



## Reading Lists for English

The Honour Moderations in English syllabus consists of four papers to be taken in Trinity term. At New College, the English tutors propose to teach this part of the course as follows. Over Michaelmas term and Hilary term: (Michaelmas) the Victorian paper (1832-1900), (Hilary) the Modern paper (1900-present day) and (Michaelmas and Hilary) Old English.

There is, in addition, a more general two-hour paper, 'Introduction to English Language and Literature.' This is a new paper and will be taught for the first time in 2012 through compulsory Faculty lectures and classes, with extra college classes to supplement it. Rather than a traditional exam, this is assessed by a portfolio consisting of a commentary exercise and general essay and submitted in week 5 of the Trinity Term. The commentary exercise will ask you to analyse the use of literary or non-literary language in two passages. You might, for example, pick two passages written hundreds of years apart and examine the linguistic similarities and differences; or analyse the way in which two authors use non-standard English or metaphor. For the theoretical essay, you'll address subjects such as 'Is sympathy for fictional characters irrational?' or 'Is there a place for paraphrase in literary criticism?' or 'What is the value of literary history?'. The aim of this paper is to promote critical reflection on the material you'll study in the other Mods papers and, for now, the best preparation you can do for it is simply to read widely and analytically.

When you come up in October, you will be expected to have read *everything* on the Core Reading List and a good amount of the material on the General List, where you should follow up your own enthusiasms and interests. It is difficult to 'cover' the whole Victorian period, say, in the course of an 8 week Oxford term – so prior reading is essential. If, for example, you wish to specialise in George Eliot, it is important that you should know several works: tutorials operate on Nabokov's principle that 'a good reader, a major reader, an active and creative reader is a re-reader.' Ideally, your first two terms should be spent re-reading and rethinking books you have already read. This is, we know, a counsel of perfection, but it is the only certain way of learning how novels and poems work as artistic entities.

There will be a short written test on the Victorian core reading list in 0<sup>th</sup> week of Michaelmas term just after you arrive. You should plan on buying copies of the books on this list before coming up, as well as Christopher Ricks's edition of *The New Oxford Book of Victorian Verse* and T. S. Eliot's *Selected Prose*, edited by Frank Kermode. We would rather that you spend your time reading primary texts at this point, but if you want to delve a little into some contextual and historical criticism, a few suggestions are provided as secondary reading.

## CORE READING LIST

### Victorian

Jane Austen: *Pride and Prejudice*, *Emma*. [Not Victorian, but crucially important for understanding the 19c novel.]

Charlotte Bronte: *Jane Eyre*

Charles Dickens: *David Copperfield*, *Our Mutual Friend*

Alfred Lord Tennyson: 'Ulysses,' 'Tithonus,' *In Memoriam*, *The Princess*. The Penguin *Selected Poems* edited by Christopher Ricks is the best edition to buy.

Elizabeth Gaskell: *North and South*

George Eliot: *Middlemarch*, *Daniel Deronda*

Henry James: *The Portrait of a Lady*

Gerard Manley Hopkins: 'The Caged Skylark,' 'Felix Randall,' 'Carrion Comfort,' 'No Worst,' 'Pied Beauty,' 'Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves,' 'Spring and Fall,' 'The Windhover'

Thomas Hardy: *Jude the Obscure*, 'Hap,' 'Neutral Tones,' 'Thoughts of Phena,' 'I Look Into My Glass,' 'Drummer Hodge,' 'The Darkling Thrush,' 'The Self-Unseeing'

George Gissing: *New Grub Street*

### Modern

Joseph Conrad: *Heart of Darkness*

Ford Madox Ford: *The Good Soldier*

E. M. Forster: *Howards End*

D. H. Lawrence: *Sons and Lovers*

T. S. Eliot: *Prufrock and Other Observations*, *The Waste Land*, *Four Quartets*

James Joyce: *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, *Ulysses*. [You should buy Jeri Johnson's edition of the 1922 text for Oxford World's Classics.]

Ezra Pound: 'Portrait D'Une Femme,' 'Hugh Selwyn Mauberley.' Prose: 'Imagisme,' 'A Retrospect.'

Virginia Woolf: *Jacob's Room*, *To the Lighthouse*

W. B. Yeats: *The Tower*

W. H. Auden: 'The Letter,' 'Taller Today,' 'The Secret Agent,' 'The Watershed,' 'This Loved One,' '1929,' 'This Lunar Beauty,' 'Five Songs,' 'The Wanderer,' 'The Witnesses,' 'A Summer Night,' 'A Bride in the 30's,' 'On This Island,' 'Night Mail,' 'As I Walked Out One Evening,' 'Oxford,' 'Lullaby,' 'The Capital,' 'Musée des Beaux Arts,' 'Gare du Midi,' 'The Novelist,' 'The Composer,' 'A. E. Housman,' 'In Memory of W. B. Yeats,' 'In Memory of Sigmund Freud.'

## GENERAL READING LIST

### Victorian

Matthew Arnold: 'To Marguerite—Continued,' 'The Buried Life,' 'Dover Beach,' 'To a Friend,' 'The Function of Criticism at the Present Time,'

Charlotte Bronte: *Villette*

Emily Bronte: *Wuthering Heights*, 'Remembrance,' 'The Prisoner'

Elizabeth Barrett Browning: *Sonnets from the Portuguese*

Robert Browning: 'Porphyria's Lover,' 'My Last Duchess,' 'Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister,' 'The Bishop Orders His Tomb at St. Praxed's Church,' 'Love among the Ruins,' 'Fra Lippo Lippi,' 'Andrea del Sarto,' 'A Toccata of Galuppi's,' 'How it Strikes a Contemporary'

Wilkie Collins: *The Woman in White*

Charles Dickens: *Hard Times, Oliver Twist, Great Expectations, Bleak House*

George Eliot: *Mill on the Floss,*

Elizabeth Gaskell: *Mary Barton, The Life of Charlotte Bronte*

Thomas Hardy: *Far From the Madding Crowd, The Mayor of Casterbridge, The Woodlanders, Tess of the D'Urbervilles*

Gerard Manley Hopkins: *Collected Poems and Selected Prose* (Oxford paperback)

Henry James: *Washington Square, The Europeans, The American, The Aspern Papers,* 'The Middle Years,' 'The Next Time,' *The Ambassadors, The Wings of the Dove, The Golden Bowl*

John Ruskin, *Sesame and Lilies*

Alfred Lord Tennyson: 'The Lady of Shalott,' 'The Lotus-Eaters,' 'Break, Break, Break,' 'Frater Ave Atque Vale,' *Maud.*

Bram Stoker: *Dracula*

Oscar Wilde: *The Importance of Being Earnest, The Picture of Dorian Gray,* 'The Critic as Artist'

## Modern

Samuel Beckett: *Waiting for Godot, Murphy, Watt, Endgame, Krapp's Last Tape*

Joseph Conrad: *Lord Jim, The Secret Agent, Nostromo*

T. S. Eliot: 'Poems' (1920), 'Sweeney Agonistes,' *Four Quartets*

Ford Madox Ford: *The Good Soldier*

E. M. Forster: *The Longest Journey, A Passage to India*

Ernest Hemingway: *The Sun Also Rises*

Christopher Isherwood: *Berlin Stories, Prater Violet*

James Joyce: *Dubliners*

D. H. Lawrence: *The Rainbow,* 'The Woman Who Rode Away,' *Women in Love*

Katherine Mansfield: 'Bliss,' 'The Little Governess,' 'The Tiredness of Rosabel,' 'The Daughters of the Late Colonel,' 'The Fly'

Ezra Pound: 'Homage to Sextus Propertius,' *Cantos I-XVI*

Virginia Woolf: *Mrs Dalloway, The Waves, Between the Acts,* 'A Sketch of the Past' (in *Moments of Being*, ed. Jeanne Schulkind). Non-fiction prose: 'Character in Fiction,' 'Modern Fiction,' *A Room of One's Own*

Among post-1950 writers, you should know the work of some of the following: Kingsley Amis, Martin Amis, Sybille Bedford, Saul Bellow, J. M. Coetzee, Bret Easton Ellis, Allen Ginsberg, William Golding, Seamus Heaney, Frank O'Hara, Ted Hughes, Ian McEwan, Philip Larkin, Doris Lessing, Robert Lowell, Vladimir Nabokov, V. S. Naipaul, Harold Pinter, Sylvia Plath, Philip Roth, Tom Stoppard, John Updike.

## SECONDARY READING

Isobel Armstrong: *Victorian Poetry: Poetry, Politics, Poetics* (Routledge, 1993)

Gillian Beer: *Darwin's Plots* (Cambridge, 2000)

T. S. Eliot: *Selected Prose of T. S. Eliot*, ed. Frank Kermode (Faber, 1975)

E. M. Forster, *Aspects of the Novel* (1927, reprinted many times)

Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (Oxford, 1975)

Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (Oxford, 1973)

Jonathan Culler: *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford, 2000)

David Crystal, *Making Sense of Grammar* (London, 2004)

### **OLD ENGLISH READING LIST**

*A Guide to Old English*, ed B. Mitchell and F.C. Robinson 8th ed. (Oxford, 2012).

Please read as much of its Introduction possible before arriving.

T.A. Shippey, *Old English Verse* (London, 1972)

S.B. Greenfield & D.G. Calder, *A New Critical History of Old English Literature* (New York, 1986)

*The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature*, ed M. Godden & M. Lapidge, (Cambridge, 1991)

*A Companion to Anglo-Saxon Literature*, ed. P. Pulsiano & E. Traherne, (Oxford, 2001)