

Secondary Field Proposal and List: Transatlantic Nineteenth-Century Fiction

Rationale

My secondary field list includes a representative selection of nineteenth-century British and American fiction. This list will strengthen my understanding of nineteenth-century literature in its transatlantic context. I intend to read these fictional works attuned to a variety of transatlantic themes, some of which Clare Pettitt outlines in “The Transatlantic Novel in the Nineteenth Century”: “the formation of communities of reading and of authorship; the mapping of imaginary national landscapes; the political and popular use of sentiment; the international world of book and periodical publishing; the importance of communications technologies; and the time lag between the old and new worlds” (231-232). I will also read with attention to Ronjaunee Chatterjee, Alicia Mireles Christoff, and Amy R. Wong’s call, in the special issue of *Victorian Studies* titled “Undisciplining Victorian Studies,” to remedy the lack of rigorous study of race and racialization in contemporary Victorian literary scholarship. These authors acknowledge that “scholars of Victorian literature and culture are, in fact, scholars of Atlantic slavery, even if to date we have largely taken up that study through evasion or non-recognition” (“Undisciplining” 370). In an effort to cease these acts of evasion and non-recognition, in relation to Atlantic slavery as well as Indigenous peoples, I will read my sources with the purpose of questioning the “cherished objects of study,” “familiar historical and theoretical frameworks,” “engrained scholarly protocols,” and “the very demographics” (370) of Victorian studies.

I will read with attention to additional considerations, such as what Kevin Hutchings and John Miller call “transatlantic literary ecologies” in their book by the same name (2016). I am also interested in how America and Americans are represented and mediated fictionally in

British literature and vice versa, and in the formation and reputation of literary genres across the Atlantic. My secondary sources provide the context for many of these considerations. For example, in *Virtual Americas: Transnational Fictions and the Transatlantic Imaginary*, Paul Giles investigates the formation of British and American national identity through what he calls “a transatlantic imaginary” (1).

The selection of this list is designed, in part, to equip me to teach nineteenth-century British and American literature. As a result, it includes literary works that span the beginning, middle, and end of the nineteenth century and literary works from a variety of genres. Among, for instance, the sensational, realist, social, sentimental, and gothic works on the list are also fictional autobiography and abolitionist literature. As much as possible, this list attempts to represent a variety of authors spanning the nineteenth century, some of whom are well known and some lesser known. These authors and their works, in one way or more, lend themselves well to a transatlantic framework. For example, some works have controversial publication histories at home and abroad; others include pertinent representations of nationhood. I will analyze how the authors on my list, and their critics, have imagined, represented, and questioned the formation of British identity and American identity. How have, for example, questions of race and gender been absent because ignored, and how are these questions now addressed and integrated by literary critics who use the term “Transatlantic” to frame their work? I will analyze how some of the assumptions and approaches of these literary critics can contradict one another – Paul Gilroy’s idea of transnational modernity *contra* Fionnghuala Sweeney and Laura Chrisman’s rebuttals, for example – so as to become conversant with the current debates in the field.

American; Primary

Alcott, Louisa May. *Little Women* (1868-69)

Brown, William Wells. *Clotel* (1853)

Callahan, S. Alice. *Wynema* (1891)

Chesnutt, Charles. *The Marrow of Tradition* (1901)

Chopin, Kate. *The Awakening* (1899)

Cooper, James Fenimore. *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826)

Douglass, Frederick. *The Heroic Slave* (1852)

Harper, Frances E.W. *Iola Leroy* (1892)

Hawthorne, Nathaniel. *The Scarlet Letter* (1850)

Irving, Washington. [Selections from]*The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon* (1819-1820)

Jacobs, Harriet. *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861)

James, Henry. "Daisy Miller" (1878)

Melville, Herman. *Moby-Dick* (1851)

Poe, Edgar Allan. "Ligeia" (1838)

---. "The Fall of the House of Usher" (1839)

---. "The Purloined Letter" (1844)

Sedgwick, Catharine Maria. *Hope Leslie* (1827)

Stoddard, Elizabeth. *The Morgesons*(1862)

Stowe, Harriet Beecher. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852)

Twain, Mark. *The Innocents Abroad* (1869)

Webb, Frank. *The Garies and their Friends* (1857)

Wharton, Edith. *The House of Mirth* (1905)

Woolson, Constance F. "Miss Grief" (1880)

---. "Peter the Parson" (1874)

British; Primary

Bronte, Charlotte. *Jane Eyre* (1847)

Butler, Samuel. *The Way of All Flesh* (1903)

Collins, Wilkie. *The Woman in White* (1859)

Dickens, Charles. *David Copperfield* (1850)

Doyle, Arthur Conan. *A Study in Scarlet* (1887)

Eliot, George. *The Lifted Veil* (1859)

Gaskell, Elizabeth. *Lois the Witch* (1859)

---. *Mary Barton* (1848)

Hardy, Thomas. *The Return of the Native* (1878)

Kingsley, Charles. *Westward Ho!* (1855)

Lee, Vernon. "Lady Tal" (1892)

---. "Prince Alberic and the Snake Lady" (1896)

Martineau, Harriet. *Deerbrook* (1839)

Reade, Charles. *It is Never Too Late to Mend* (1856)

Scott, Walter. *Waverly; or 'tis Sixty Years Since* (1814)

Shelley, Mary. *Lodore*(1835)

Stevenson, Robert Louis. "The Bottle Imp" (1891)

---. "The Isle of Voices" (1893)

Thackeray, William M. *The Virginians* (1859)

Trollope, Anthony. *The Way We Live Now* (1875)

Trollope, Frances. *The Refugee in America* (1832)

Wilde, Oscar. *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890)

Yonge, Charlotte. *The Trial*. (1864)

Secondary readings:

Archibald, Diana C. *Domesticity, Imperialism, and Emigration in the Victorian Novel*. (2002)

Beer, Janet, and Bridget Bennett. *Special Relationships: Anglo-American Affinities and Antagonisms 1854-1936*. (2002)

Chatterjee, Ronjaunee, et al. "Undisciplining Victorian Studies." (Special issue of *Victorian Studies*, vol. 62, no. 3, Spring 2020.)

David, Deirdre. *The Cambridge Companion to the Victorian Novel* (2012)

Giles, Paul. *Virtual Americas: Transnational Fictions and the Transatlantic Imaginary* (2002)

Hutchings, Kevin, and John Miller. *Transatlantic Literary Ecologies* (2019)

Manning, Susan, and Andrew Taylor. *Transatlantic Literary Studies: A Reader* (2007)

McGill, Meredith L. *American Literature and the Culture of Reprinting*. (2003)

Phegley, Jennifer, et al. *Transatlantic Sensations* (2012)

Weisbuch, Robert. *Atlantic Double-Cross: American Literature and British Influence in the Age of Emerson*. (1986)

Westover, Paul, and Ann Wierda Rowland. *Transatlantic Literature and Author Love in the Nineteenth Century*. (2016)