

FORMS:  
VICTORIAN AND MODERN POETRY

*course info*

English 8110

Spring 2023 → SPRING 2025 WILL BE SIMILAR

Tuesday 6:30 to 9:00

Tate Hall 310

Course site on Canvas

*instructor info*

Frances Dickey

Associate Professor

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This course surveys major poetic genres in 19<sup>th</sup> century British and early 20<sup>th</sup>-century transatlantic Anglophone literature, exploring the characteristics of Victorian and Modernist writing in these genres. Course goals include:

- Develop familiarity and fluency with Victorian and Modern(ist) poetry from the 1830's to the 1940's, recognizing and interrogating critical categories of periodization and genre.
- Practice literary analysis through research, discussion, oral presentation, critical writing, and scholarly annotation leading to successful comprehensive exams and teaching as well as exploring areas for future research.

Schedule of Readings

Secondary/critical readings TBA when not listed

**Week 1      Jan. 17      Ballad**

John Keats, "La Belle Dame Sans Merci"

Alfred Tennyson: "The Lady of Shalott"

Dante Gabriel Rossetti: "The Blessed Damozel," "Sister Helen"

Algernon Swinburne: "The King's Daughter," "The Sea-Swallows"

Oscar Wilde: "Ballad of Reading Gaol"

Rudyard Kipling: "Danny Deever" from *Barrack Room Ballads*

W. B. Yeats: "Who Goes with Fergus?" "The Ballad of Moll Magee," "His Dream," "September 1913," "Beggar to Beggar Cried," "Running to Paradise," "Wild Swans at Coole," "Sixteen Dead Men," "The Rose Tree," "The Black Tower"

Ezra Pound: "A Ballad of the Mulberry Road," from *Cathay*

Claude McKay: "A Laborer's Life Give Me," "The Heart of a Constab," "Sukee River," from *Constab Ballads*

W.H. Auden: "As I Walked Out One Evening"

Elizabeth Bishop: "The Gentleman of Shalott"

Ehrenpreis, Introduction to *The Literary Ballad*

Helsing, "Taking Back the Ballad"

Vendler, "Three Stages of the Yeatsian Ballad" from *Our Secret Discipline*

**Week 2      Jan. 24      Victorian Dramatic monologue**

Robert Browning, *Dramatic Lyrics; Men and Women* (esp. "My Last Duchess," "Porphyria's Lover," "The Bishop Orders His Tomb," "Fra Lippo Lippi," "Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came," etc)

Elizabeth Barrett Browning, "Runaway Slave at Pilgrim's Point"

Alfred Lord Tennyson, "Ulysses," "Tithonus," "St. Simeon"

Dante Gabriel Rossetti, "Jenny"

Langbaum, Ch. 2, "Dramatic Monologue," from *The Poetry of Experience* (1957), pp. 75-108

Tucker, "Dramatic Monologue and the Overhearing of Lyric"

Byron, "Definitions" from *Dramatic Monologue*

**Week 3      Jan. 31      Modern Dramatic monologue**

W. B. Yeats: "The Madness of King Goll" (*Crossways*), "Fergus and the Druid" (*The Rose*)  
"An Irish Airman Foresees his Death," "Crazy Jane" poems again, "Masks"

Ezra Pound: "Pierre Vidal Old," (from *Exultations*), "The Tomb at Akr Çaar," "The Seafarer" (*Ripostes*), "Song of the Bowmen of Shu," "The River Song," "The River-Merchant's Wife: A Letter" (*Cathay*)

T. S. Eliot: "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," "Gerontion"

Robert Frost: *North of Boston*

Edgar Lee Masters, from *Spoon River Anthology*

Christ, Ch. 2 from *Victorian and Modern Poetics* (Univ. of Chicago Press, 1984)

Fowler, Ch. 4, "Historical Kinds and the Generic Repertoire," from *Kinds of Literature: An Introduction to the Theory of Genres and Modes* (Harvard UP, 1982)

**Week 4      Feb. 7      Portrait and Ekphrasis**

D. G. Rossetti: "The Portrait" (sonnet); "The Portrait" (dramatic monologue); Sonnets for Pictures (from "For 'Our Lady of the Rocks'" to "Pandora" in *Poems* 1870)

Christina Rossetti: "A Portrait"

A. C. Swinburne, "Before the Mirror"

Walter Pater, from *The Renaissance*

T. S. Eliot: "On a Portrait," "Portrait of a Lady," "La Figlia Che Piange," "Mr. Apollinax," "Aunt Helen," "Cousin Nancy"

Ezra Pound: "Portrait d'une femme," excerpts from *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*

Gertrude Stein: "Picasso" (see also Picasso's "Gertrude Stein")

Mina Loy: "Gertrude Stein" (1926)

William Carlos Williams: "Portrait of a Woman in Bed," "Portrait of a Young Man with a Bad Heart," "Sympathetic Portrait of a Child," "Portrait of a Lady," "Proletarian Portrait"

Marianne Moore, "Sea Unicorns and Land Unicorns," "An Egyptian Pulled Glass Bottle in the Shape of a Fish"

Melvin Tolson, from *Gallery of Harlem Portraits*

Hollander, on D. G. R., from *The Gazer's Spirit: Poems Speaking to Silent Works of Art* (U Chicago Press, 1995)

Dickey, Ch. 3, "Getting Out of the Picture," in *The Modern Portrait Poem*

Loizeaux, "Women Looking: Feminist Ekphrasis" (from *In the Frame*), 121-131  
 Fowler, "Transformations"

Further reading

Krieger, "Picture and Word, Space and Time," from *Ekphrasis: The Illusion of the Natural Sign* (Johns Hopkins UP)

Heffernan, "Entering the Museum of Words: Browning's 'My Last Duchess' and Twentieth-Century Ekphrasis"

**Week 5      Feb. 14      Song 1**

Tennyson, "The Lotos Eaters" including "Choric Song"

Rossetti, "Songs" in *Poems 1870* ("Love Lily" to "The Sea-Limits")

Christina Rossetti, "A Birthday," "Song" ("She sat and sang alway"), "Song" (When I am dead, my dearest"), "Songs in a Cornfield," "Song" (Oh what comes over the sea"), "A Christmas Carol"

Yeats, "Down by the Salley Gardens" (*Crossways*), "The Lake Isle of Innisfree," "The Song of the Wandering Angus," "The Song of the Old Mother" (*Wind Among the Reeds*), "A Song" (*Wild Swans at Coole*)

Mina Loy, "Songs to Joannes"

Jean Toomer, songs from *Cane*

Langston Hughes: blues poems from *Weary Blues* (1926) and *Fine Clothes to the Jew* (1927)

Rowlinson, "Lyric" (Blackwell, Bb)

Helsing, from *Poetry and the Thought of Song in 19<sup>th</sup> century Britain*

**Week 6      Feb 21      Song 2: the Condition of Music**

Christina Rossetti, "Goblin Market"

Swinburne, "Hymn to Proserpine," "Anactoria"

Lewis Carroll, "Jabberwocky" and other poems

Arthur Symons, selected poems

Eliot, "Preludes"

Wallace Stevens, "Peter Quince at the Clavier," "Sad Strains of a Gay Waltz," "The Idea of Order at Key West," "Mozart, 1935," "The Man with the Blue Guitar"

Countee Cullen, "Heritage"

Walter Pater, "The School of Giorgione" and "Conclusion" from *The Renaissance* (1888)

McGann, "Wagner, Baudelaire, Swinburne: Poetry in the Condition of Music"

**Week 7      Feb 28      Elegy 1**

Tennyson, *In Memoriam*

Swinburne, "Ave Atque Vale"

Peter Sacks, from *The English Elegy*

**Week 8      Mar. 7      Elegy 2**

Walt Whitman, "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd"  
 Thomas Hardy, "The Darkling Thrush"  
 Wilfred Owen, "Anthem for Doomed Youth," "Strange Meeting"  
 Yeats, "Easter 1916"  
 Wallace Stevens, "The Death of a Soldier"

Jahan Ramazani, from *Poetry of Mourning: The Modern Elegy from Hardy to Heaney*

**Week 9      Mar. 14      Elegy 3**

Eliot, *The Waste Land*

**Week 10      Mar. 21      Sonnet 1**

Elizabeth Barrett Browning, *Sonnets from the Portuguese*  
 D. G. Rossetti, from *The House of Life*

McGann, commentary

Wagner, Ch. 5 from *A Moment's Monument: Revisionary Poetics and the 19<sup>th</sup> c. English Sonnet*

Mar 28      Spring Break

**Week 11      Apr. 4      Sonnet 2**

Christina Rossetti, "Monna Innominata"  
 Matthew Arnold, "Lucifer in Starlight"  
 Gerard Manley Hopkins, "Terrible Sonnets"  
 Thomas Hardy, "Hap"  
 William Butler Yeats, "Leda and the Swan," "The Fascination of What's Difficult," "Meru"  
 Robert Frost, "Mowing," "The Oven Bird," "Acquainted with the Night," "Design"  
 Claude McKay, from *Harlem Shadows*  
 E. E. Cummings, from *Tulips and Chimneys*

**Week 12      Apr. 11      Modern Long Poem 1**

Ezra Pound, Ur-Cantos; *Cantos* I-X (1926); LXXXI-LXXXII (from *Pisan Cantos*, 1948)

**Week 13      April 18      Modern Long Poem 2**

T. S. Eliot, *Four Quartets* (1936-42)

**Week 14      April 25      Modern Long Poem 3**

H. D., "The Walls Do Not Fall" from *Trilogy*

**Week 15      May 2      wrap up**

**May 9 @ 9 a.m.      Final revised papers due**

### Course work

- Weekly reading assignments, primary and secondary works
- Start off class discussion at least 4 times (sign up in advance)
- Three short papers (4-5 pp/1500-2000 words) circulated before class (sign up in advance)
- Collaborate on annotated bibliography of relevant scholarship (at least 10 entries)
- Create an annotated edition of at least one poem on syllabus
- Revise and extend one of the three papers into a "research note" of 2500-3000 words

Overview: Since this course is essentially a survey, I've designed the assignments to help you engage on a weekly basis with our readings rather than preparing to do a single research dive at the end of the semester. In addition to reading and thinking about the assigned texts before class, you'll be preparing at least one visible sign of engagement every week, whether starting off class with a close reading or posing a critical question, contributing to the course annotated bibliography, turning in one of your three short papers, etc. You are always welcome to write or orally present beyond the required assignments, choosing a format that suits you.

Reading: Although our discussions won't be able to cover every work on the syllabus, reading comprehensively is an important aspect of graduate education and I do expect you to familiarize yourself with all the reading for each class day. To prepare yourself for our discussion, take notes in the margin and/or on a separate page about what you find interesting and puzzling. Even a check mark by a line that catches your attention can become the basis for a reflection or comment in class.

Discussion: The quality of the course depends as much on your contributions as on mine. In addition to written work and oral presentations, please come prepared with interpretations and questions.

Leading discussion: In this small group, class participation will obviously be important to the learning experience. For at least **four** meetings, you'll be expected to start class discussion with a brief presentation that sets the stage for our conversation (sign up in advance). You can start off with a close reading/analysis of a poem, a response to the critical reading, or proposing and sketching out a context for understanding one or more of the poems for the week. An opening, not closure, is the goal.

Writing assignments are designed to give you practice in different modes of literary criticism that you will need to use in graduate school and beyond:

- **Three short papers** due on a rolling basis (via sign-up), due by 7:00 p.m. Monday and circulated to the class, to be discussed in seminar. The topic of the paper should address one of the primary works assigned for the day your paper is due; ideally, you will find a way to work in one or more critical readings, but they do not have to be those assigned for the day. See specifics on Canvas. You may combine your short paper with starting off discussion.
- **One annotated edition of a poem** on our syllabus, either digital or using traditional text & footnote format, providing explanatory notes to help a modern reader understand the text and providing any needed contextual background

- **Ten annotations of critical scholarship**, contributed to our collaborative annotated bibliography.
- **Revised paper**: after writing three papers, choose one to revise and extend into a research note/conference paper of 2500-3000 words (7-9 pp)

### Policies

- Grades are based on submitted work and class performance. Improvement is definitely taken into consideration in assigning the final grade. Your participation/engagement will also be reflected in your grade, and more importantly, in any letter of reference that I might write for you in the future. Approximate weighting of assignments:
  - Participation, including oral presentations/discussion leading: 30%
  - Annotations (critical & scholarly): 20%
  - Papers: 3 x 10% each; revised paper 20% → 50%
- Academic honesty: see “Support and Policies” section of our Canvas site. It is your responsibility to understand the appropriate and ethical use of sources. Papers that fail to attribute sources properly will receive a grade of zero. NOTE: Plagiarism includes using books, articles, other people, and websites without proper citation. Needless to say, ChatGPT and similar AI tools are even worse than plagiarism since no part of their productions are your own work and they steal your learning opportunity.
- Students with disabilities: see “Support and Policies” section of our Canvas site. I will attempt to accommodate any disabilities that I know about; please tell me anything I should know to help you learn effectively. To request academic accommodations (for example, a note taker), students must also register with the Office of Disability Services [http://disabilityservices.missouri.edu/#\\_blank](http://disabilityservices.missouri.edu/#_blank). S5 Memorial Union, 882-4696.
- Grievance Policy: Information concerning student grade appeal procedures and non-academic grievances and appeals may be found in the Student Handbook.
- University of Missouri Notice of Nondiscrimination: see “Support and Policies” section of our Canvas site.
- Assistance: to get the most out of your graduate education, you should be in regular contact with your professors. I try to respond to emails within a few hours, and am always willing to read and comment on thesis statements, drafts, etc. If you need to get in touch with me in a hurry, email is best. If you want to talk on a day when I am not on campus, we can zoom or talk on the phone.
- *University of Missouri Notice of Nondiscrimination*: The University of Missouri System is an Equal Opportunity/ Affirmative Action institution and is nondiscriminatory relative to race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability or status as a Vietnam-era veteran. Any person having inquiries concerning the University of Missouri-Columbia's compliance with implementing Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990, or other civil rights laws should contact the Assistant Vice Chancellor, Human Resource Services, University of Missouri-Columbia, 130 Heinkel Building, Columbia, Mo. 65211, (573) 882-4256, or the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education