

## Preliminary Web Course Description

\*Please note: This is a preliminary web course description only. The department reserves the right to change without notice any information in this description. The final, binding course outline will be distributed in the first class of the semester.

### School of English and Theatre Studies

Course Code: ENGL*6431	Course Title: 19 <sup>th</sup> -c Lit: Victorian Literature and Ecocriticism	Date of Offering: F'19
Course Instructor: Michelle Elleray		Course Format: seminar
<p><b>Brief Course Synopsis:</b></p> <p>The Victorian period saw the rise of industrial pollution, urban overcrowding, animal extinction, the beginnings of fast fashion, and environmentally-damaging resource extraction, as well as opportunities for big-game hunting through Britain's imperial presence. Meanwhile scientists expanded the Victorians' understanding of geological time from thousands of years to millennia, the first and second laws of thermodynamics focused attention on energy and generated narratives of resource exhaustion, while Darwin exploded the presumed distinction between human and non-human animals. This course will situate the Victorians' developing understandings of the biosphere in conversation with the ecocritical concerns raised in our own time as we investigate Victorian literature. Issues we might examine are the extent to which Victorian social causes intersect with a concern for environmental justice; the mobilizing force of narratives generated by scientific reframings of the environment and its resources; the extent to which a post-Darwinian awareness of the interrelatedness of organisms and environments raised questions of biological egalitarianism; or investigation into what is enabled through Victorian conflations of moral and environmental pollution.</p>		
<p><b>Methods of Evaluation and Weight (subject to change):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation 10%</li> <li>• Public writing 20%</li> <li>• Cultural/historical context presentation 10%</li> <li>• Research presentation 20%</li> <li>• Research essay 40%</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Texts and/or Resources Required (e.g. Internet access, specific textbook title, lab kit, etc.):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elizabeth Gaskell, <i>North and South</i> (1854)</li> <li>• Charles Kingsley, <i>The Water-Babies</i> (1863)</li> <li>• Gerard Manley Hopkins, poems (1870s and 80s)</li> <li>• George Manville Fenn, <i>Nat the Naturalist: or, A Boy's Adventures in Eastern Seas</i> (1883)</li> <li>• John Ruskin, "The Storm-Cloud of the Nineteenth Century" (1884)</li> <li>• H. G. Wells, <i>The Island of Dr. Moreau</i> (1896)</li> <li>• Plus assigned readings on ecocriticism and the primary texts</li> </ul> <p>We will be investigating the texts in this order if you want to get reading the novels before the semester begins. I'll be assigning the Broadview editions of Gaskell, Kingsley, and Wells (available as e-books through their website)</p>		