Writing London
ENGL-UA 9182L01

Instructor Information
- Dr Leya Landau
- Office hour: 4-5pm Wednesday

Course Information
- Wednesday 1-4pm
  - Room 102
- Class prerequisite: none

Course Overview and Goals
This course will study a variety of texts written at particular times in the history of London. The aims of the course are to encourage the student to think historically, in terms of the way London and representations of the city have changed and developed over time; and theoretically, in terms of the way the city is mediated through different forms and genres (e.g. poetry, novels, essays, film; satire, detective and crime fiction), and the interrelationship of literary and material spaces. We will also examine the significance of gender, the definition of the modern metropolis as a labyrinthine city of Babylon, the influence of metropolitan culture on Modernism and Modernity, assimilation versus multiculturalism, immigration, and the effects of new modern spaces on individuals.

The course will be conducted mainly as a seminar, in which students will participate through oral presentations and class discussion, with introductory lectures when appropriate. Please note that this course includes several novels of varying lengths, and you are advised to start reading them ahead of time.

Upon Completion of this Course, students will be able to:
- Read and think about literary texts in the context of London’s history over different periods
- Identify a variety of literary forms – e.g. novel, poem, essay, short story -- and consider them in relation to the city’s own various spaces, shapes and forms.
- Recognise particular urban genres and figures: crime and detective fiction; urban Gothic; anti-pastoral; the flaneur
The goal is to bring a body of significant literary works in close relation to the urban environment, the architectural transformation, the metropolitan politics, and the extra-literary cultural life of the city. We will try to understand why London authors often conceived this city as text and how the task of living up to London and of finding a form of representation adequate to its radical social heterogeneity has become a defining measure of imaginative ambition.

Course Requirements

Grading of Assignments

The grade for this course will be determined according to these assessment components:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments/Activities</th>
<th>Description of Assignment</th>
<th>% of Final Grade</th>
<th>Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>Participation in class discussions demonstrating reading and preparation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Ongoing assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper 1</td>
<td>Close reading: 1000-1500 words (3-4 pages)</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<td>Paper 2</td>
<td>Final comparative paper: 2000-3000 words (6-8 pages)</td>
<td>45%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Presentation</td>
<td>Presentation on assigned topic: 10-15 minutes</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Week assigned in class</td>
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Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the class

Grades

Letter grades for the entire course will be assigned as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Example: 93.5% and higher</td>
<td>Demonstration of detailed familiarity with the text under review; ability to establish and argue an independent line of thought; ability to engage critically with secondary reading material; fluent and articulate expression of ideas. Positive participation in the classroom is essential.</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Example: 82.5% - 87.49%</td>
<td>Demonstration of familiarity with text under review; support for argument from secondary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Letter Grade</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Example: 72.5% - 77.49%</td>
<td>Basic understanding of text under review; ideas in paper may lack organization and appear random and disconnected at times; occasionally deviating from main theme and title of paper; writing lacks clear expression. Positive participation in the classroom is important.</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>Example: 62.5% - 67.49</td>
<td>Little reference to the text other than what could be gleaned from an outline or summary of the plot; advancing ideas that have insufficient relevance to the title; being simplistic (writing in a way that does not do justice to the complexity of the text); careless expression.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Example: 59.99% and lower</td>
<td>Little or no reference to the text under review; deviation from or ignoring the title/subject of the paper; clear indication that the student has not read, or has clearly failed to understand, the text under review; poor and ungrammatical expression.</td>
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**Course Materials**

**Required Textbooks & Materials**
- Edgar Allan Poe, ‘*The Man of the Crowd*’ (handout to be provided)
- T. S. Eliot, *Selected Poems* (handouts will be provided)
- Virginia Woolf, ‘*Street Haunting: A London Adventure*’ (handout will be provided)
- Sam Selvon, *The Lonely Londoners* (Penguin, 0141188413)

**Optional Textbooks & Materials (not required to purchase as copies are in NYU-L Library)**

*Sample Syllabus – Subject to Change*
• Christopher Alexander et al., *A Pattern Language: Towns, Buildings, Construction* (1978)
• Malcolm Cross & Michael Keith, eds., *Racism, the City and the State* (1992)
• Ruth Fincher and Jane M. Jacobs, eds., *Cities of Difference* (1998)
• Dick Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (1979)
• Neil Leach, *The Hieroglyphics of Space: Understanding the City* (2001)
• D. Massey, *Space, Place and Gender* (1994)
• J Mclaughlin, *Writing the Urban Jungle: Reading Empire in London from Doyle to Eliot* (2000)
• Malcolm Miles et al., ed. *The City Cultures Reader* (2000)
• Deborah L. Parsons, *Streetwalking the Metropolis: Women, the City and Modernity* (2000)
• Richard Sennett, *Flesh and Stone: The Body and the City in Western Civilization* (1994)
• Georg Simmel, ‘The Metropolis and Mental Life’ (1903)

Resources

• Access your course materials: [NYU Classes](http://nyu.edu/its/classes)
• Databases, journal articles, and more: [Bobst Library](http://library.nyu.edu)
• NYUL Library Collection: [Senate House Library](http://catalogue.libraries.london.ac.uk)
• Assistance with strengthening your writing: [NYU Writing Center](http://nyu.mywconline.com)
• Obtain 24/7 technology assistance: [IT Help Desk](http://nyu.edu/it/servicedesk)

Course Schedule
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session/Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Session 1:</td>
<td>Introduction to course</td>
<td>Selected poems and passages, including: William Wordsworth, John Keats, Fleur Adcock; Ian McEwan; selected passages from urban theorists Georg Simmel, Michel de Certeau and others (these are all handouts). Visit to British Museum, if time.</td>
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<td>Session 2:</td>
<td>City of Pleasure: 18th-Century London</td>
<td>Frances Burney, <em>Evelina</em> (1778)</td>
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<td>Session 3:</td>
<td>London Nightmares</td>
<td>Thomas De Quincey, <em>Confessions of an English Opium-Eater</em> (1822); Edgar Allan Poe, ‘The Man in the Crowd’ (1840) (handout provided)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 4:</td>
<td>Charles Dickens and Victorian London</td>
<td>Charles Dickens, selections from <em>Sketches by Boz</em> (1836); excerpts from <em>Bleak House</em> (1852-3); ‘People of the City’ in Williams, <em>The Country and the City</em> (handout provided)</td>
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<td>Session 5:</td>
<td>Tour of Dickens’ London</td>
<td>Meet outside Temple tube station at 2pm</td>
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<td>Session 6:</td>
<td>Dickens and Crime</td>
<td>Charles Dickens, <em>Oliver Twist</em> (1837-8)</td>
<td><em>Paper 1 due</em></td>
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<td>Session 7:</td>
<td>Fin de siecle London</td>
<td>Robert Louis Stevenson, <em>The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr Hyde</em> (1886)</td>
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<td>Session 8:</td>
<td>Unreal City</td>
<td>T. S. Eliot, ‘The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock’ (1917); ‘Preludes’ (1917); excerpts from <em>The Waste Land</em> (1922) (handout provided for all poems)</td>
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<td>Session 9:</td>
<td>Virginia Woolf and Bloomsbury; the Flaneur</td>
<td>Virginia Woolf, ‘Street-Haunting: a London Adventure’ (1927) (handout provided); <em>Baudelaire, ‘To a Passerby’</em> (handout provided). Bloomsbury walk, if time.</td>
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<td>Session 10:</td>
<td>Modernist London</td>
<td>Virginia Woolf, <em>Mrs Dalloway</em> (1925); David Pike, ‘Modernist Space and the Transformation of Underground London’ in <em>Imagined Londons</em> (handout provided)</td>
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<td>Session 12:</td>
<td>Swinging Sixties London</td>
<td>Film: Michaelangelo Antonioni’s <em>Blow-Up</em> (1966)</td>
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<td>Final session:</td>
<td>Concluding Writing</td>
<td>Showing of Fritz Lang’s <em>Metropolis</em> (1927)</td>
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**Co-Curricular Activities**

- Information about current London-related literary and cultural events and places to visit will be communicated and circulated throughout the semester.
- Please bring your travel card with you

**Classroom Etiquette**

- Laptops may be used for classwork only. Cell phones must be put away for the duration of the class.

**NYUL Academic Policies**

**Attendance and Tardiness**

- Key information on NYU London’s absence policy, how to report absences, and what kinds of absences can be excused can be found on our website (http://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/attendance-policy.html)

**Assignments, Plagiarism, and Late Work**

- You can find details on these topics and more on this section of our NYUL website (https://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/academic-policies.html) and on the Policies and Procedures section of the NYU website for students studying away at global sites (https://www.nyu.edu/academics/studying-abroad/upperclassmen-semester-academic-year-study-away/academic-resources/policies-and-procedures.html).

**Classroom Conduct**

Academic communities exist to facilitate the process of acquiring and exchanging knowledge and understanding, to enhance the personal and intellectual development of its members, and to advance the interests of society. Essential to this mission is that all members of the University Community are safe and free to engage in a civil process of teaching and learning through their experiences both inside and outside the classroom.
Accordingly, no student should engage in any form of behaviour that interferes with the academic or educational process, compromises the personal safety or well-being of another, or disrupts the administration of University programs or services. Please refer to the NYU Disruptive Student Behavior Policy for examples of disruptive behavior and guidelines for response and enforcement.

Disability Disclosure Statement

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

Instructor Bio

Dr Leya Landau’s main research interests lie in the 18th century and the city in literature. She has taught for many years in the University of London. She is currently writing a book on women and 18th-century London and her publications include work on Frances Burney, women and 18th-century literature, city writing, literature and coastal culture, and 18th-century opera.