

## Lifting the Veil

*British Women Novelists in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century  
from Jane Austen to George Eliot*

**Lecturer:** PD Dr. Stefan L. Brandt, Guest professor

**Basic information:** Proseminar, 2 SWS, ECTS-Studium, ECTS-Credits: 7, application at KOS.

**Room and time:** AR-B-2201, Tuesdays, 12-14.

**First session:** October 16, 2007.

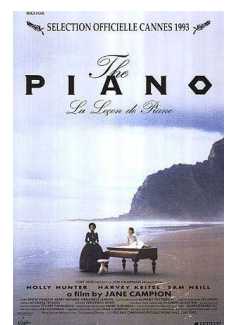
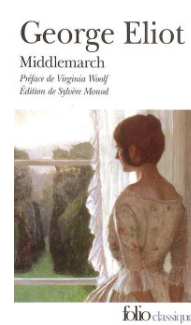
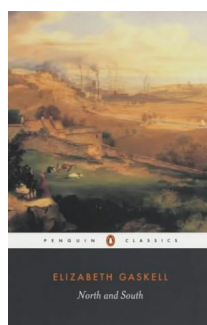
**Modules:** LCMS-BA-M3.1 (Literatur- und kulturspezifischer Überblick) ab 2, EL-2 (Theorie, Geschichte und autorenpezifische Ausprägungen literarischer Gattungen) ab 2, ENG-GHR-M1.2 (Gattungspoetik und Gattungsgeschichte) ab 2, AL3 (Organisationsformen literarischer Texte und ihre Geschichte / Textanalyse und -interpretation) ab 2, SekI & II-B3 (Englische Literatur von 1650 bis zur Gegenwart) ab 2.

**Short description:** This course is a comprehensive survey of the 19<sup>th</sup> century women's novel in Great Britain, discussing texts such as Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey* (1818), Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847), Elizabeth Gaskell's *North and South* (1855), and George Eliot's *Middlemarch* (1871/72). We will read excerpts of these texts with respect to the following issues: gender and class identity, morality, nostalgia and progress, as well as the increasingly politicized self-image of women in Victorian society. What function do stereotypes such as the ›unmarried woman‹, the ›old maid‹, and the ›new woman‹ assume in these novels? In how far did authors such as Austen, the Brontës, and Eliot contribute to the formation of the novel as a text form in the British 19<sup>th</sup> century? In addition to canonized novels and stories written by women writers, we will analyze the more recent negotiation and reconstruction of the Victorian frame of mind in movies such as *Wuthering Heights* (1939) and *The Piano* (1993).

### Credit requirements:

For 5 or 7 credit points: regular attendance, lively participation in class discussions, and at least 10 entries in the discussion forum before the session (1/3), an oral presentation as part of an expert group (1/3), and a final paper (10-12 pgs. / 17-20 pgs.) (1/3). For 2 credit points: attendance, participation in class discussions, and 10 entries in the discussion forum before the session (50%), oral presentation as part of an expert group (50%).

**Deadline for Final Papers: Friday, February 29, 2008. Note: There is no (!) extension of this deadline.**



**Syllabus:**

- 16. Oct. Introduction: The 19<sup>th</sup> Century Women's Novel**  
Elaine Showalter, »The Female Tradition«, from: *A Literature of Their Own* (1977), 3-36, available online (BSCW server)
- 23. Oct. The Romantic Formula**  
*Sense and Sensibility* (film, dir. Ang Lee, 1995; based on Jane Austen's novel fr. 1811) \*
- 30. Oct. Behind the Black Veil – Femininity, Maturation, and the Rejection of the ›Gothic‹**  
Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey* (1803/1818), especially ch 1-2, 5-7, 23-27, 30-31, available online (BSCW server)
- 06. Nov. The Return of Female Gothic - From Mary Shelley to the Brontë Sisters (1<sup>st</sup> theory session)**  
Emily Brontë, *Wuthering Heights* (1847), esp. ch. 1, 16, 34  
& Ellen Moers, »Female Gothic«, from *Literary Women* (1977), 90-110.
- 13. Nov. Passion and Violence**  
*Wuthering Heights* (film, dir. William Wyler, 1939) \*
- 20. Nov. Gender and Religion**  
Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre* (1847), esp. pref. & ch. 1, 10, 16, 20, 27-28, 30, 36-38.
- 27. Nov. Morality and Alterity**  
Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre* (1847) (film, dir. Robert Stevenson, 1944) \*
- 04. Dec. Madness and Self-Sacrifice: Women's Fiction from Charlotte Brontë to George Eliot (2<sup>nd</sup> theory session)**  
Elaine Showalter, »Feminine Heroines«, from *A Literature of Their Own* (1977), 100-32.
- 11. Dec. Spiritualism and Community**  
George Eliot, *The Mill on the Floss* (1860), esp. book 1, ch. 1-3 & 12; book 4, ch. 1 & 3; book 6, ch. 1; book 7, ch. 5 & conclusion, available online (BSCW server)
- 18. Dec. The Social Drama I**  
*North and South*, BBC mini series (2004), based on Elizabeth Gaskell's novel (1855)\*
- Christmas Break!**
- 08. Jan. The Social Drama II**  
*North and South*, BBC mini series (2004), based on Elizabeth Gaskell's novel (1855)\*
- 15. Jan. Women with a Past: The Sensationalist Novel**  
Mary Elizabeth Braddon, *Lady Audley's Secret* (1862), esp. ch. 1, 8, 10, 27-29, 34, 38, 41, available online (BSCW server)
- 22. Jan. Christianity and Moral Choice**  
George Eliot, *Middlemarch* (1871/72), esp. ch. 1, 4, 12, 15, 50, 52, finale, available online (BSCW server)
- 29. Jan. Nostalgia and Progress**  
George Eliot, *Middlemarch* (1871/72), esp. ch. 6, 10, 27, 37, 63, 84, 86, available online (BSCW server)
- 05. Feb. Lifting the Veil – The Heritage of 19<sup>th</sup> Century Women's Fiction**  
*The Piano* (film, dir. Jane Campion, 1993) \*

\* These films are available on DVD. They can be checked out from our Sekretariat. Room AR-H 213.

Please note: Make sure you return the movie by 10 in the morning the next weekday!