

English 3328: British Masterpieces, II
Spring, 2015
Dr. James Pipkin

Course Requirements: active participation in class discussion, two papers (the first 5-6 pages and the second 10-12 pages), and a final examination.

This course will not attempt the usual survey of nineteenth and early twentieth-century British literature. Instead, it will focus on four poets and four novelists who are representative in certain ways of Romantic, Victorian, and Modernist literatures and explore the ways they each responded to a major crisis in culture. More specifically, we will pair Lord Byron and Jane Austen, Alfred Tennyson and Charles Dickens, Gerard Manley Hopkins and Thomas Hardy, and T.S. Eliot and Virginia Woolf.

The four crises in culture are the French Revolution, the Industrial Revolution and the rise of the new sciences, *fin de siècle*, and World War I. Some of the specific issues include the conflicting claims of science and religion, the possibilities of individualism in an increasingly mass society, the value of imaginative vision in a utilitarian world, and the viability of myths in a world that is paradoxically seen as both ruled by tradition and marked by chaos.

Reading List:

Austen *Pride and Prejudice*

Byron: *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* and *Manfred*

Dickens *Hard Times*

Tennyson *In Memoriam*

Hopkins selected sonnets

Hardy *The Mayor of Casterbridge*

Eliot *The Waste Land*

Woolf *Mrs. Dalloway*