



Course Description:

In the nineteenth century, Britain “ruled the waves,” led the Industrial Revolution, and—expanding its influence to every habitable continent—controlled an empire on which, it was said, the sun never set. Yet with the successes of global power and industrial and economic modernization came rapid and unsettling social change: new ambiguities in class and social status, shifting ideas about gender and sexuality, growing concerns about colonial practices, and a dawning awareness of the ironies of scientific advancement. In this Seminar, we will consider how nineteenth-century fiction copes with and transforms the social anxieties of its time, and how these anxieties are expressed, from *Frankenstein* (1818) to *War of the Worlds* (1898), in figures of monstrosity. We will study six major works, together with the rich tradition of secondary criticism they have inspired.

Course texts:

- Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*
- Emily Brontë, *Wuthering Heights*
- Robert L. Stevenson, *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*
- Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*
- Bram Stoker, *Dracula*
- H.G. Wells, *War of the Worlds*