ENG 460 – VICTORIAN AGE
BOOK REVIEW

Deadlines and guidelines

• This paper will be a book review, and the final version should be seven to ten pages long.

• The review is due on Friday, May 27 at 5:00 p.m.

• If you turn in a complete draft by noon on Tuesday, May 17, you can join a peer editing group. This is optional, but (in my opinion) advisable.

Further instructions

• Before long, you’ll want to pick a book from our reserve shelf. Here’s an initial list:
  o David Cannadine, Ornamentalism (2001)
  o William Dalrymple, The Last Mughal (2008)
  o Judith Flanders, Inside the Victorian Home (2004)
  o Steven Marcus, The Other Victorians (1966)
  o Adrienne Munich, Queen Victoria’s Secrets (1996)
  o Elaine Showalter, Sexual Anarchy (1991)
  o Matthew Sweet, Inventing the Victorians (2001)

• As you begin working on your review, you’ll want to keep a few things in mind:
  o You’ll need a good sense of the book’s central argument. So begin at the beginning, with the preface or introduction, and then jump all the way to the conclusion. Most of the big ideas and important questions should be presented there.
  o You’ll need to see how the book differs from earlier works on similar topics. There are lots of books about the British Empire. So what’s new or different or maybe even controversial about Ornamentalism?
  o You’ll probably also want to know how the book has been received by earlier reviewers. So don’t just look to see if the reviews have been positive or negative. Try to get a sense of what the book’s major contributions are supposed to have been.

• As you’re composing your review, assume that your reader is another good student in our class. She may be familiar with the writers or works being discussed in your book—but she will not have read or even seen the book itself.

• At some point in your research, try to figure out if you’d recommend your book to your reader. What might the reader get out of the book? What might it add to her sense of our period?