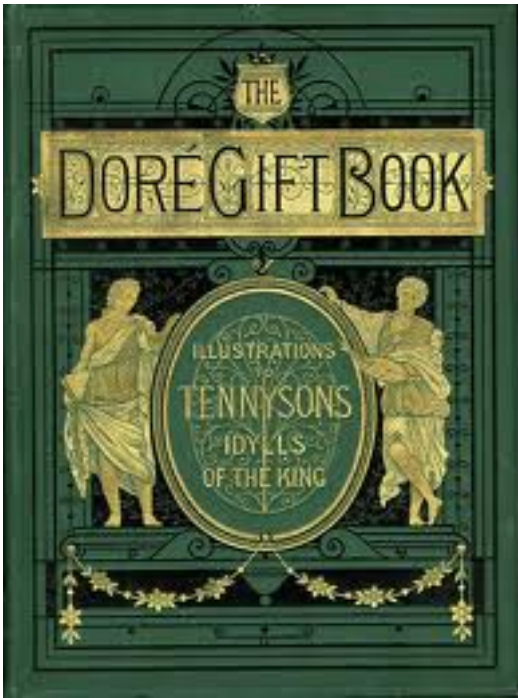


English 550: Victorian Poetry (Fall 2013)

Dr. Alison Chapman



Class Meets: Thursdays, 1.30 - 4.20 p.m.
(Special Collections Classroom, basement of McPherson Library)

Set text: *Broadview Anthology of Victorian Poetry and Poetic Theory* (larger edition; should be copies available second hand in campus bookstore)

Class Website:

popularvictorianpoetry.wordpress.com

Outline of Course:

What would Victorian Poetry look like if, instead of the current teaching and research canon of poets represented by, for example, the major critical anthologies (such as the *Broadview Anthology of Victorian Poetry and Poetic Theory*), we replaced it with the poetry most read, and most popular, at the time? This is the premise of English 500, to reconstruct Victorian poetry through what Victorian readers read, through contemporary reception, rather through the lens of current critical and canonical fashions. The course responds to recent and emerging developments in Victorian studies, including periodical studies and print culture, canon formation, the history of reading, and the importance of popular literature.

Course Aims

- To introduce or deepen your knowledge of the Victorian poetry and its relevant print contexts
- To explore a range of topics in Victorian poetry studies, such as reception history, print culture, popular culture, distant reading, digital reading
- To give you confidence in your close reading of poetry and to deepen your critical and analytical skills
- To improve your skills in essay writing, class debate and oral presentation
- To introduce you to, or to deepen your knowledge of, designing, creating and writing for a public website

Seminar Etiquette:

- Seminars will be student-focused
 - Seminar teaching will adapt some of the approaches of Digital Pedagogy
 - Seminars will usually include a short talk by the instructor (or guest lecturer), student presentations, and group discussion. Sometimes there may be focused and structured workshops.
 - Seminars will work with both the poetry and literary/cultural/historical criticism. We will adopt close reading practices, pay attention to print culture and literary reception, and examine the most current models of literary reading.
 - The syllabus is determined here by the instructor, but student discoveries will also shape the eventual popular poetry canon that we will create collectively (see below)
 - Students will come to class having done the required reading, ready to discuss the material, and prepared to both ask and answer questions
 - If anything isn't clear, students have the responsibility to tell me
 - Laptops are allowed in the class only by permission of the instructor
 - Cell phones and hand-held devices are to be switched off in class
 - Checking social media or email during the seminar is disruptive and not allowed
- Students will feel confident in talking to me about their progress in the class at any point in the semester
 - Students will complete all assignments on time, unless an extension has previously been granted (see below)
 - Students will attend all seminars unless prevented by illness or a personal emergency (if such things befall you, and I hope they do not, please let me know!)



My expectations:

- Students will be prepared for each class and keep up with the reading and research
- Students will tell me if they encounter problems or do not understand something
- If students need help contributing to the discussion they will ask me for advice

Assessment Goal:

To create collectively a digital resource on Victorian Poetry, based on the poems that most Victorians actually read. Technical skill requirements are minimal and full help will be given by the instructor.

Assignments-at-a-glance:

Presentation (10%), revised as 500-1000 word descriptive wiki entry (10%).

Deadlines throughout the semester; details to follow

Prepare 2 poems for the online popular poetry anthology (includes brief introduction [c. 500 words], jpeg and transcription, and any necessary light annotations if necessary [explaining unusual words, quotations, influences etc.], plus any relevant contextual material). **(15% x 2)**

Deadlines throughout the semester; details to follow.

Research Project (40%), choosing a topic from a list prepared by me, and including a range of writing formats. The project will ultimately form an addition to the website. Deadline % details to follow.

Participation (10%)

N.B. completion of all assignments is required in this course. Failure to complete any assignment without an extension will result in an N grade.

Key Digital Indexes and Databases:

- *Waterloo Directory of English Newspapers and Periodicals, 1800-1900* [UVic database]
- [Database of Victorian Periodical Poetry](#)
- [Periodical Poetry Index](#)
- [Index of British Periodicals](#)

[The Local Press as Poetry Publisher](#)

General Victorian Digital Resources:

- [NINES](#)
- www.victorianweb.org
- <http://victorianresearch.org>
- [BRANCH](#)

Key Print Material in Reserve:

Richard D. Altick, *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public, 1800-1900* (Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1957) Z1003 A57 1998

Brake, Laurel, *Print in Transition, 1850-1910: Studies in Media and Book History* (London: Palgrave 2001)

Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor (eds.), *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism In Great Britain and Ireland* (London: British Library, 2009) PN5117 D53

Richard Cronin, Alison Chapman and Antony H. Harrison (eds.), *A Companion to Victorian Poetry* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002) PR591 C66

Lee Erickson, *The Economy of Literary Form: English Literature and the Industrialization of Publishing, 1800-1850* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996) PR451 E75

James Mussell, *The Nineteenth-Century Press in the Digital Age* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012) e-book through UVic

William St. Clair's *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2004) Z1003 S77

Essential Essays:

Andrew Hobbs, "Five Million Poems, or the Local Press as Poetry Publisher, 1800-1900," *Victorian Periodicals Review* 45 (2012): 488-92

Natalie M. Houston, "Newspaper Poems: Material Texts in the Public Sphere", *Victorian Studies* 50 (2008): 233-42

Linda K. Hughes, "What the Wellesley Left Out: Why Poetry Matters to Periodical Studies," *Victorian Periodicals Review* 40, no. 2 (Summer 2007): 91-125

*** More reading will be suggested in the course of the semester**

Seminar Schedule



Week 1 (5 September): Best Sellers, Popularity, Circulation in the Literary Marketplace: Metrics and Methodologies

- Introduction to course and to each other
- Handling Special Collections Material
- Important resources
- Our digital class platform
- Instructor presentation: what is Victorian popular poetry, and what's at stake with the category "popular"?
- Kinds of reading: close, distant, vicarious
- The Broadview Anthology: How to use it
- Library Tour

Special Collections Material:

Keepsake (1829) SC AY13 K4

John Keble, *The Christian Year* (second American edition, 1840) SC PR4839 K15 C4

Macaulay, *Lays of Ancient Rome* (1842) SC PR 4963 A7 1842

Penny Magazine (1845) AP4 P44

Harper's New Monthly Magazine (June 1850) AP2 H3

Household Words, No. 1, Vol. 1 (1850) SC AP4 H7

All the Year Round, No. 1, Vol. 1 (1859) SC AP4 A4

Cornhill Magazine, Vol. 1 (1860) SC AP4 C8
Alfred, Lord Tennyson, *Enoch Arden* (1864) PR 5555 A1
Strand (1896) SC AP458

Secondary Reading (please catch up with these by next week):

Altick, *Common Reader*, Appendices A, B, C (handout)

Natalie Houston, "The Middle Distance," <http://digitalvictorian.org/2012/03/the-middle-distance/>

Linda K. Hughes, "What the Wellesley Left Out: Why Poetry Matters to Periodical Studies," *Victorian Periodicals Review* 40: 2 (Summer 2007): 91-125

Franco Moretti, "Conjectures on World Literature," *New Left Review*, 1 (January-February 2000), unpaginated, online

Nicholson, Bob (2012), "Digital Detectives: Rediscovering the Scholar Adventurer," *Victorian Periodicals Review* 45: 2, 215-23



Week 2 (12 September): From magazine to book publishing

Case Study: Christina Rossetti

How and why do authors navigate between serial, ephemeral print and high-status book publication? What difference do the different print media have on the poetry's reception history? What happens when the periodical poem is read in its deep print context? How can this be replicated in an anthology?

Special Collections Material:

Christina Rossetti, *Goblin Market and Other Poems* (1862) PR5237 G6 [Broadview 848ff]

“The Round Tower at Jhansi” (*Once a Week*, 13 August 1859: 140) AP4 O4

“Maude Clare” (*Once a Week*, 5 November 1859: 381–2)

“Up-Hill” (*Macmillan's Magazine*, February 1861: 325) AP4 M2 [Broadview 858]

“A Birthday” (*Macmillan's Magazine*, April 1861: 498) [Broadview 855]

“An Apple-Gathering” (*Macmillan's Magazine*, August 1861: 329) [Broadview 856]

“Light Love” (*Macmillan's Magazine*, February 1863: 287)

“The Bourne” (*Macmillan's Magazine*, March 1863: 382)

“The Lowest Room” (*Macmillan's Magazine*, March 1864: 436–39)

“Helen Gray” (*Macmillan's Magazine*, March 1866: 375)

“By the Waters of Babylon” (*Macmillan's Magazine*, October 1866: 424–6)

“Mother Country” (*Macmillan's Magazine*, March 1868: 403–4)

“Dead Hope” (*Macmillan's Magazine*, May 1868: 86)

“They Desire a Better Country” (*Macmillan's Magazine*, March 1869: 422–3)

“Venus's Looking-Glass” and “Love Lies Bleeding” (*Argosy*, January 1873: 31). AP4 A71



Week 3 (19 September): Literary Annuals

Special Collections Material:

Forget-Me-Not 1823, 1833, 1843 SC AY13 F62

The Keepsake 1828, 1838, 1848, 1857 SC AY13 K4

Gem (1829) SC AY13 G3

Literary Souvenir (1833) SC AY13 L5

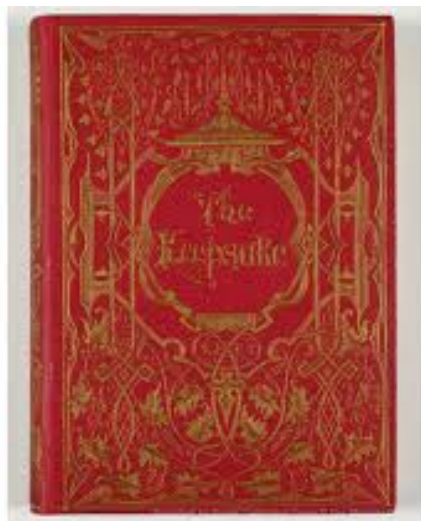
Digital Resources:

Forget-Me-Not: A Hyper-Textual Archive
<<http://www.orgs.muohio.edu/anthologies/FMN/>>

Nineteenth-Century British Literary Annuals
<http://bookhistory.ischool.utoronto.ca/annuals/Keepsake> (1829)

<http://www.rc.umd.edu/editions/lcl/keepsake.htm>

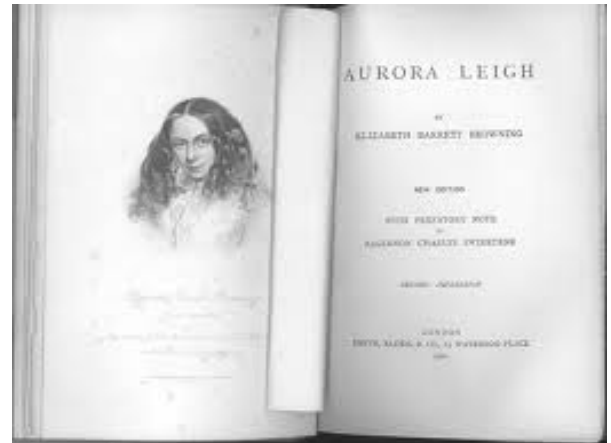
Why were the literary annuals so popular? How did their verbal-visual relations re-package poetry? Why did the annual fashion wane in the 1850s? What were the attractions and pitfalls involved in poets publishing in the annuals?



Week 4 (26 September): Christmas Gift Books

Special Collections Material:

Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Aurora Leigh* (1857) PR4185 A1 1857 [Broadview 82ff]
A selection of periodical Christmas issues



Week 5 (3 October): Hymns

Special Collections Material:

John Keble, *The Christian Year* SC PR4839
K15 C4 (second American edition, 1840)

Secondary Reading:

Alisa Clapp-Intyre, "Writing for, Yet Apart:
Nineteenth-Century British Women's
Contentious Status as Hymn Writers and
Editors for Children", *Victorian Literature
and Culture* 2012, 40, 47-81

J. R. Watson, "Hymn", *Companion to
Victorian Poetry* (Blackwell)

Week 6 (10 October) Songs and Lyrics, (music hall, drawing-room, print)

Special Collections Material:

Thomas Hood, "Song of the Shirt," *Punch* 16
December 1843 [Broadview 26ff)

John Stuart Mill, "What is Poetry?"
[Broadview 1212-20]

And see the following songs in the
Broadview:

Letitia Landon, "Sappho's Song" (34-5)

Tennyson, "Break, break, break" (194)

Christina Rossetti, "Song" (857)

Alice Meynell, "Cradle-Song at Twilight
(1090)

A. Mary F. Robinson, "Song" (1127)

Plus:

William Holman Hunt, *The Awakening
Conscience* (1853) (picture)

Edmund H. Garrett, *Victorian song: lyrics of
the affections and nature*, ebook/uvic

Resources:

<http://www.victorianweb.org/mt/parlorsongs/>

<http://www.songsofthevictorians.com>

Week 7 (17 October): Newspaper Poetry 1

Special Collections Material:

Chartist Circular SC HD8396 C52

Scots Observer (1888-1990) SC AP4 S385

Plus:

Northern Star

<http://www.ncse.ac.uk/headnotes/nss.html>

Secondary Reading:

Kirstie Blair, "'A Very Poetical Town':
Newspaper Poetry and the Working-Class
Poet in Victorian Dundee" (forthcoming,
VP, in course website).

Andrew Hobbs and Claire Januszewski,
"How local newspapers came to dominate
Victorian poetry publishing" (ditto)

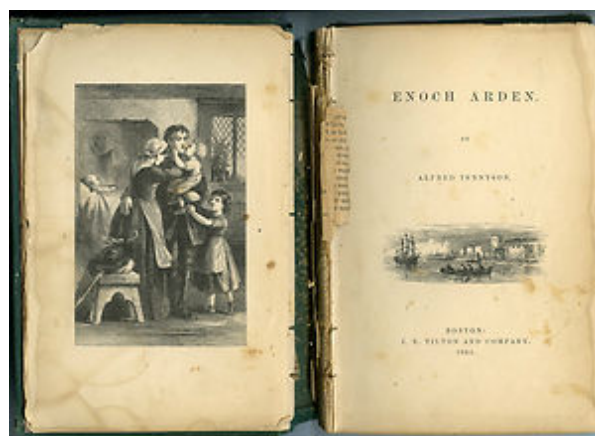
Andrew Hobbs, "Five Million Poems, or the
Local Press as Poetry Publisher, 1800-
1900," *Victorian Periodicals Review* 45
(2012): 488-92

Week 8 (24 October) Case Study: Tennyson

Instructor away at NAVSA conference

Guest Instructor: Sam MacFarlane

In Memoriam, *Enoch Arden*, and Tennyson as
Poet Laureate; reading tbc.



Week 9 (31 October): Poetry in Schools
Felicia Hemans, "Casabianca" [Broadview 16]

Secondary Reading:

From Catherine Robson, *Heart Beats* (photocopy provided)



Week 10 (7 November) Newspaper Poetry
2

Special Collections Material:

Tennyson, "The Charge of the Light Brigade", *Examiner*, 9 December 1854, p. 780 (available online through UVic Library) [Broadview 253]

Elizabeth Barrett Browning, "A Tale of Villafranca," *Athenaeum*, 24 September 1859, p. 397 (available online through UVic)

Rudyard Kipling, "Tommy" (as "The Queen's Uniform"), (*Scots Observer*, 1 March 1890: 409–10) SC AP4 S385

How does newspaper poetry interact with journalism? How does publishing in a newspaper ensure topicality, but what about the cost of longevity? What do poems add to newspapers, and vice versa?

Secondary Reading:

Natalie M. Houston, "Newspaper Poems: Material Texts in the Public Sphere", *Victorian Studies* 50 (2008): 233-42

Week 11 (14 November): Best-selling Periodical Issues

Special Collections Material:

Penny Magazine (1845) AP4 P44

Harper's New Monthly Magazine (June 1850) AP2 H3

Household Words, No. 1, Vol. 1 (1850) SC AP4 H7

All the Year Round, No. 1, Vol. 1 (1859) SC AP4 A4

Cornhill Magazine, Vol. 1 (1860) SC AP4 C8
Strand (1896) SC AP458

Secondary Reading

Linda K. Hughes, "On New Monthly Magazines, 1859-60." *BRANCH: Britain, Representation and Nineteenth-Century History*. Ed. Dino Franco Felluga. Extension of *Romanticism and Victorianism on the Net*. Web.

What function does poetry serve in these issues? How does the periodical affect the way we read the poetry in context?

Week 12 (21 November) Some famous flops, failures, and poems with little or no contemporary Victorian readership

If we construct a canon based on the poems most Victorians read, what do we leave out? Why were these poems under-appreciated in their time? Why do they matter for literary studies?

Special Collections Material:

The Germ (facsimile) SC AP4 G34 1970; plus <http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/ap4.g4.15.raw.html>

Poems by Acton, Currer and Ellis Bell:

<http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/bro/nre/poems/poems.html/>

<http://books.google.ca/books?id=VbADA AAAQAAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=poe ms+by+acton+bell&hl=en&sa=X&ei=dv MnUtyOKebKiAKd24HQCw&ved=0CDE Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=poems%20by %20acton%20bell&f=false>

Currer Bell [Charlotte Brontë], *The Professor, to which are added the poems by Acton, Currer and Ellis Bell, now first collected* PR4167 P7 1888

Robert Browning, *Pauline*, PR4217 A2W5 (reprint)

Various poems by Hopkins [see Broadview selection 1941ff]

Mary E. Coleridge, *Fancy's Guerdon*, SC PR6005 O3G8

Michael Field, *Underneath the Bough* SC PR4699 F5U5 1893

Oscar Wilde, *Poems* (1881) SC PR5814 1881

Week 13 (28 November): Round Table on Projects

Each student will give a short poster presentation on their research project, and the class will give constructive feedback and discussion. Further details to follow.

15-20 mins will be reserved at the end of the class for students to complete CES.

