

Assignments

These assignments are designed to give you practice in historical, archival and academic research, in academic and online writing for multiple audiences, and in orally presenting your research.

You cannot do your essay on the same text on which you do your exhibit entry.

1. VICTORIAN CULTURE AND THOUGHT DIGITAL EXHIBIT ENTRY

Value: 20% for web entry; 5% for revisions

Length: 1000 words

Presentation and Entry Due: See below.

Revision Due: 7 days after I give you the feedback.

Sign up: Signup on Moodle opens Friday after class and will be first come, first served.

As the Victorians well knew, when technology changes, so do methods of communicating ideas. Today, academics frequently share their research in a digital format: doing so not only encourages immediate scholarly conversation, but it also opens that conversation to non-academic readers. Victorianist scholars are among the greatest contributors to the growing online collection of open-access academic writing.

For this assignment, you too will participate in online Victorian scholarship by contributing entries to an online exhibit of primary sources taken from the journals, magazines and newspapers that provide the contexts for the works our class is reading. You can find the online exhibit at www.victoriancultureandthought.wordpress.com.

Sign up on Moodle for one of the presentation dates and one of the works. Your assignment is to **find an article, story, illustration, poem, or advertisement** published within a ten-year range of your chosen work from one of the non-electronic Victorian periodicals held in our library.¹ **Choose one that addresses a similar theme** to your chosen work and **scan or photograph up to three pages** of it to illustrate your entry on the website.²

Write an entry for the exhibit that compares how your found piece and the piece you signed up for approach their shared theme. Consider differences or similarities among opinion, style, and rhetoric. Consider how the audiences, authors, and periodical sources of each piece affect the approach. For example, a piece on the Labour Movement appearing in Dickens's periodical *Household Words* will be considerably different to one appearing in the more conservative *Blackwood's Magazine*. You will need to research historical context for the theme, movements, or

¹ **Each periodical can have up to four students use it as a source for their piece.** I will keep a list of which periodicals have been used so you may check if your choice has been filled.

² Due to copyright laws, you must scan or photograph it yourself from the library's hard copy or a microfilm rather than use an online copy.

events the pieces discuss (citing all secondary sources used for the information). You may also wish to research the authors and periodical sources of the pieces to find out their intended audiences and their political leanings.³ The entry is due the same day as your presentation. You submit it by uploading it and the scans to victoriantcultureand thought.wordpress.com following the guidelines on the Wordpress handout.

Style Guidelines

Remember your audience! You are writing for other academic scholars and general readers, as well as for your classmates. Below the assignment description, you can find links to examples of online academic writing by Victorianists. Aim to sound academic, while still being accessible to the general reader.

Use MLA style for in-text citation and the works cited; paragraph indents and hanging indents for the works cited, however, are not necessary, as they require html knowledge in Wordpress. As in MLA style, italicize book, journal, and periodical titles; put article, poem, short story, or illustration titles in quotation marks.

Grading

I will grade the entry considering the following questions:

- Is the choice of piece original and interesting?
- Will the entry contribute to the class's and the general public's understanding of the pieces and their contexts?
- Is the entry original, informative, clear, concise, and well organized?
- Does the entry have a clear thesis statement near its opening to make its argument clear to readers?
- Is the analysis sophisticated?
- Was the historical and cultural context adequately researched?
- Does the entry properly cite sources according to MLA style?
- Is it written with correct grammar and punctuation?
- Is the writing sufficiently academic, but accessible for the average reader?
- Have you chosen appropriate and helpful tags for your entry? Ones that will guide readers to related entries from other students?

Revisions

If all revisions are wholly and correctly made, you will receive 5/5. If they are not, you have two days to fix the remaining errors. If then they are wholly and correctly made, you will get 4/5. If not, you have one day to fix the remaining errors. If then they are wholly and correctly made, you will get 3/5. (And so on.)

Due Dates and Articles

³ The *Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals*, *The Waterloo Directory of Victorian Periodicals*, and victorianweb.org will help you to research the periodicals. Use the online *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* through the library to research the authors.

Labour and Class

21 January – Engels, from *The Conditions of the Working Class* OR Dickens, from “A Walk in a Workhouse”

24 January – Mayhew, from *London Labour and the London Poor* OR Mill, from *On Liberty*

Faith and Doubt

28 January – Carlyle, from *Sartor Resartus* OR Jowett, from “On the Interpretation of Scripture”

5 February – Newman, from *Apologia pro Vita Sua* OR Stephen, from “An Agnostic Apology”

Victorian Bodies

19 February – Dodd, from *Narrative of the Experience and Suffering of William Dodd, A Factory Cripple* OR Martineau, from *Life in the Sickroom*

25 February – Thomson, “On Chloroform” OR Kitto, from *The Lost Senses*

Gender and Sexuality

4 March – Ellis, *The Women of England* OR Bodichon, from *A Brief Summary*

11 March – Ruskin, from *Sesame and Lilies* OR Mill, from *The Subjection of Women* OR Hughes, from *The Manliness of Christ*

Empire and Travel

18 March – Livingstone, from *Missionary Travels and Researches* OR Eden, from “Up the Country”

21 March – Wallace, from *The Malay Archipelago* OR Trollope, from *Australia and New Zealand*

Aesthetics and Culture

28 March – Arnold, from “Culture and Its Enemies” OR Buchanan, from “The Fleshly School of Poetry”

2 April – Pater, from *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* OR Morris, from *Hopes and Fears for Art*

Victorian Periodicals held by the UVic Library in hard copy or microfilm/microfiche

(This is not an exhaustive list—feel free to look directly on the shelves or in the microfilm in the AP4 section for other periodicals to find your text.)

All the Year Round

Atalanta

Bentley's Miscellany

Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine

Chambers's Edinburgh Journal

The Chartist Circular

Chatterbox (Children's Magazine)

Cornhill

The Dark Blue

The English Woman's Journal

The Family Economist

Good Words

Graphic

Harper's Weekly/Journal (American)

Household Words

Illustrated London News

Irish Monthly

The Keepsake

Nineteenth Century

Once A Week

Pall Mall Gazette

The Penny Magazine

Punch

The Saturday Review

St. Nick (American Children's
Magazine)
The Strand
Temple Bar

The Times
Victorian Magazine
The Yellow Book

Examples of online, academic writing by scholars in Victorian history and literature

Victorian Poetry: Poetics and Context (includes entries by UVic undergraduate students) – <http://victorianpoetrypoeticsandcontext.wikispaces.com/>

The Victorian Web – <http://www.victorianweb.org/>

Journal of Victorian Culture Online – <http://myblogs.informa.com/jvc/>

Victorian Poetry Network – <http://web.uvic.ca/~vicpoet/>

BRANCH: Britain, Representation, and Nineteenth-Century History -
<http://www.branchcollective.org/>

Nineteenth Century Disability – <http://www.nineteenthcenturydisability.org/>

Nines: Nineteenth Century Scholarship Online - <http://www.nines.org/>

Songs of the Victorians – <http://www.songs-of-the-victorians.com/>

2. DIGITAL EXHIBIT ENTRY PRESENTATION

Value: 5%

Length: 5 minutes

Date: See above.

For this assignment, you will present your research to the class. In the presentation, you will give a short description of how you found your source and a brief explanation about why the source interested you, how it addresses the topic, and how it differs from or is similar to the assigned reading. Do not simply read or summarize your exhibit entry for the class; instead your presentation should introduce the class to your chosen piece, describe your research process, present your thesis, and make the class interested in reading your complete entry once it is published on the website.

I will grade the presentation considering the following questions:

- Were your points informative, clear, concise, and well organized?
- Was your presentation engaging and did it facilitate productive discussion?
- Did you maintain good eye contact with the class and speak clearly and audibly?
- Did you use appropriately formal language?
- Did you meet the time limit, not going too long or too short?

3. RESEARCH ESSAY:

Value: 35%

Length: 2500–3000 words

Due Date for Proposal: Friday March 7

Due Date for Essay: Tuesday April 1

Please prepare and submit your essays as follows:

1. Double spacing, 1" margins, 12 point Cochin or Times New Roman font
ONLY
2. All pages numbered
3. Use MLA citation style
4. Provide Works Cited section according to MLA guidelines
5. Upload either a **doc, rtf, or pdf** file of your essay to Moodle by the beginning of class on the due date.

Your assignment is to write an essay on one or more texts on the course syllabus. Your essay should analyse a particular theme or other aspect of a text or texts on the course list. The topic for this assignment is deliberately left open to enable you to suit your interests and knowledge.

Restrictions: Please note that you should not work on the text on which you did your exhibit entry.

Essay structure and style: The introduction should clearly state your argument (your thesis) and provide the general direction and perspective of the essay. Paragraphs should be unified and developed well (at least five sentences long), with clear transitions signalling development or shift in perspective. The thesis should be clearly maintained throughout and the conclusion should be a final analysis, not solely a repeated summary. Use specific examples but avoid excessive quotation. Essays may fail because of pervasive compositional errors. Be sure to consult grammar handbooks, your instructor, or the Writing Centre for help.

Historical Context: Any good literary analysis should consider the text in relation to its cultural and political contexts, publication history, and readership insofar as these are relevant to your discussion. The research component of the assignment requires you 1) to situate the text(s) you choose in relation to the broader social context of your topic; and 2) to include in your paper a discussion of the publication of the text(s) you choose. The extent of this discussion of publication history is up to you; it may be a brief section or introductory preamble to your paper, or it may constitute a larger portion of your paper. For example, if you choose to write about representations of women in Mayhew's *London Labour and the London Poor*, you may want to situate your discussion in relation to broader debates about the nature and role of women or, perhaps, in relation to other texts on the course syllabus. This is up to you. But you will need to include a discussion of the origins of *London Labour and the London Poor* in Mayhew's writing for the *Morning Chronicle* and his development of the newspaper series for serial and book publication. If you choose to write on John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty*, which was not first published in the periodical press, your secondary research will need to focus on finding out which press first published the volume, how it was issued (i.e. serially or as a book), if the text was based on lectures, etc.

Secondary Sources: I strongly encourage the use of scholarly secondary sources; you should situate yours as one voice in a community of scholars. Your essay, then, should frame its argument in relation to other scholars working on your topic and/or your text. You should learn to use the MLA International Bibliography and ArticleFirst databases to search for relevant literary criticism. These are found on the UVic Libraries Gateway as follows: go to <http://library.uvic.ca/>, click the “Databases” tab, click on “Databases by subject,” and then choose “Literature” as your subject. You will find MLA International Bibliography and ArticleFirst among them.

Proposal: March 7, you must email me (kyh@uvic.ca) a brief proposal outlining your proposed essay topic. Try to be as specific as possible. Please pose any questions you may have about the viability of your topic, how to begin your research, etc., and I will email you with suggestions and feedback. If you need help choosing an essay topic, I am happy to discuss this process with you. My advice is to choose a topic that excites and interests you. If you are having difficulty finding a focus or feel stuck, please come and see me before the proposal deadline. **I will not accept the essay if I have not approved your proposal in advance.**

Grading:

- Quality of your analysis. Have you made an effective argument about your chosen text? Do you undertake careful close reading in mounting your argument?
- Quality of your research. Have you undertaken appropriate secondary research on your topic? Have you delved into the archive for relevant primary sources? Do you contextualize your argument in relation to relevant socio-historical events/debates and/or other authors’ perceptions of your topic?
- Quality of your prose. Is your essay well organized? Are your grammar and spelling correct? Is your writing stylistically sophisticated?