

English 4362: Victorian Poetry

Carroll Science 302 (and Armstrong Browning Library Seminar Room)

MWF, 9:05-9:55AM, Spring 2014

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(not online on weekends or after 5pm weekdays)

Our Journey: Queen Victoria reigned (1837 to 1901) over an age of tensions—a time of intense religious devotion and scientific skepticism; of industrial waste and love of nature; of strict gender roles and questioning of those roles; of fascination with the past and commitment to addressing the present age through art. In the six units of our course, we will trace such tensions through Victorian poetry and study the startling diversity of poetic forms—from the dramatic monologue to the verse novel—that Victorian poets invented and remade when reflecting on their turbulent times. I believe this poetry will magnetize us because the oppositions with which these poets struggled have shaped our own world. In their poems, we find prefigured our intellectual and spiritual concerns, and in many ways our times are the days that they both hoped and feared would come. In this class, then, we will study Victorian poetry in its original contexts, but we will also reflect on its enduring relevance. Our syllabus includes some names you have probably often heard, such as Alfred (Lord) Tennyson, Robert Browning, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Christina Rossetti, Gerard Manley Hopkins, and Thomas Hardy. Yet we will also study poets with whom readers today are less familiar, such as George Meredith, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Augusta Webster, James Thomson, and Algernon Charles Swinburne.

Our Goal: Our mission is not only to expose ourselves to the beautiful achievements and historical contexts of Victorian poetry, but also to learn how this literature continues to speak to us. In my experience, I only learn something of worth, about poetry or anything else, if I start asking my *own* questions about it; and I don't truly have a motive to ask those questions until I've struggled to *bring home* what I study by relating it to my interests, other things I've read or learned, my experiences, and the world around me. So, in addition to contributing to discussions, in this class you will complete a number of interrelated reflection pieces and papers designed to help you ask your own questions about the poetry we read, and to build confidence in connecting it to your life and world.

Required Texts

Browning, Elizabeth Barrett. *Aurora Leigh*. Ed. Margaret Reynolds. Norton

(Critical Edition), 1996. ISBN: 978-0393962987

Collins, Thomas J. and Vivienne J. Rundle, eds. *The Broadview Anthology of Victorian Poetry*.

Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2005. ISBN: 1-55111-100-4

Hopkins, Gerard Manley. *Gerard Manley Hopkins: The Major Works*. Ed. Catherine Phillips.

Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002. ISBN: 0-19-284079-2

Rossetti, Christina. *Christina Rossetti: The Complete Poems*. Ed. R.W. Crump and Betty S. Flowers.

Revised ed. London: Penguin Classics, 2005. ISBN: 978140423662

Electronic Sources

Several readings are in digital format. To access these documents, go to our **Blackboard site and click on the tab labeled "Electronic Sourcebook."** You may bring your laptops to class and access the documents online to save on printing.

Course Requirements

Assignment	Due Date/Explanation	Points
"Bring It Home" Reflections	<p>See Reading Calendar for Due Dates (Guidelines on Blackboard)</p> <p>Most of us connect "homework" with a <i>terrible</i> idea: when study leaves the classroom it is an invasion of our "home," "work" we're forced to do to find answers for a teacher. By contrast, this assignment is designed to help you "bring home" the Victorians by learning to ask and pursue <i>your</i> questions.</p> <p>Five times this semester, you will type a short reflection (600-800 words, around 2 double-spaced pages) on a question of your own about texts or ideas that we have discussed. Ideally, these responses will help keep your mind and life connected to what we read, and provide a rich store of ideas from which to draw for your formal essays.</p> <p>See the "Guidelines for 'Bring It Home' Reflections" on Blackboard for instructions and suggestions about how to use your reflections to prepare for your essays.</p>	<p>300 points</p> <p>30% of Grade</p> <p>(Each response worth 60 pts.)</p>
Essay 1	<p>Friday, Feb. 21 (See Essay Guidelines on Blackboard)</p> <p>For this 6-8 page essay, you will write about a text(s) in Units 1-2. Please discuss your ideas with me well before the deadline. You need to consult at least four critical sources, so you must include a "Works Cited" page (MLA format).</p>	<p>170 points</p> <p>17% of Grade</p>
Essay 2	<p>Friday, May 2 (See Essay Guidelines on Blackboard)</p> <p>In this 8-10 page essay you may focus on any texts by authors we study this semester. You need to consult at least five secondary sources and include a "Works Cited" page (See Guidelines).</p>	<p>190 points</p> <p>19% of Grade</p>
Midterm	<p>Mon., Mar 17</p> <p>This exam will cover Units 1-3 and will consist of in-class essays. Prior to the exam, you will receive a study sheet with five questions, three of which will appear on the test. On the exam, you will select two of these questions and write organized, detailed essays in response. You should prepare for all five questions.</p>	<p>140 points</p> <p>14% of Grade</p>
Final Exam	<p>Sat. May 10, 9:00-11:00pm (CS 302)</p> <p>This exam will again consist of in-class essays and will be comprehensive (emphasizing Units 4-6). You will receive a study sheet with seven questions, five of which will appear on the test. On the exam, you will select and respond cogently to three questions. You should prepare to answer all seven questions.</p>	<p>150 points</p> <p>15% of Grade</p>
Participation	<p>You should be prepared to discuss the reading for each class. We will do some in-class group exercises and I will expect you to contribute. I will often give you short questions to consider between classes: you should come to class ready to share your answers.</p>	<p>50 points</p> <p>5% of Grade</p>
Total Points		1,000
Grade Ranges	<p>900-1,000: A 800-869: B 700-769: C 0-600: F</p> <p>870-899: B+ 770-799: C+ 600-699: D</p>	

Note: Grades for each assignment will be posted on Blackboard. You are responsible for keeping track of your performance. **I will not discuss your grade with you in the final two weeks of the semester.**

Policies

Availability:

- Office Hours (MW 1:30-4:30 pm, Carroll Science 404)
- By appointment (Joshua.King@baylor.edu: please remember that I am not online after 5pm or on weekends.)
- You will be most likely to see me if you drop by during my posted hours.

Attendance:

• I generally follow the College of Arts & Sciences Policy:

“To earn course credit in the College of Arts and Sciences, a student must attend at least 75% of all scheduled class meetings. Any student who does not meet this minimal standard will automatically receive a grade of ‘F’ in the course.”

- **Each absence after your first three lowers your final grade by **25 pts.** ($\frac{1}{4}$ of a letter grade).**
- You **must** be present on the final day of class to turn in your paper, review for the final, and examine items from the Armstrong Browning Library’s special collections. Missing this day will automatically lower your final grade by **25 pts.** ($\frac{1}{4}$ of a letter grade).
- I will not lower your grade for absences for university-related events (e.g. sports matches, debates), ill health, or family tragedies. You must provide evidence—note from coach, doctor, parent, etc.—demonstrating that your absence was necessary; when possible, give me advance notice. Classes missed for family or social events (weddings, vacations, etc.) are not excused.

Late Assignments and Make-Up Exams:

• **A late assignment will lose the equivalent of half a letter grade for each day it is overdue.** After four days, the grade will be “F.”

- Only true emergencies or severe illnesses will allow you to make up exams or turn in an assignment late, and you must inform me of your situation **as soon as possible**. If you take a late exam for any other reason, you can only receive up to 80% of your actual score (e.g., if you score 100 pts., I give you 80).

Dishonorable Conduct:

- I expect your assignments to reflect your critical and imaginative labor: plagiarism or cheating will automatically earn you a **failing grade** in this course. I will report you to the Honor Council.
- Such breaches of confidence could result in your expulsion from Baylor.

Academic Challenges and Resources:

- If you have a disability that could affect your test-taking and completion of assignments, you are responsible for giving me a form from the Office of Access and Learning Accommodation (OALA: <http://www.baylor.edu/oala>).
- OALA is part of the Paul L. Foster Success Center, which is in the Sid Richardson Building near Moody Library (<http://www.baylor.edu/successcenter>).

Reading Calendar

Note: Remember that all “**Electronic Sources**” are in the “Electronic Sourcebook” on Blackboard.

Week 1 Mon. Jan. 13 Introduction: Who Are We? Why Are We Here? Where Are We Going?

Unit 1: “I” Under Scrutiny: The Rise of the Dramatic Monologue

Wed. Jan. 15

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, “The Eolian Harp” (1796); William Wordsworth, “Tintern Abbey” (1798) [**Electronic Source**]; Robert Browning, “Porphyria’s Lover” (1836), pp. 312-313 in Collins & Rundle.

Fri. Jan. 17

Robert Browning, “My Last Duchess” (1842), “The Bishop Orders His Tomb at Saint Praxed’s Church” (1845), pp. 309-317 in Collins & Rundle.

Week 2 Mon. Jan 20: **Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (University Holiday)**

Wed. Jan. 22

Alfred, Lord Tennyson, “St. Simeon Stylites” (1842), “Ulysses” (1842), pp. 183-187 in Collins & Rundle.

Fri. Jan. 24

Reflection 1 Due

Robert Browning, *The Ring and the Book* (1868-1869), Book I, pp. 419-441 in Collins & Rundle.

Week 3 Mon. Jan. 27

Browning, *The Ring and the Book* (1868-1869), Book V, pp. 442-470 in Collins & Rundle.

Wed. Jan. 29

Browning, *The Ring and the Book* (1868-1869), Book VII, pp. 471-496 in Collins & Rundle.

Fri. Jan. 31 _____ (Viewing of rare editions of Robert Browning’s poetry)

Browning, *The Ring and the Book* (1868-1869), Book XI, pp. 496-530 in Collins & Rundle.

Week 4 Mon. Feb. 3

Augusta Webster, “Circe” (1870), “A Castaway” (1870), pp. 1010-1022 in Collins & Rundle.

Unit 2: Poetry and the Present Age

Part 1. Victorian Medievalism: Seeing the Present through the Past

Wed. Feb. 5

Alfred, Lord Tennyson, "Explorations in Arthurian Legends—Part 7. Alfred, Lord Tennyson" [**Electronic Source**]; "The Lady of Shalott" (1832), pp. 162-165; Tennyson, *Idylls of the King* (1859-1885): "Dedication," pp. 280-281; *Lancelot and Elaine* (1859), pp. 288-308 in Collins & Rundle.

Fri. Feb. 7

Reflection 2 Due

Anthony H. Harrison, "Arthurian Poetry and Medievalism" (2002), pp. 246-249 [**Electronic Source**]; Tennyson, "Guinevere" (1857) from *The Idylls of the King* [**Electronic Source**].

You might enjoy searching this richly informative website: "Arthurian Literature and Art"

<http://faculty.pittstate.edu/~knichols/labelle2.html#twentieth>

Week 5 Mon. Feb. 10 (Viewing of rare editions and manuscripts)

Anthony H. Harrison, "Arthurian Poetry and Medievalism" (2002), pp. 249-252 [**Electronic Source**]; William Morris, "The Defence of Guenevere" (1858), pp. 885-890 in Collins & Rundle.

Part 2. Serving the Present Age: Art and Society

Wed. Feb. 12

Matthew Arnold, "Sweetness and Light" from *Culture and Anarchy* (1869), 90-104 in *The Complete Prose Works*, vol. 5 [**Electronic Source**]; "Stanzas from the Grand Chartreuse" (1855), pp. 724-727 in Collins & Rundle.

Fri. Feb. 14

Walter Pater, "Preface and Conclusion to *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry*" (1873), 1349-1354; Dante Gabriel Rossetti, "The Blessed Damozel" (1847), pp. 806-808; "The Woodspurge" (1856), p. 817 in Collins & Rundle.

Week 6 Mon. Feb. 17 (Viewing of rare editions and manuscripts)

Swinburne, from *Notes on Poems and Reviews* (1866), pp. 348-353, 357-359, Notes pp. 487-488; "Art for art's sake first of all" [from *William Blake: A Critical Study* (1868)] pp. 380-382, pp. Notes 489 [**Electronic Source**]; "Anactoria" (1866), pp. 979-984; John Morley, "Mr. Swinburne's New Poems: Poems and Ballads [1866]," 1320-1325 in Collins & Rundle.

Unit 3: Victorian Women Poets and Religion

Wed. Feb. 19

Sarah Stickney Ellis, from *The Women of England: Their Social Duties and Domestic Habits* (1843): “Chapter II: Influence of Women in England” [Electronic Source]; Felicia Hemans, “The Memorial Pillar” (1828), “The Grave of a Poetess [on the poet Mary Tighe]” (1828), pp. 19-21; Letitia E. Landon, “The Factory” (1835), pp. 40-43 in Collins & Rundle.

Fri. Feb. 21

Essay 1 Due

Elizabeth Barrett Browning, “The Cry of the Children” (1844), pp. 74-77; “The Runaway Slave at Pilgrim’s Point” (1850), pp. 78-82 in Collins & Rundle.

Week 7 Mon. Feb. 24

Thomas Carlyle, “The Hero as Poet” (1840) [Electronic Source]; Elizabeth Barrett Browning, *Aurora Leigh* (1857), Books 1-2 in *Aurora Leigh*.

Wed. Feb. 26

Aurora Leigh, Books 3-4.

Fri. Feb. 28

Aurora Leigh Books 5-7.

Week 8 Mon. Mar. 3 (Viewing of related letters and rare editions)

Aurora Leigh, Books 8-9

Wed. Mon. Mar. 5

Christina Rossetti (*The Complete Poems*), “Consider the Lilies of the Field” (1853), p. 70; “From House to Home” (1858), pp. 76-82; “The Thread of Life” (1881), 330-331.

Note: Please be sure to consult the helpful notes in our edition of Rossetti’s poetry. They are in the back arranged according to the page numbers of poems.

Fri. Mar. 7

Reflection 3 Due

William T. Stead, “Wanted, An English Bible!” *The Daily Paper* (1893) [Electronic Source]; Sarah Flower Adams, “Nearer My God, to Thee” (1841) [Electronic Source]; Christina Rossetti, from *Face of the Deep* (1892) pp. 301-2 [Electronic Source]; Christina Rossetti (*The Complete Poems*), “And now why tarriest thou? (Lord, grant us grace to mount by steps of grace)” (1892), pp. 412-413; “Behold, it was very good. (All things are fair, if we had eyes to see)” (1892), pp. 474-5; “Now they desire a Better Country. (Love said nay, while Hope kept saying)” (1885), pp. 521-522.

SPRING BREAK (March 8-16)

Week 9 Mon. Mar. 17

Midterm Exam

Unit 4: *Victorian Poetry and Science*

Wed. Mar. 19

Philip Davis, from “Nature,” *The Victorians* (2002) 55-66 [**Electronic Source**]; Charles Darwin, from *The Origin of Species* (1859) and *The Descent of Man* (1871), 1293-1304 [**Electronic Source from Longman’s Anthology**]; William Clyde DeVane, *A Browning Handbook* (1955), pp. 299-302 [**Electronic Source**]; Robert Browning, “Caliban upon Setebos; or, Natural Theology in the Island” (1864), pp. 415-18 in Collins & Rundle.

Fri. Mar. 21

Daniel Brown, “Victorian Poetry and Science” (2000), section II: pp. 143-148 [**Electronic Source**]; Matthew Arnold, “Dover Beach” (1851, pub. 1867), pp. 722-723; Thomas Hardy, “Hap” (1866), “In a Wood” (1877), pp. 1029-1034 in Collins & Rundle.

Week 10 Mon. Mar. 24 (Viewing of rare editions)

Thomas Hardy, “Nature’s Questioning,” “A Christmas Ghost-Story” (1899), “God’s Funeral” (1908-1909), “Transformations,” “Often When Warring” (1915), “Unkept Good Fridays” (1927) [**Electronic Source**].

Wed. Mar. 26 (**We need to return to Carroll Science today—and only today.**)

Marie Banfield, “Darwinism, Doxology, and Energy Physics: The New Sciences, the Poetry and the Poetics of Gerard Manley Hopkins” (2007), pp. 175-182 [**Electronic Source**]; Gerard Manley Hopkins (*The Major Works*), “As kingfishers catch fire” (1877), “Pied Beauty” (1877), pp. 128-132. **Note:** Please be sure to consult the helpful notes in our edition of Hopkins’ poetry. They are in the back arranged according to the page numbers of poems.

Fri. Mar. 28

Reflection 4 Due

Brown, “Victorian Poetry and Science,” from Section IV: pp. 152- top of 155 [**Electronic Source**]; Banfield, “Darwinism, Doxology, and Energy Physics,” pp. 181-182 [**Electronic Source**]; Hopkins (*The Major Works*), “God’s Grandeur” (1877), pp. 128-129; “Binsey Poplars,” pp. 142-143; “Ribblesdale” (1883), pp. 156-7; “The Blessed Virgin Compared to the Air We Breathe” (1883), pp. 158 -161.

Week 11 Mon. Mar. 31

Brown, “Victorian Poetry and Science,” finish section IV: bottom of p. 155-157 [**Electronic Source**]; Banfield, “Darwinism, Doxology, and Energy Physics,” pp. 182-185 [**Electronic Source**]; Hopkins (*The Major Works*): “Spelt from Sibyl’s Leaves” (1886), p. 175; “That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire and of the comfort of the Resurrection” (1888), pp. 180-181.

Note: Hopkins critically reflected on the scientific developments of his day to arrive at a deeper theological vision that vitalized his poetry. Many have charted similar paths in our time. One is John Polkinghorne, a highly distinguished physicist and Anglican priest formerly at Cambridge University who has written engaging, accessible books demonstrating that Christian faith benefits from engagement with fields such as quantum physics, string theory, evolutionary biology, and special relativity. If you are intrigued, you might start with his book *Exploring Reality: The Intertwining of Science and Religion* (Yale UP, 2005). Chapters 1-3 are of particular interest.

Unit 5: Poetic Sequences and Imagined Congregations

Wed. Apr. 2

Wikipedia, "Oxford Movement" [**Electronic Source**]; Kirstie Blair, "Keble and *The Christian Year*" (2007), pp. 607-621 [**Electronic Source**]; G.B. Tennyson, *Victorian Devotional Poetry* (1981), pp. 72-97 [**Electronic Source**]; Selections from John Keble, *The Christian Year* (first pub. 1827): Advertisement, Morning, Evening, Septuagesima Sunday, Trinity Sunday, The Sixth Sunday After Trinity [**Electronic Source**].

Fri. Apr. 4

Daniel Brown, "Victorian Poetry and Science" (2000), pp. 137-143 [**Electronic Source**]; Alfred, Lord Tennyson, *In Memoriam A.H.H.* (1850), Prologue-LXXVII, pp. 204-228 in Collins & Rundle.

Week 12 Mon. Apr. 7

Tennyson, *In Memoriam A.H.H.* (1850), LXXVIII-[Epilogue], pp. 229-253 in Collins & Rundle.

Wed. Apr. 9

James Thomson, *The City of Dreadful Night* (1874), pp. 896-914 in Collins & Rundle

Unit 6: Forms of Love in the Victorian Sonnet

Fri. Apr. 11

Reflection 5 Due

Elizabeth Barrett Browning, *Sonnets from the Portuguese* (1846, pub. 1850) [**Electronic Source**]; Christina Rossetti, *Monna Innominata: A Sonnet of Sonnets* (1881), pp. 294-301; please also read the notes, pp. 953-957.

Week 13 Mon. Apr. 14 (Viewing of *Sonnets from the Portuguese* manuscript)

Marjorie Stone, "'Monna Innominata' and *Sonnets from the Portuguese*," pp. 46-68 [**Electronic Source**]; Continued discussion of *Sonnets from the Portuguese* and *Monna Innominata: A Sonnet of Sonnets* (1881).

Wed. Apr. 16

Christina Rossetti, *The Complete Poems*: "On the Wing" (1862), p. 133; "After Communion" (1866), pp. 222-223; "Out of the Deep Have I Called unto Thee, O Lord" (c. 1892) pp. 389-396; "Whitsun Tuesday" (c. 1885), p. 442.

EASTER HOLIDAYS, April 18-21

Wed. Apr. 23

Joseph Phelan, “Illegal Attachments’: The Amatory Sonnet Sequence,” pp. 107-114 [**Electronic Source**]; George Meredith, *Modern Love* (1862), pp. 793-805 in Collins & Rundle.

Fri. Apr. 25

Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *The House of Life* (1848-1881), 827-832; Christina Rossetti, “In an Artist’s Studio” (1896), p. 870, in Collins & Rundle

Week 15 Mon. Apr. 28

John B. Gleason and John P. Gleason, “The Sexual Underthought in Hopkins’ ‘The Windhover’” (1989) [**Electronic Source**]; Julia F. Saville, *A Queer Chivalry: The Homoerotic Asceticism of Gerard Manley Hopkins* (2000), pp. 1-5 [**Electronic Source**]; Gerard Manley Hopkins (*The Major Works*), “The Windhover” (1877), “Hurrahing in Harvest” (1877), pp. 132-134.

Wed. Apr. 30:

Gerard Manley Hopkins (*The Major Works*), “I wake and feel the fell of dark, not day,” (1885-6), “(Carrion Comfort)” (1885-6), pp. 166-168; *Justus quidem tu es, Domine* (1889), p. 183; Retreat at Beaumont (1883), Retreat Notes (1889), pp. 301-303

Fri. May 2: (View letters, manuscripts, rare editions; **Final Review**)

Essay 2 Due.

LAST DAY OF CLASS

Sat. May 10: Final Exam, 9:00-11:00am (Final Held in CS 302; coffee provided!)