

Carleton University
Fall 2017
Department of English

ENGL 5503: STUDIES IN NINETEENTH CENTURY LITERATURE II
“HIDDEN WORLDS: DOCUMENTING VICTORIAN LONDON”

Mondays / 2:30-5:30

Location: *Please confirm location on Carleton Central*

Instructor: Janice Schroeder

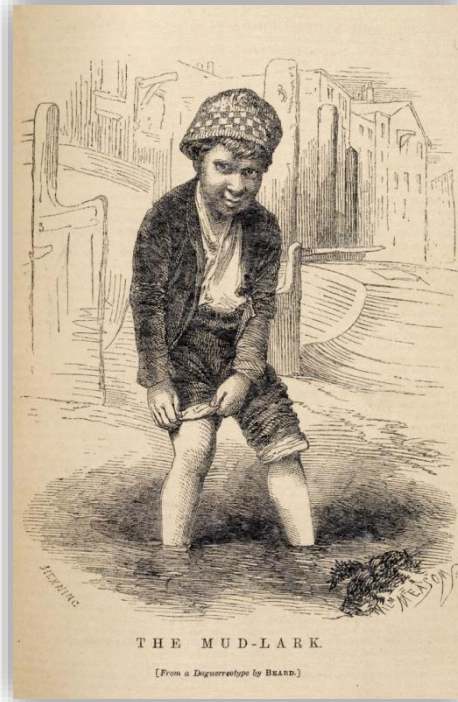
Email: Janice.schroeder@carleton.ca

Office: 1924 Dunton Tower

Phone: use email

Office Hours: Wednesdays 1-2:30 or by appointment

Carleton University is located on unceded Algonquin territory.



COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course we will read Victorian and contemporary examples of urban documentary produced by “embedded” journalist/researchers who were motivated by a mix of curiosity and

ethical responsibility towards the urban poor. Victorian London witnessed rapid growth, industrialization, large-scale public works projects, immigration, homelessness, and the building of the first suburbs amid the constant flow of “human capital” in and out of the city. Accompanying these changes was the development of popular genres that documented and often sensationalized the “hidden worlds” of slum neighbourhoods, temporary lodging houses, street markets, homeless shelters, and penny theatres where the poor “congregated.” Precarious forms of employment and ingenious survival tactics fascinated middle-class observers, who ventured into the streets and sometimes right into the homes of the poor in order to collect and publish their stories for readers variously figured as oblivious, curious, and frightened.

Our key text will be a mid-Victorian social survey compiled by Henry Mayhew entitled *London Labour and the London Poor*, an illustrated, encyclopedic collection of marginalized urban voices, labour practices, and “vanishing” ways of life. Mayhew’s vast and influential collection, from which we will read a representative sample, bears a strong resemblance to the fiction and journalism of Charles Dickens, who was born the same year as Mayhew. We will begin by examining the work of these two writers before moving on to lesser-known works by other Victorian investigators and explorers, some of whom went undercover, disguising themselves as vagrants in order to arrive at a more “authentic” account of the lives of the poor. The course will conclude with a discussion of a recent example of “slum journalism”: Katherine Boo’s *Behind the Beautiful Forevers: Life, Death, and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity* (2012).

TEXT LIST

Primary, for purchase

Henry Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor* (Oxford; mandatory edition)

Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist* (Broadview; mandatory edition)

Katherine Boo, *Behind the Beautiful Forevers* (Random House)

Primary, on ARES

Henry Mayhew, selections from *London Labour and the London Poor*

Charles Dickens, selections from *Sketches by Boz* and *Household Words*

James Greenwood, “A Night in the Workhouse”

Elizabeth Banks, from *Campaigns of Curiosity*

All other required readings (secondary readings for the research resource presentations) are available on ARES.

ASSIGNMENTS AT A GLANCE

- 3 in-class presentations worth 10% each + written submissions worth 10% each: 20% (60% total)
Due: ongoing; schedule to be determined in class
- 1 essay (approx 3500 words; 8 pages): 20%
Due: December 15

- Participation: 10% (comprised of one 3-minute presentation in the second class; one 3-minute presentation on the last day of class; weekly 1-minute talk-backs to the research resource presentations, presentation of the DIY documentary, and ongoing in-class participation and preparedness)
- DIY Documentary, to be shared in class: 10%
Due: schedule to be decided in class

ASSIGNMENTS IN DETAIL

In-class presentations

There are two types of presentation: 1) scholarly editing presentations, and 2) research resource presentations. You will complete **two** scholarly editing presentations and **one** research resource presentation. Please try to schedule your presentations to fall, roughly, once every 3-4 classes.

Scholarly editing presentations

Please take any **one** of the assigned **Mayhew articles** and prepare it as if you were editing it for a scholarly edition. What does this mean?

- Read through the entire article in its original form (from the Dover edition on ARES and/or on reserve in the library)
- Cut sections of the text where necessary, especially if it is a lengthy article; explain and justify your cuts
- Research and write a minimum of three scholarly annotations. This is really the core of the assignment (separate handout on this will be provided). ***Document the sources you used to research your annotations.***
- Cross-check your article with the three modern editions of the text (Oxford, Penguin, and Wordsworth. The Penguin and Wordsworth editions are on reserve in the library). Your article may be included in the other editions, or only some of them, or none of them.
- Have the editors made cuts to the original selection? Are there annotations? Compare and contrast with your own choices.
- Write a 500-750 word written submission to accompany your presentation that includes the text of your annotations (a separate handout on this will be provided). Please hand in the written submission no more than one week after the presentation.

For assigned primary readings other than Mayhew (Dickens; Greenwood; Banks)

- Choose a chapter or short selection from the text

- Research and write a minimum of three scholarly annotations as described above
- Cross-check with modern editions of the text as described above; did the editors of other editions include annotations in this section, and if so, what did they annotate?
- Provide a 500-750 word submission as described above

You will present each of your annotated selections to the class. This is your opportunity to ask questions and enlist your classmates in addressing any critical conundrums that you encountered. All presentations should last about 10-15 minutes. In addition the presenters are responsible for facilitating class discussion for 10-15 minutes. To facilitate discussion the presenters will ask questions of the students, respond to questions, and add information when pertinent. You can distribute hand-outs and/or use PowerPoint or Prezzi, but, if you choose to do the latter, please be careful not to let the PPT take the place of your presentation (that is, try not just to read PPT slides).

The grading scheme will be as follows: each assignment is worth 20% divided evenly between the written and the oral presentation.

When applicable, we hope to use successful annotations in our Broadview edition of *London Labour and the London Poor* (with due credit to the annotator); this assignment, then, is also a chance to participate in the publication process.

Research resource presentations + 1-minute talk-back

This assignment asks the presenter to read and summarize a recent piece of criticism on Mayhew and/or nineteenth-century London, slum journalism, etc. These readings will be assigned and are available on ARES.

Everyone is responsible for reading the material from week to week. After the presentation, there will be a brief roundtable, where each student must deliver their own one-minute talk-back to the article and the presenter.

The presenter *must* do the following things:

- Identify the thesis or main argument succinctly, in one or two sentences at the most;
- Identify the main points of the article; what kind of evidence does the author use to support his or her argument?
- Provide a brief critical assessment of the usefulness of the article or chapter: How well does it illuminate *LLP* or the other texts we are studying? Does the critic's interpretation seem convincing to you? Does it help you to read *LLP* or the other texts? If so, how?
- Write a 500-750 word written submission to accompany your presentation. Please hand in the written submission no more than one week after the presentation.

The presenter's classmates *must* do the following things:

- read the article thoroughly;
- have something to say about it;
- listen to the presenter and responding to their summary and criticism of the article.

In some ways, this is kind of a group assignment. That is, one person is responsible for summarizing the article and providing some critical commentary on it, but the entire class is responsible for supporting the presenter by reading the article and preparing a short response. I'd recommend jotting a few notes down for your talk-back rather than winging it, but it doesn't have to be formal. The most effective talk-backs will be those that demonstrate they have listened carefully to the presenter and are willing to engage with his or her response to the article.

On a day when you are giving a scholarly editing presentation, you do not have to do a 1-minute talk-back unless you want to, but you should still strive to read the article for class, since it has been chosen to illuminate the primary texts we are reading for that class, including the one you're presenting on.

Essay

There are four different essay options for this course:

- write a research essay on *London Labour and the London Poor* that engages with a course theme that interests you;
- write an essay that compares and contrasts *LLLP* with any one of the other primary texts (Dickens, Greenwood, Banks, and/or Boo) assigned in the course;
- edit your own mini-edition of Mayhew's text (select articles on a theme, write an introduction [minimum 6 double spaced pages], annotate your selections, and add any other material you consider relevant). For your mini-edition you might select material to foreground a theme like Mayhew and gender, Mayhew and empire, Mayhew and disability, queer Mayhew, Mayhew and animals, Mayhew and food, Mayhew and waste, to name only a few possibilities;
- create a story map based on Mayhew's text using the following app: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/en/>. Your story map must be accompanied by a four-to five-page mini essay explaining the research question your story map is based on, the argument it makes about *LLLP*, and any problems you encountered along the way. **Note:** I have not used this app myself, but I've heard it's fairly easy to work with. If you choose this option, you will have to be self-directed with learning how to use the app.

DIY Documentary

This assignment invites you to interpret the course themes and reading material creatively, outside the traditional academic forms of seminar presentation and essay writing. The objectives of the assignment are 1) to allow for different ways of interpreting the course material in order to discover new, perhaps unexpected insights into it; 2) to encourage you to engage directly with the methodologies used by nineteenth-century urban explorers; 3) to test our sense of past and present as separate categories.

The assignment is to create your own short documentary about urban or campus life using the methodologies featured in Mayhew's and the other writers' texts (interview; monologue; personal narrative; close description; expert opinion; visual image; statistical tables; lists). Your

documentary might be a short piece of writing, or a short video with or without voiceover; it might use visual images, or audio, or illustration, or have a game component. You might interview someone, or write a short observation of a scene from everyday life (park yourself at a busy Tim Horton's for an hour and record what you observe). You could do a series of blog posts if you keep a blog, or a podcast if you have one, or use social media, or create some kind of art object (written, visual, etc.) that documents some aspect of everyday life on campus or in the city, your neighbourhood, dorm, etc.

Ideally, we will present these to each other in class. They should take no more than about 5-8 minutes to present, and we'll decide the presentation schedule for this together in class. (I'm leaning towards presenting these on the last day of class over wine and snacks, but we can discuss.)

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

You are responsible for completing all of the readings for each class. On some weeks it looks like a lot, but rest assured that many of the readings are quite short.

September 11 : Welcome

- Introduction and orientation
- Introduction to the forthcoming Broadview edition of *LLLP*
- Sign up for presentation schedule (to be posted on cuLearn)

September 18 : Introduction

- 3-minute presentations (first impressions)
- Demo annotation exercise
- Research resource presentation

Readings:

primary

Robert Douglas-Fairhurst, "Introduction" to *LLLP* (Oxford)

Esther Leslie, "Recycling" (ARES)

Henry Mayhew, "Watercress Girl" (Oxford)

secondary

Gertrude Himmelfarb, "The 'Culture of Poverty'" (ARES)

September 25 : Reading *London Labour*

- Scholarly editing presentations
- Research resource presentation

Readings:

primary

“Preface” (*LLLP* ARES)

“Of Wandering Tribes in General” (*LLLP* ARES)

“The London Street Markets on a Saturday Night” (*LLLP* ARES)

“Of the ‘Penny Gaff’” (*LLLP* ARES)

secondary

Thomas Prasch, “Ethnicity as Marker in Henry Mayhew’s *LLLP*”

October 2 : Reading *London Labour*

- Scholarly editing presentations
- Research resource presentation

Readings:

primary

“Of the Homes of the Costermongers” (*LLLP* ARES)

“Of the Education, Literature, and Amusement of the Street Irish” (*LLLP* ARES)

“Of the History of Some Irish Street Sellers” (*LLLP* ARES)

“Of the Street Sellers of Stationary, Literature, and the Fine Arts” (*LLLP* ARES)

“Of the Death and Fire Hunters” (*LLLP* ARES)

secondary

Stephen Jankiewicz, “A Dangerous Class: The Street Sellers of Nineteenth Century London” (ARES)

October 9 : Statutory holiday; no class

October 16 : Reading *London Labour*

- Scholarly editing presentations
- Research resource presentation

Readings:***primary***

“Of ‘Cocks,’ etc.” (*LLLP ARES*)

“Of ‘Strawing,’ etc.” (*LLLP ARES*)

“Of the Sham Indecent Street Trade” (*LLLP ARES*)

“Of the Experience of a Street Author, or Poet” (*LLLP ARES*)

“Of the Experience of a Street Bookseller” (*LLLP ARES*)

“Of the ‘Screevers’ or Writers of Begging-Letters and Petitions” (*LLLP ARES*)

“Of the Street-Buyers of Waste (Paper)” (*LLLP ARES*)

secondary

Daniel Hack, “Sympathy for the Begging Letter Writer” (*ARES*)

October 23 : Fall break; no class**October 30 : Reading *London Labour***

- Scholarly editing presentations
- Research resource presentation

Readings:***primary***

“The Crippled Street-Seller of Nutmeg Graters” (*LLLP ARES*)

“Of the Low Lodging Houses” (*LLLP ARES*)

“A Night at Rat-Killing” (*LLLP ARES*)

“Snake, Sword, and Knife Swallower” (*LLLP ARES*)

“Old Sarah” (*LLLP ARES*)

“Tom Tom Players” (*LLLP ARES*)

secondary

Natalie Prizel, “The Non-Taxonomical Mayhew”

November 6 : Reading *London Labour*

- Scholarly editing presentations
- Research resource presentation

Readings

primary

“Of the Mud-Larks” (*LLP ARES*)

“Of the Dustmen, Nightmen, Sweeps, and Scavengers” (*LLP ARES*)

“Of the Subterranean Character of the Sewers” (*LLP ARES*)

“The London Dock” (*LLP ARES*)

“Pickpockets and Shoplifters” (*LLP ARES*)

“Clandestine Prostitutes” (*LLP ARES*)

secondary

John Scanlan, “‘In Deadly Time’: The Lasting on of Waste in Mayhew’s London”

November 13 : Dickens!

- Scholarly editing presentations
- Research resource presentation

Readings:

primary:

Oliver Twist (Broadview)

Secondary

Patrick Brantlinger, “How Oliver Twist Learned to Read, and What He Read” (*ARES*)

November 20 : Dickens 2!

- Scholarly editing presentations
- Research resource presentation

Readings

primary

Dickens, *Oliver Twist*

Dickens, “The Streets – Morning” from *Sketches by Boz* (*ARES*)

Dickens, “The Streets – Night” from *Sketches by Boz* (*ARES*)

Dickens, “A Visit to Newgate” from *Sketches by Boz* (*ARES*)

Dickens, “A Nightly Scene in London” from *Household Words* (*ARES*)

Secondary

Larry Wolff, “‘The Boys are Pickpockets, and the Girl is a Prostitute’: Gender and Juvenile Criminality in Early Victorian England from *Oliver Twist* to *London Labour*”

November 27 : Going Incognito / Cross-Class Masquerades

- Scholarly editing presentations
- Research resource presentation

Readings:**Primary**

James Greenwood, "A Night in a Workhouse" (ARES)

Elizabeth Banks, "Chapters 1 and 3" from *Campaigns of Curiosity* (ARES)

Elizabeth Banks, "A Day with the Flower Girls" from *Campaigns of Curiosity* (ARES)

secondary

Seth Koven, from Chapters 1 and 3 of *Slumming: Sexual and Social Politics in Victorian London*

December 4 : "Hidden Worlds"

- Research resource presentation

Readings:**primary**

Katherine Boo, *Behind the Beautiful Forevers* (Random House)

secondary

Mike Davis, "A Surplus Humanity?" (ARES)

Friday, December 8 : Wrap Up

(class follows a Monday schedule to make up for stat holiday on Oct 9)

- 3-minute presentations (final thoughts)
- Learning self-assessment
- Course evaluation (required by the university)
- Presentation of DIY Documentaries over drinks and snacks (?)

Reading:

Behind the Beautiful Forevers

Seminar structure

- 5 minute check-in at the beginning of every class with a chance to ask housekeeping questions about the course, assignments, upcoming deadlines, etc.
- 10-15 minute roundtable where we share some first thoughts about the primary readings for the day
- 1st scholarly editing presentation + discussion
- 2nd scholarly editing presentation + discussion

- Break
- 3rd scholarly editing presentation + discussion (there will be four classes where it will be necessary to have a third presentation)
- Research resource presentation + talk back
- Final insights/unfinished business/summing it up/in-class writing exercises