

ENG 334 7-2018/19  
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Class Location: VEL  
Office: South 203  
Office Hours: Mon & Wed  
1:00-2:30, or by appt.

## ENG 333 - Victorian Literature

### Charles Dickens and 19<sup>th</sup> Century Book Production

Charles Dickens's novel *Bleak House* was originally published serially in 19 monthly installments from March 1852 through Sept. 1853, the last being a double-issue. We will read this novel together in parts, but whereas the Victorians had to wait one month for the next installment, we get to "binge," waiting only 24 hours or less.

While reflecting on how the Victorians encountered novels, students will also learn about 19<sup>th</sup>-century book production, a subfield of English that has been invigorated paradoxically by today's cultural saturation of digital media. Dickens' immersion in book production and reception make him a perfect touchstone for this study: he was not only a novelist but also worked during his lifetime as a parliamentary reporter, legal transcriber, journalist, critic, and journal editor, and he worked closely with publishers, printers and illustrators.

Finally, students will build on their understanding of nineteenth-century novels and of printing practices by reading George Gissing's 1891 novel *New Grub Street* alongside *Bleak House*. Gissing was influenced by and admired Dickens, and his novel's themes overlap with those of *Bleak House*, but Gissing's perspective and style as a late-century novelist also differ significantly. Throughout the term, course readings will also include supplementary non-fiction pieces, which will be made available on Moodle.

**Class Format and Expectations** The course format will largely be discussion-based, so consistent attendance and participation (including active listening and note-taking as well as speaking) are crucial to success. Students will do both informal and formal writing, present a scholarly article, take responsibility for contributing questions to class discussion, and will participate in a group project. Hands-on learning activities may include typesetting, letterpress printing, and bookbinding.

### Learning Objectives

This course's learning objectives support Cornell's educational priorities and outcomes (EOP's), particularly those related to Inquiry, Reasoning, and Communication. Students will also gain practice in effective collaboration (Citizenship), and will reflect on cultural differences between past and present (Intercultural Literacy).

- Acquire general historical knowledge of nineteenth-century English novels, and more specific knowledge of novelists Dickens and Gissing [Knowledge].
- Explore 19<sup>th</sup>-century English book production and reflect on relationships among
  - publishers, authors, editors, illustrators, printers, readers and critics;
  - literary form and reading trends;
  - intellectual property and the literary marketplace. [Inquiry]
- Develop critical reading, research, speaking and writing skills [Reasoning, Communication]

See <http://www.cornellcollege.edu/about-cornell/mission/> for further information about Cornell's EOP's.

### Contacts

Me: I can be reached most easily by email ([mmouton@cornellcollege.edu](mailto:mmouton@cornellcollege.edu)).

Writing Studio and Cole Library: The Writing Studio is located on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of Cole Library. I highly recommend consultations on papers, at any stage in your writing process. You can call or stop in for an appointment. I also encourage you to consult with the Humanities Research Consultant, Jen Rouse, as needed. Her office is also located in Cole Library, and her email address is [jrouse@cornellcollege.edu](mailto:jrouse@cornellcollege.edu).

### Required Texts

Charles Dickens, *Bleak House*

George Gissing, *New Grub Street*

Assorted Readings on Moodle and on the Internet

Recommended: MLA Handbook

### Required Assignments

See assignment sheets for details. All assignments must be completed to obtain a passing grade.

In-Class Participation and Daily Reading Checks: Students are expected to contribute to meaningful discussion of the material, to contribute on a rotating basis by sharing insights from examining the original publication, and to do informal in-class writing daily. I will facilitate what I hope will be lively discussions. To motivate you to read carefully and fully in preparation for class, I may also implement reading quizzes without further warning.

Close Reading: A three-four page paper that explicates (or unpacks) a particularly knotty passage from Dickens's or Gissing's novel.

Article Presentations: A presentation to the class of a pre-approved scholarly article or book-chapter related to the course content.

Final Paper: A six-seven page paper on Dickens or Gissing's novel based primarily on analysis of the novel but which also uses research to frame the argument.

Group Project: A creative project that uses hands-on letterpress activities to produce a broadsheet.

## Course Policies

### Grading

I'll grade written work will be graded holistically according to the general rubric below:

"A" = thoughtful, clear and in-depth analysis of the text with little or no summary, highly convincing and memorable presentation of ideas, clear and careful organization, smooth and concise writing with very few or no errors; meets standard genre expectations;

"B" = solid development of ideas, well-reasoned, good organization, relevant evidence, generally good writing with few errors; meets standard genre expectations;

"C" = presentation of ideas is adequate but still sketchy in some places, organization is not always clear, writing is rough in a number of places (major and minor writing errors), may rely too heavily on summary; mostly meets genre expectations but unevenly;

"D" = incomplete development of ideas, unproved assertions, unclear organization, many errors in writing; fails to meet genre expectations

"F" = undeveloped ideas, little or no organization, lack of focus, multiple mechanical errors in writing (e.g., poor grammar, inappropriate choice of words, misspellings, etc.).

Attendance: You'll have a better experience in this course if you attend regularly and participate constructively. For any absence after two missed class periods I will deduct ½ letter grade from your final grade. More than three missed class periods may be grounds for failure. Perfect attendance will work in your favor should your final grade be borderline. I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences, but if you know you will need to miss in advance, please make me aware of this.

Letter grades will be converted to number grades based on these equivalencies: A=95, A-=92, B+=88, B=85, B-=82, C+=78, and so forth. Your final grade will be roughly based on these percentages, though I may take improvement into account. Again, note that all assignments must be completed and submitted in order to pass the course.

Participation, Preparation, and Contributions to the Class's Learning (20%)

Close Reading (20%)

Article Presentations (15%)

Final Paper (25%)

Group Project (20%)

Technology: (1) Cell phones must be turned completely off during class. (2) I will respond to your emails within a 24-hour period, and request that you do the same. Before emailing me, please consider whether your question can be answered with reference to the syllabus, or whether it can wait until class time on the following day. (3) If you intend to

use power-point or some other technology in class, e.g. for a presentation or in leading a discussion, ensure that it is ready to go by the start of class time by coming to class and getting it set up early. Otherwise, no laptops in the classroom with the exception of pre-arranged accommodations.

Deadlines: I typically will not accept late papers, and reading quizzes held at the start of class cannot be made up. If you cannot meet a deadline, it will be excused only if I consider your reason to be a true emergency (such as a necessary hospital stay), or if I have approved an extension several days in advance.

Student Health and Counseling Center: College can be stressful on any number of levels. If you find yourself distracted or unmotivated, or a personal issue is undermining your academic success, take advantage of the on-campus counseling center to talk it through. This is a great resource and you don't have to be on the brink of disaster to benefit from their services. (If you do feel that you're on the brink of disaster, that's all the more reason to see them early.) You might even think of it as an "adjunct" course, only the subject is (how great is this?) YOU, and you get full attention of the instructor! Ph: 319-895-4234 for appointment, open M-F 8am-4pm; 24-hour crisis intervention services (provided by Foundation 2 Crisis Center) at 319-362-2174.

Learning Disabilities and Accommodations: Cornell College makes reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities. Students should notify the Coordinator of Academic Support and Advising and their course instructor of any disability related accommodations within the first three days of the term for which the accommodations are required, due to the fast pace of the block format. For more information on the documentation required to establish the need for accommodations and the process of requesting the accommodations, see <http://www.cornellcollege.edu/academic-support-and-advising/disabilities/index.shtml>.

Maintaining Academic Integrity: Cornell College expects all members of the Cornell community to act with academic integrity. An important aspect of academic integrity is respecting the work of others. A student is expected to explicitly acknowledge ideas, claims, observations, or data of others, unless generally known. When a piece of work is submitted for credit, a student is asserting that the submission is her or his work unless there is a citation of a specific source. If there is no appropriate acknowledgement of sources, whether intended or not, this may constitute a violation of the College's requirement for honesty in academic work and may be treated as a case of academic dishonesty. The procedures regarding how the College deals with cases of academic dishonesty appear in *The Compass*, our student handbook, under the heading "Academic Policies – Honesty in Academic Work."

### **Schedule: Readings, Assignments (a work in progress)**

Class meets from 9-11 M-F, and additionally from 1-3 on T and Th. Typically, morning class will be formatted as a discussion class focusing on the novel, while afternoon sessions will include

discussion of articles and printing workshops. Students should reserve Friday afternoons from 1-3 for additional workshops as needed.

### **Week One**

Monday, 2/12	Introductions: The Nineteenth-Century Novel, and Charles Dickens
Tuesday, 2/13	BH, installment 1, 2; 901-906 (pollution) Article: Victorian Serial Novels (Moodle)
Wednesday, 2/14	BH, inst. 3 NGS, ch. 1-4
Thursday, 2/15	BH, inst. 4 NGS, ch. 5, 6 Due: Close Reading (1:00 PM)
Friday, 2/16	BH, inst. 5 NGS, ch. 7, 8 Due: Close Reading (5 PM)

### **Week Two**

Monday, 2/19	BH, insts. 6, 7 NGS, ch. 9, 10
Tuesday, 2/20	BH, inst. 8 NGS, ch. 11, 12, 13 Due: Research Articles
Wednesday, 2/21	BH, inst. 9 NGS, ch. 14, 15
Thursday, 2/22	BH, inst. 10 NGS, ch. 16, 17 Due: Research Articles
Friday, 2/23	BH, inst. 11 NGS, ch. 18, 19

### **Week Three**

Monday, 2/26	BH, inst. 12, 13 NGS, chs, 20-24
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Tuesday, 2/27      BH, inst. 14  
NGS, ch. 25, 26  
Due: Final Papers, draft 1:00 PM

Wednesday, 2/28      BH, inst. 15  
NGS, ch. 27, 28

Thursday, 3/01      BH, inst. 16  
NGS, ch. 29, 30  
Due: Final Papers, draft 1:00 PM

Friday, 3/02      BH, inst. 17  
NGS, ch. 31, 32  
Due: Final Papers, Sat. at Noon.

**Week Four**

Monday, 3/05      BH, inst. 18, 19  
NGS, chs. 33-35

Tuesday, 3/06      BH, inst. 20  
NGS, to end

Wednesday, 3/07      Due: Group Projects Due at Noon