This course will explore the advent and development of medievalism in the British Empire ca 1800-1900. Through interdisciplinary investigation, students will consider the various themes and associations connoted by medieval imagery in literary and visual contexts. Students will explore the rejection of urbanization and industrialism advanced by Romantic writers and artists, including Tennyson, Keats, Constable and Waterhouse; their subsequent idealization of the medieval past and bespoke, hand-made goods; the art-historical theories of John Ruskin, including his contention that medieval art—produced in an environment of perceived cultural decline—was not bound by the principles of Antique expression and, therefore, possessed an inherent, primitive, idealism worthy of emulation; and the architectural theories of Augustus Pugin, especially his promotion of Gothic Revival architecture throughout Britain and its empire and the resultant association of British identity with neo-medieval visual culture, including painting, sculpture and building. Presenting the City of Victoria as a case-study, students will then assess the function(s) of medievalism on a contested, colonial frontier. Students will utilize the Royal British Columbia Museum and Archives and undertake fieldwork in Ross Bay Cemetery, the Church of Our Lord and Christ Church Cathedral.

For more information, visit us online at http://www.uvic.ca/humanities/medieval/current/courses/index.php