

English 325: Victorian Literature
Professor Sirabian

In this course we will read the poetry, prose, drama, and fiction of British Victorian authors, such as Tennyson, Carlyle, Dickens, Emily Brontë, Christina Rossetti, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Kipling, Stevenson, and Florence Nightingale. We will read this literature not only to study each work's artistic value but also to understand the social, cultural, historical, and political contexts that frame this literature and the period in which it was written. In addition, we will examine theory and criticism as a way of reading, thinking, and writing about literature.

Specific works will fall under a topic or theme, such as empire, industrialization and democracy, play and games, and gender. Of course, works can address multiple themes, so we will want to keep this in mind as we move through the semester. Moreover, each main topic or theme invokes numerous subthemes we can explore. Finally, we will consider visual culture in the form of artworks and illustrations that complement the literature of the period.

Estimate of Course Requirements: Two exams, two short essays, some quizzes and weekly assignments.

As you read this semester, I hope you come to see the striking parallels between the Victorian Age and our own society.



Portrait of Queen Victoria Holding Portrait of Prince Albert, negative July 1854; print 1889, Bryan Edward Duppa and Gustav William Henry Mullins, carbon print. Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2013



Dickens's Dream, by Robert William Buss. The dozing Charles Dickens seated in his Gad's Hill Place study surrounded by many of the characters he had created.