As early as 1599, the cartographer Thomas Platter remarked that “London is the capital of England and so superior to other English towns that London is not said to be in England, but rather England to be in London.” By the nineteenth century, London was not just the center of England, but the focal point of an empire that spanned the entire world. Because of its prominent place in England and the English-speaking world, London is also the center of English literary history. The premise of this class is that London is more than a setting or a source for multiple literary works; it is a set of physical locations and repositories of material culture that might crucially inform the way we study English literature of all periods. From performances of the plays of Shakespeare at the Globe theatre to the streets that inspired Dickens’ scathing social commentary, we will study how the city functions as an essential context—and even becomes a character—in a variety of literary works. The works I’ve chosen are hardly obscure and may be ones that you’ve read and studied before. Revisiting them in the midst of the city offers a new way of thinking through these familiar texts and allows us to locate them more readily in their social and historical context. We’ll also get a first-hand look at the things and places that inspired them. This is an opportunity to experience the cultural contexts for English literature in ways not possible in a traditional classroom. Because we will be busy in class and visiting sites around the city for at least five or six hours every day, I encourage you to do all the reading before you leave San Antonio, and just review it quickly before class in London. This will also give you time to write the papers and free time to explore more of the unparalleled cultural resources in the city.
Required Texts (available at the bookstore):
- Peter Ackroyd, *London: The Biography*

-the literary works we study are widely available in cheap paperback editions or anthologies like *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*. I will put some of the harder to find items on reserve on Blackboard. Because the actual class doesn’t begin until two weeks into the semester, I would strongly suggest that you try to do as much of the reading as you can, preferably ALL of the reading, before you leave (and just review it the night before). I do expect you to have a copy of the works with you in class, but photocopies, paperback, or digital editions might be advisable to conserve on space.

Course Requirements: Your grade will be based on three papers (5-6 pages each) (20% each), a “field” journal comprised of short (about a page) reflections to each day’s “site” (20%) and participation and class discussion, which may include a series of short quizzes on that day’s material (20%). The papers must be typed according to the style set forth in the MLA Handbook.

Attendance: This course assumes an interactive approach in its structure, which builds upon previous classes, and in its presentation, which requires engaged participation from all members of the class. Your presence is essential to the success of this course, and therefore to your success in it. You must contact me about any such absences in advance, other than in extreme circumstances. You are responsible for making up any classwork missed, and must make up assignments within a reasonable time in consultation with me. Because the class will be “taught” at numerous locations around the city, make sure you plan accordingly to ensure that you know how to get there and allow ample time for your journey. If you have any questions, or if you get lost, call me right away!

A Note on Papers: I want you to write three papers, each 5-6 pages in length. One of these papers should focus on a literary work, one on a location, and one on a performance. These papers are expected to be analytic, to have a coherent and narrow thesis derived from a more general topic (note the important differences between the two), and to offer a close reading of the plays. The first paper will be due on Friday, July 29; the second on Friday, August 5; and the final one on Monday August 15 (when we’re back). Because one of the papers addresses a literary text, you can finish that before you even leave for London so you don’t have to spend time writing one of the papers while we’re there.

The key to a good paper is to have a good argument. I’ve found two things to be especially useful for students in constructing solid critical arguments: first, try to formulate your thesis as a question. If you have a good, interesting question that seems like it will take five or six pages (or more) to answer, you’ll probably end up writing a good paper. Second, to help you construct a good argument, think of your task as similar to that of lawyer: your client is your thesis for which you need to construct a coherent, analytical argument and marshal evidence (from the text and potentially other sources) in order to defend.

The “Field” Journal: This isn’t a big deal. I want two one page (single-spaced) entries week (i.e. six in total) that documents your own personal experience in the city. Things you might want to opine on include how coming to London has changed your impression of familiar literary works (or not), how the performances resonate for you, how the city might serve as a source of literary inspiration, or anything else that strikes you as significant. You can think of this as a kind of diary (although I’ll also be reading them). It might be something you’ll enjoy looking back at later. These will be due on Friday 12 August—the last day of class and the day before we leave.

A Note on Plagiarism: The University of Texas at San Antonio defines “scholastic dishonesty” as including but not limited to, “cheating on a test or other class work, plagiarism (the appropriation of another's work in one’s own written work offered for credit), and collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing course work offered for credit). Should a student be accused of scholastic dishonesty, the faculty member may initiate disciplinary proceedings” that could result in failure of the class or even expulsion from the university. The MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers provides a detailed discussion of “Forms of Plagiarism” and “Other Issues,” including the impropriety of submitting the same paper to more than one instructor or in more than one class by the same instructor. If you have doubts as to what constitutes plagiarism, ask me. I am very good at catching cases of plagiarism, so don’t do it!
CLASS SCHEDULE

(Bear in mind that dates and times are subject to change. Although I try to keep to the schedule as best as I can, because the course takes place both in the classroom and around the city, there will inevitably be slight modifications here and there, for reasons unforeseen. Except for the days when there is a scheduled excursion outside the city, we will meet in the classroom at UCL from 10-12 and then visit our various locations around the city later in the day.)

Sun, July 24 - Introductory Remarks and Orientation (I’ll meet you at Shafer House at 1pm)

Mon, July 25: The History and Topography of London to 1600
   READ: London: The Biography, chapters 1,2,3,4,7,11, 20, 21
   VISIT: The Museum of London, 150 London Wall EC2 (Barbican Underground)

Tues, July 26 – Wed, July 27: Geoffrey Chaucer, “General Prologue” and “Miller’s Tale”
   VISIT: Excursion to Canterbury Cathedral on Wednesday
   Train leaves at ??? from Victoria Station

Thurs, July 28 – Renaissance London and Its Theatres
   READ: London: The Biography, chapters 12-21

Fri, July 29 – Christopher Marlowe, Doctor Faustus
   PERFORMANCE: Doctor Faustus (2pm) at the Globe Theatre, Bankside SE1
   (London Bridge Underground)

***FIRST PAPER DUE***

Mon, Aug. 1 - Tues, Aug. 2: Edmund Spenser, The Faerie Queene (Book I)
   VISIT: (Monday) National Portrait Gallery,
   St. Martin’s Place WC2 (Leicester Sq. Underground)

Wed, Aug. 3: William Shakespeare, Richard III
   PERFORMANCE: Richard III (7:30pm) at the Old Vic (Waterloo Underground)

Thurs, Aug. 4: Shakespeare’s Stratford
   READ: from Stephen Greenblatt, Will in the World
   VISIT: Excursion to Stratford-Upon-Avon
   Train leaves at ???am from Marylebone Station

Fri, Aug. 5: John Keats, “Ode to a Nightingale”, “Ode to a Grecian Urn”, “Ode on Melancholy”
   VISIT: The British Museum, Great Russell Street WC1

***SECOND PAPER DUE***

Sat, Aug. 6 (OPTIONAL): The Sentimental Novel
   VISIT: Jane Austen’s House and Museum in Chawton
   Trains leave from Waterloo

Mon, Aug. 8: London and the Industrial Revolution
   READ: London: The Biography, chapters 61-68

Tues, Aug. 9: Charles Dickens, Oliver Twist
   VISIT: Dickens Walking Tour (begin at Chancery Lane Underground)

Wed, Aug. 10: Eugene O’Neil, Anna Christie
   PERFORMANCE: Anna Christie at Donmar Warehouse
   41 Earlham Street WC2
Thurs, August 11: Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*
    VISIT: As much as we can, we’ll try to retrace the steps of Clarissa Dalloway through Bloomsbury

Fri, August 12: London and the Literary Future: Closing Remarks
    ***JOURNALS DUE***

Mon, August 15: ***THIRD PAPER DUE***