

## ***Fall/Winter 2019-2020***

**AP/EN 3550 6.0 (Y)**

### ***The Victorians***

**Course Director:**

Douglas Freake  
dfreake@yorku.ca

**Delivery Format:**

Seminar

**Time:**

Wednesday 2:30-5:30pm

**Description:**

One could validly claim that “the Victorians are us.” During the period of Queen Victoria’s reign as queen of the United Kingdom and, later, as Empress of India as well, British society underwent changes and faced challenges that we are still grappling with today. The British Empire reached the peak of its power; the Industrial Revolution affected all aspects of society; class conflict took on new forms, especially in regard to relations between capitalists and workers, the social positions of women were examined in new and more radical ways, and tensions between religious and scientific views of the world (especially in regard to Darwinism) became acute. This course offers a broad survey of the major literary forms of the day and the ways in which literature, broadly understood, represented and wrestled with the issues just described. This was the great age of the novel, so the course highlights that genre, but the achievements of poets and cultural critics also figure prominently. Besides addressing Victorian texts in their historical and cultural contexts, we will focus on close readings of various works in order to gain a fuller appreciation of their aesthetic value and to improve our reading skills.

**Category:**

C

**Historical Requirement:**

Time Period II (1700-1900)

**Requirements:**

Six short essays (4-5 pages each)	60%
Oral presentation	10%
Class participation	15%
Final test	15%

**Reading List:**

The following novels and tales (all in Oxford World Classics editions, which are remarkably cheap) are available at the York University Bookstore:

Jane Eyre, *Wuthering Heights*

Charles Dickens, *Great Expectations*

George Eliot, *Silas Marner*

Thomas Hardy, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*

Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde and Other Tales*

Oscar Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest*

Selections of writing by John Stuart Mill, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Alfred, Lord Tennyson, Robert Browning, John Ruskin, Matthew Arnold, Thomas Henry Huxley, Christina Rossetti, Walter Pater, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Charles Darwin, Friedrich Engels, Coventry Patmore, Harriet Martineau, and T.N. Mukarji will be made available online or in class

**Open To:**

Year 3 and 4