Department of History  
University of Western Ontario  
2016/17

History 9416A  
The Victorians at Home: 19\textsuperscript{th} c Britain

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Office hours: TBA

This course examines the domestic experience of men and women in nineteenth-century Britain. It covers both physical premises, from urban slums through suburban villas and country estates, and their inhabitants both upstairs and down. Topics include the domestic ideal, gender roles, and master/servant relations.

Students will be expected to read the Steinbach text for general background knowledge, plus at least one source from each weekly list. We will also collectively make our way through 

\textit{Middlemarch}. Often cited as the greatest 19\textsuperscript{th} c English novel, it addresses many of the themes highlighted in academic studies of the period.

**Required texts:**  
Susie Steinbach, \textit{Understanding the Victorians} (Routledge, 2012)  
George Eliot, \textit{Middlemarch} (1871-2; Penguin 2003)

Other readings will be available online or placed on reserve in Weldon Library.

**Grading scheme:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Words</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Book review (due 17 Oct.)</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>1200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seminar presentation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay (due 28 Nov.)</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>5000</td>
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**Learning outcomes**

At the conclusion of this course a successful student will be able to:

\begin{itemize}
  \item Evaluate evidence and assess historical claims.
  \item Assess historical approaches and methodologies.
  \item Articulate and defend historical ideas, arguments, and conclusions, both orally and in written prose.
\end{itemize}
• Engage with faculty and peers in discussion of both source material and the process of writing history.
• Contribute thoughtfully to debates about historical and methodological issues.
• Present historical knowledge effectively and engagingly.

1 (12 Sept.) **Introduction**

2 (19 Sept) **Whose home is it? 19th c demographics**
Steinbach, chs. 4, 6

D. Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy* (New Haven, 1990)

3 (26 Sept.) **Bricks and mortar: The Victorian house**
Steinbach, ch. 1


4 (3 Oct.) **Queen Victoria: Wife and mother**
Steinbach, ch. 8


Thanksgiving

5 (17 Oct.) Keeping up appearances: The middle-class housewife
Steinbach, chs. 5, 6

Kathryn Hughes, *The Short Life and Long Times of Mrs Beeton* (London, 2005)


Book review due

6 (24 Oct.) Masculinity and domesticity
Steinbach, ch. 7

A. Milne-Smith, *Clubland: A Cultural History of Gender and Class in Late Victorian Britain* (New York, 2011)

7 (31 Oct.) Bedroom and brothel: The Victorians and sex
Steinbach, ch. 11

S. Marcus, *The Other Victorians: A Study of Sexuality and Pornography in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Britain* (New York, 1966)
J. Weeks, *Sex, Politics and Society: The Regulation of Sexuality since 1800* (Harlow, 2012)
R. Jennings, *A Lesbian History of Britain: Love and Sex between Women since 1500* (Oxford, 2007), introduction, chaps. 3-5
8 (7 Nov.) Sculleries and scullery maids

P. Horn, *The Rise and Fall of the Victorian Domestic Servant* (Stroud, Gloucs, 1990)


9 (14 Nov.) In the garden: Forcing nature … and the farmers who fed cities


10 (21 Nov.) Food and drink: The Victorian kitchen


11 (28 Nov.) A death in the family: Victorian mourning

V. Bailey, *This Rash Act: Suicide across the Life Cycle in the Victorian City* (Stanford, 1998)
S. Barnard, *To Prove I'm Not Forgot: Living and Dying in a Victorian City* (Manchester, New York, 1990)
J.S. Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death* (Detroit, 1973)

Essay due

12 (5 Dec.) **Home away from home: British Victorian India**
Steinbach, ch. 3

V. Gavaskar, ‘Domesticating Empire: Figuring Womanhood at Home and Abroad’
http://www.clemson.edu/cedp/press/scr/articles/scr_46-1_gavaskar.pdf

*The Englishwoman in India* (1864)