

## Victorian Literature

Dr. Jarlath Killeen

This module will explore the Victorian period through the close study of important Victorian novels, of some of the poetry, and of some non-fictional prose of the period. It is envisioned that the texts studied will change on a regular basis, and will most likely include writing by Dickens, the Brontës, Trollope, Thackeray, Gaskell, Hardy, Tennyson, Browning, Barrett Browning, Clough, Hopkins, Swinburne, Rossetti, Carlyle, Ruskin, Pater, Wilde, and some popular and children's writers.

### **Learning Outcomes**

To develop an understanding of some important Victorian writing.

To develop awareness of the historical and social context in which this writing was produced.

To explore the development of particular genres and themes.

To acquire knowledge of critical approaches to the material.

To develop ability to focus discussion of particular issues through analysis of particular texts.

**Week One:** Introduction.

**Week Two:** Emily Bronte, *Wuthering Heights* (1847).

**Week Three:** Anonymous, *The String of Pearls* (1846-7).

**Week Four:** Poetry – Alfred Tennyson, *In Memoriam A.H.H.* (1850).

**Week Five:** Charles Dickens, *Hard Times* (1854).

**Week Six:** George Eliot, *Silas Marner* (1861).

**Week Seven:** Reading Week.

**Week Eight:** Poetry – Christina Rossetti, 'Goblin Market' (1862).

**Week Nine:** Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy* (1867-8).

**Week Ten:** Poetry – Gerald Manley Hopkins: 'The Wreck of the Deutschland', 'God's Grandeur', 'Spring', 'Pied Beauty', 'The Windhover', 'That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire', 'The Bugler's First Communion', 'Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves', 'Harry Ploughman', 'Tom's Garland', 'Spring and Fall', 'To seem the stranger lies my lot, my life', 'I wake and feel the fell of dark, not day', 'Thou art indeed just, Lord, if I contend'. (written c. 1875-1889; published 1918).

**Week Eleven:** Thomas Hardy, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891).

**Week Twelve:** Oscar Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895).

**Select Bibliography.**

Armstrong, Nancy, *Desire and Domestic Fiction: a Political History of the Novel* (New York: Oxford UP, 1987)

Beer, Gillian, *Darwin's Plots: Evolutionary Narrative in Darwin, George Eliot and 19th Century Fiction* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983)

Brantlinger, Patrick, *The Reading Lesson: the Threat of Mass Literacy in Nineteenth Century British Fiction* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1998)

Brooks, Peter, *The Melodramatic Imagination* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1976)

David, Deirdre, *The Cambridge Companion to the Victorian Novel* (Cambridge: CUP, 2001)

Gallagher, Catherine, *The Industrial Reformation in English Fiction* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1985)

Garrett, Peter, *The Victorian Multiplot Novel* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1980)

Gilbert, Sandra and Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1979)

Gilmour, Robin, *The Victorian Period: the Intellectual and Cultural Context of English Literature* (London: Longman, 1993)

Houghton, William, *The Victorian Frame of Mind* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1957)

Miller, J. Hillis, *The Disappearance of God* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1963)

O' Gorman, Francis, *The Victorian Novel* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002)

Poovey, Mary, *Uneven Developments: the Ideological Work of Gender in Victorian England* (London: Virago, 1988)

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Tucker, Herbert F., *A Companion to Victorian Literature and Culture* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998)

Wheeler, Michael, *English Fiction of the Victorian Period, 1830-1890* 2nd ed.  
(London: Longman, 1994)

Williams, Raymond, *The Country and the City* (London: Chatto and Windus,  
1973)

*The English Novel from Dickens to Lawrence* (London: 1973)