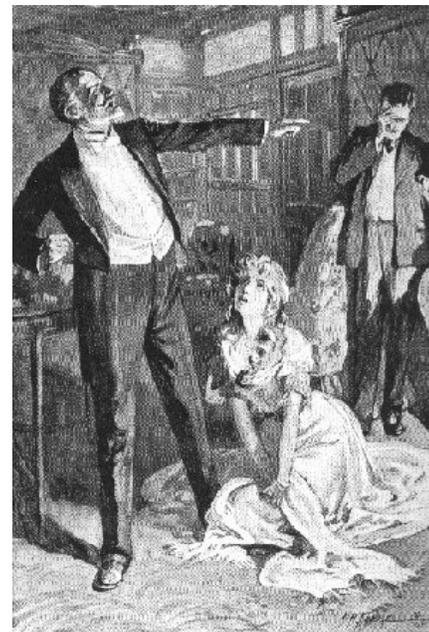
As per the English Department's Learning Goals, by the end of this course students will be practiced in:

- 1) 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).
- 2) understand 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) formulate a powerful critical argument (characterized by an arguable thesis, the convincing marshaling of evidence, and grammatically and mechanically correct prose).

## Class Participation and Attendance:

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 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 and we can create a participation strategy.



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

## Requirements and Grading

Beyond participation, your grade will be based on semi-weekly response papers, a final paper, and two exams. The relative weight of each component is as follows:

Attendance and Participation	10%
Midterm Exam	15%
Final Exam	20%
Blog Posts, comments, and other in-class writing	35%
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	

### **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.

### **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 and therefore your grade.

### **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 final exam 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:**

- This class may be recorded for accommodation purposes
- Laptop use is by permission only
- 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:**

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.

### **Screenames:**

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

### **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](http://www.dickinson.edu/ADS), email [access@dickinson.edu](mailto: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](http://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.”

### **Physical Accessibility**

My office is located on the fourth floor of East College, which has an elevator, located in the Classics department. Our classroom is located on the second floor of Denny Hall which has an elevator accessible through the entrance closest to the Social Justice House on West St. If there is ever a malfunction with the elevator, please let me know and I will gladly arrange an alternative location or meet on Zoom.

### **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.



## Monsters & Madness: Secret Lives in Victorian Literature Schedule

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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.  
(red assignments are writing assignments due in class)

### 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 on how to prepare for readings. I will begin *most* classes by simply asking for this information:

- 1) For literary readings come ready with 2-3 passages you think are interesting, revealing, or strange. Mark these in your text and be ready to talk about *why* you chose the passage. These passages will become the basis of our class discussion *and* will appear on our exams. I suggest having a notebook that keeps track of these passages and thoughts.
- 2) For *Writing Analytically* reading come ready to talk about 1-2 tips/tools/tricks that the reading offered to help improve your writing, reading, or thinking.

### Week 1

#### **August 31**

~Class Introduction

#### **September 2**

~ complete: **Writing Questionnaire** (emailed to me)

~ pp 1-16 and p36 in Chapter 1 of *Writing Analytically*

~ Robert Browning's "My Last Duchess" (handout)

## **Week 2**

### **September 7**

- ~ pp 16-32 in Chapter 1 of *Writing Analytically*
- ~ *Lady Audley's Secret*, Vol I; chapters: 1-6 (39p)

### **September 9**

- ~ *Lady Audley's Secret*, Vol I; chapters: 7-13 (54p)
- ~ **Blog Post #1**

## **Week 3**

### **September 14**

- ~ *Lady Audley's Secret*, Vol I; chapters: 14-19 (51p)
- ~ *Writing Analytically*, Chapter 1 pp 16-21 "Notice and Focus"
- ~ **2 Blog Comments**

### **September 16**

- ~ *Lady Audley's Secret*, Vol II; chapters: 1-7 (54p)
- ~ also read your assigned section from the *Longman Anthology* (handout)

## **Week 4**

### **September 21**

- ~ *Lady Audley's Secret*, Vol II chapters: 8- end of vol II (79p)
- ~ *Writing Analytically* Chapter 1, pp 20-32 "Asking So What" and "The Method"
- ~ **Blog Post #2**

### **September 23**

- ~ *Lady Audley's Secret*, Vol III, chapters: 1-6 of vol III (83p)

## **Week 5**

### **September 28**

- ~ finish *Lady Audley's Secret*
- ~ *WA* Chapter 2 pp 38-47 "How to Write a Critique" and "Focus on Individual Sentences"
- ~ **2 Blog Comments**

### **September 30**

- ~ Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, chapters 1-8 (77p)

## **Week 6**

### **October 5**

- ~ *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, chapters 9- end (83p)
- ~ Greg Buzwell's online article on *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (<https://www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/articles/an-introduction-to-the-hound-of-the-baskervilles>)

### **October 7**

- ~ Wilkie Collins' "A Terribly Strange Bed" (handout)
- ~ *WA* Chapter 4, pp98-115 "Responding to Traditional Writing Assignments More Analytically"
- ~ in-class writing TBA

## Week 7

### **October 12**

- ~ Arthur Conan Doyle's "The Adventure of the Speckled Band" (handout)
- ~ exam review

### **October 14**

- ~ **First Exam**

## Week 8

### **October 19 – FALL PAUSE**

### **October 21**

- ~ Bram Stoker's *Dracula*; chapters 1- 6 (64p)
- ~ WA Chapter 6, pp 148-153 "Reasoning from Evidence to Claims"

## Week 9

### **October 26**

- ~ *Dracula*; chapters 7-10 (72p)
- ~ **Blog Post #3**

### **October 28**

- ~ *Dracula*; chapters 11-15 (79p)

## Week 10

### **November 2**

- ~ *Dracula*; chapters 16-20 (71p)
- ~ WA: chapter 7, pp 205-212 "How to Word Thesis Statements"
- ~ **2 Blog Comments**

### **November 4**

- ~ *Dracula*; chapters 21-24 (57p)

## Week 11

### **November 9**

- ~ *Dracula*; chapters 25- end (66p)
- ~ **Blog Post #4**

### **November 11**

- ~ Emily Gerard's "Transylvanian Superstitions" (handout)
- ~ section of article "The Occidental Tourist" (handout)

## Week 12

### **November 16**

- ~ Christina Rossetti's "Goblin Market" (pp 1-16) as well as "A Triad," "Echo," "No Thank you, John'," "A Pause of Thought," and "The World" (pp18, 28, 30, 32, 45)
- ~ WA: chapter 3, pp78-84 "Implications Versus Hidden Meanings"

### **November 18**

- ~ John Keats' "La Belle Dame San Merci" (handout)
- ~ Alfred Tennyson's "The Lady of Shalott" (handout)
- ~ read again *Writing Analytically* Chapter 4, pp108-111

~ Watch the short video on “Gender 19th-Century Britain” (<https://www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/videos/gender-in-19th-century-britain>)

### **Week 13**

#### **November 23**

~ Robert Louis Stevenson’s *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*; pp 1-21 (“The Story of the Door” through “Incident of the Letter”)

~ 2 Blog Comments \*\*Comments should be about 75-100 words and connect something in your peer’s post to either one of the poems we have read OR *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. Use your ability to notice similarity across difference or difference across similarity. See Blog #4 Prompt

#### **November 25 – THANKSGIVING BREAK**

### **Week 14**

#### **November 30**

~ finish *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*

~ exam review

#### **December 2**

~ **Second Exam**

### **Week 15**

#### **December 7**

~ last class/wrap up

~ WA, Chapter 10, pp 273-281 “What Introductions and Conclusions Do”

#### **December 9**

~ **in-class peer review for final paper**

**Final Paper Due: Wednesday, December 15<sup>th</sup> by 5:00 p.m.**