

Title: Victorian Research Seminar Outline Week Thirteen

Authors: Katie Paulson and Leila Selchaif

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Week 13 Outline

Search Tools and Theory

- Ana (Rosenberg)
- Aly (Underwood)
- (Leary)
 - how can we update this? Think about accessibility vs net-neutrality, think about alternatives to word search, like keyword tagging on JSTOR and neural networks
- Have Rebecca talk about her search practices in her seminar paper

Search Practice in LAS

Robert Audley's Brief

- Pseudo-legal research: institutionalization of knowledge
- Compare with Dr. Mosgrave: acting professionally but also lawyeristically

How are systems of knowledge used by different classes/individuals?

- Katie's seminar paper: look at servants and panopticism
- Servants traffic information within the story; Robert Audley acts diegetically.
- Compare Phoebe to Luke: she is the model, loyal servant and she shares information; he is ungrateful and he holds the secret: without Luke there is no story
- What is the effect of this story being unravelled by Robert Audley?
- both impersonal because of his nature and relation but also deeply passionate because it comes from the heart and is unusual for him
- Robert Audley info management techniques?
- Information as a facet of the novel: how does the rollout of information offer opportunities to look at the story from a variety of perspectives (or not?)

The Secret

- What is it?
- Elaine Showalter famously argued, “Lady Audley’s real secret is that she is sane, and, moreover, representative”
- The novel’s moral priorities: murder is downplayed, female madness exaggerated, bigamy as a buzzword
- What/when did Lady Audley do wrong? Are you pro- or anti-Lady Audley? Is she sympathetic?

Women and Insanity

- Historical context: expectation of domesticity, prevalence of asylums
- Monstrous beauty (cf. Hetty Sorrel)
- See Rebecca’s seminar paper of demoniac aspects

Comparisons

- Emma’s close reading: Phoebe’s resemblance to Lady Audley
- What do we make of Phoebe being a pale Lady Audley?
 - what implications are there that the novel does not fully realize?
- Amy’s close reading: Alicia’s opposition to Lady Audley
- What do we get from these comparisons?
- Lady Audley as more like Phoebe than Alicia, revealing her as an imposter in her house?
- Robert Audley’s opposition to Lady Audley
- He is lymphatic (even-tempered), she is maniacal (feverish)
- He is honest, she is lying.
- Why are there so many comparisons that center around Lady Audley? Can she be a character defined on her own? Is she playing a character, or is she herself?
- Think about honesty: Why is Robert Audley so honest towards Lady Audley? Especially because he decides to hide her murder from everyone else and ultimately circumvents the law?
- How does Lady Audley deal with dishonesty? She lives a lie, but she uses the truth (see: telling Sir Michael that Robert thinks she’s a murdered George Talboys)

The gay/homosocial

- Robert and George (Robert choosing Clara because she's basically George)
- Luke's sympathy, misogyny, and secret keeping
- Contrast to lack of close relationships between women
 - lack of emotional connection, largely economic system

Sensation novel as genre

Tristan's close reading: the upper class is not immune from crime

- Genre as challenging realist fiction—or a suspicious reading of realist fiction?
- Look at the opening paragraphs: why does it begin this way?
- Is the novel realistic? Compare to *Hard Cash* and *OMF* (both of which include sensational elements)
 - think about this piecemeal. Alicia exits the sensationalism and enters realism. How else are characters and treatments shifting between style?
- As challenging the middle class and embodying middle class fears
- Criticism of sensation novels (Katie)
- Sensational depictions of insanity in *Hard Cash* and *LAS*
- Gothic influence: architecture (Audley, asylum, burning inn), characterizations, horror-asides
- A way to think about evilness, madness, fear

Art's close reading of language

- Relates back to Poovey on Trollope's series
- Are these notes in *LAS* equally as distracting? Is that okay in a sensation novel?
- Topic modeling demo?