

Fall 2017
Department of English

ENGL 2906A
Course Title: Culture and Society

Prerequisite: second year standing

Time: Thursdays 8:30-11:30
Location: Paterson Hall 133

Instructor: Professor Barbara Leckie
e-mail: barbara.leckie@carleton.ca
Please note: I do not reply to any emails before noon

Office: 1821 Dunton Tower
Office hours: by appointment; there will also be two optional writing sessions combined with office hours later in the semester

Texts: (Available at [Octopus Books](#) in the Glebe or on CuLearn)

"The Gray Room: A True Story" (CuLearn)
Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*
Honore Balzac, "Sarrasine" (CuLearn)
Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*
Iain Reid, *I'm Thinking of Ending Things*
Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*
Sigmund Freud, *Dora*
Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "The Yellow Wallpaper" (CuLearn)
Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, "The Man with the Twisted Lip" (CuLearn)
One visit (at least) to the National Gallery

Course Description: This course addresses the relationship between written works and social issues in the nineteenth century with a particular focus on the individual body and the body politic. We will situate the works studied in their social, historical, and political contexts, address the way in which these contexts register in the works themselves (in terms of the work's content *and* form), and finally consider how these works shape the social world both in their immediate contexts and in the twentieth and twenty-first century. This course will draw on a broad range of material from historical documents and legal trials to visual art and movies; students are also encouraged to introduce different contexts and perspectives that may further illuminate the works studied.

Please Note: Students must bring their text to class. If you don't have your text in class I will ask you to go and retrieve it. Students can miss no more than 1.5 classes. If I have to ask you to get your book you will use up .5 of your allowed absences.

Our class will be internet and device-free (excepting pre-approved cases).

Evaluation:

- One essay (1500 words): **50% FIRST TERM ESSAYS DUE IN CLASS 7 Dec**
Late papers will be graded without comments
- 10 Weekly commentaries*: **30%** (Students are required to submit at least TEN commentaries on individual works or issues studied this semester (at least **five** of these commentaries must deal with specific texts studied in the course); these commentaries should be no more than a paragraph and they must be handed in at least two hours BEFORE the class dealing with the work discussed. (You can email your commentaries to me at barbara.leckie@carleton.ca). Please note that **two** of the ten commentaries are compulsory. The remaining **three** can be on a topic of your choice related to the course (the discussions we have in class, the texts, something outside of class that relates etc). Failure **to hand in the minimum of ten commentaries will result in 0% for this requirement. Failure to hand in either of the compulsory commentaries will also result in 0% for this requirement.**)
- 3 Question Assignments: **10%** (The first question assignment should be submitted in September, the second in October, the third in November; you can choose the exact date based on the readings that interest you most). The question assignment should articulate a question that clearly emerges from the reading, is informed by an understanding of at least some of the reading, and is not a yes or no question. It should be a weighty or interesting question. You can elaborate on your question a bit and explain why it strikes you as important or interesting or in need of an answer if appropriate. The question assignment should be no shorter than half a double-spaced page and no longer than 2 double-spaced pages. On average, half a page to 3/4s of a page is fine.
- Class participation: **10%** (This participation mark is based on your work group discussion and your participation in class. Note: to participate you have to be in class. Work Groups will be groups composed of about three to four students. These groups will be expected to lead class discussion for half an hour on an assigned day. Group members should meet at least once before that day to think of provocative and interesting questions to ask the class, to organize ideas that they want to communicate to the class, and to devise strategies to capture the class's attention. It is not necessary to discuss the book assigned for that day, but it is necessary to stick to the discussion topic. It is also not necessary that every group member speaks, but it is necessary that the group works together to plan the discussion. You will be graded as a group for this assignment.)

I have created two email newsgroups on the CHAT system at Carleton; one is for course materials and the other is for discussion. The discussion newsgroup is a good place to send your commentaries to the class as a whole to generate comments and discussion.

Plagiarism: See the statement on Academic Integrity in the Undergraduate Calendar (12.0).

Request for Academic Accommodation: You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the [Student Guide](#).

Religious obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the [Student Guide](#).

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your **Letter of Accommodation** at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (*if applicable*). **Requests made within two weeks will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.** After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website (www.carleton.ca/pmc) for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (*if applicable*).

Course Outline:

7 September	Course Format and Requirements Introduction <i>Discussion: Social Issues and Literature</i>
14 September	"The Gray Room: A True Story" (course hand-out) Shelley, <u>Frankenstein</u> (read until the end of vol 1, chap1) <i>Discussion: History, Ghosts, and Bodies</i> COMPULSORY COMMENTARY DUE TWO HOURS BEFORE CLASS Topic: Do you think cultural representations (novels, poems, movies, television, art, youtube, etc) have an impact on social change? If so, what types of

representations do you think are most effective? How?
If not, why?

Optional: Six-word memoir (click [here](#) and [here](#) for examples); this option will count as one commentary; you can submit it today or at any other point in the semester.

- 21 September Frankenstein (the movie), shown in class
- 28 September Shelley, Frankenstein
Discussion: "Grotesque" Bodies; Science and Technology
Three [contemporary reviews](#) of Frankenstein
WORK GROUP #1.
- 5 October Balzac, "Sarrasine"
Discussion: Gendered Bodies
WORK GROUP #2.
- 12 October Douglass, Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass
Discussion: Raced Bodies
WORK GROUP #3.
- 19 October Douglass, Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass
Discussion: Education
Reid, I'm Thinking of Ending Things (first section)
Discussion: Words
WORK GROUP #4.
- 2 November Reid, I'm Thinking of Ending Things
Discussion: Family
WORK GROUP #5
- 9 November Wilde, The Picture of Dorian Gray
Discussion: Visual Art and Social Issues
SECOND COMPULSORY COMMENTARY BASED ON ART GALLERY VISIT DUE TWO HOURS BEFORE CLASS
- 16 November NO CLASS: Please try to catch up on your reading and/or work on your essay
- 23 November Freud, Dora
Discussion: Psychoanalysis; Telling Stories
WORK GROUP #6.
[Essay Writing Guidelines](#)
- 30 November Freud, Dora
Gilman, "The Yellow Wallpaper"

Discussion: Madness and Literature
WORK GROUP #7.

7 December

Doyle, "The Man with the Twisted Lip"
Discussion: the City
Summary; Questions and Discussion
FIRST TERM ESSAYS DUE IN CLASS