In the 19th century, England perceived itself as the height of progressive civilization. London, the seat of its government and the center of an empire stretching across the globe, was hailed as the epitome of culture and refinement. In a class taught this summer in London (Jun 3 - July 3), we’ll discover a radically different story. Victorian writers and readers could not shake the suspicion that the patriotic myth hid a scandalous truth. Wherever they looked, they seemed to find more “shameful testimonies,” as Dickens wrote, of “how civilization and barbarism walked this boastful island together.”

Taking our cue from this skeptical reappraisal, we will investigate the dark side of Victorian England, focusing especially on a London reimagined as the site of Gothic monstrosity and barbaric crime. We will follow Holmes into lurid opium dens; accompany Dorian Gray on visits to seedy theaters and riverside dives; and trace the routes of villains such as Mr. Hyde as they search for prey on the metropolitan streets.

Our explorations of underground London will take us outside the classroom and into the settings of these nightmares of civilization. After reading journalistic accounts of the “Ripper” murders, we will tour the East End district where he committed his horrific crimes. Our analysis of Heart of Darkness will come to life as we delve into archives recording the facts of imperial conquest and exploration. To better understand Wuthering Heights, we will walk the Yorkshire moors and village streets where Emily Brontë locates the most startling account of savage passion ever written. We will also visit Edinburgh, whose brooding architecture and dark streets mapped themselves onto the imagination of Robert Louis Stevenson.

**Reading List**

- Emily Brontë, *Wuthering Heights*
- Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*
- Arthur Conan Doyle, *Sherlock Holmes* stories
- R. L. Stevenson, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*
- Bram Stoker, *Dracula*
- Oscar Wilde, *Picture of Dorian Gray*

Plus selected readings on PDF / Photocopy

For more information, contact Professor Tim Carens ([carenst@cofc.edu](mailto:carenst@cofc.edu))
Or visit the British Studies Consortium Website ([http://www.usm.edu/british-studies](http://www.usm.edu/british-studies))