

The Romantic Period

50:350:322

Spring 2011

MW 2:50-4:10 FA 221

Office hours MW 1:30-2:30 and by appointment

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Course Description

This course will cover writing of the British Romantic period, roughly defined as beginning with the French Revolution (1789) and ending with the crowning of Queen Victoria (1837). The French Revolution, in many ways, sets the tone for this period characterized by political upheaval and a radical questioning of societal structures. We will study how writers responded to this revolutionary spirit by exploring, adapting, or rejecting its influence on a variety of issues such as slavery, gender and sexuality, class inequality, and religion. Our investigation will focus on these contentious issues, paying specific attention to the ways in which Romantic writers and intellectuals conducted dialogues about them through poetry, philosophical tract, drama, and prose. We will encounter well-known figures such as Wordsworth and Shelley as well as their lesser-known contemporaries who influenced these “major” writers and contributed greatly to the Romantic intellectual world.

Texts*

- *The Longman Anthology of British Literature*, vol. 2A, fourth edition, 2010
- Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*, Penguin, 2003
- Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, Longman cultural edition, 2003
- Selected readings on e-reserves or under Sakai Resources

Requirements and Grading

- 4, 3-4 page papers. Each paper is worth 15% of your final grade (total 60%)
- Quizzes 10%
- Participation & Attendance 10%
- Final Exam 20%

Papers

You will be given a list of six paper topics, corresponding to the progression of readings on the syllabus. You will *choose four out of these six topics* and hand in your essays on the listed due dates. Once a due date has passed, your opportunity to write on that topic is forfeit. For example, if you decide you want to get your essays done

* I allow students to use an earlier addition of the anthology and/or different editions of the novels. If you do so, however, it is your responsibility to figure out corresponding page numbers to keep up with the reading and to follow along in class.

as soon as possible (excellent idea!) and you want to write on Topic 1: “British Responses to the French Revolution,” your paper will be due in-class on Wednesday, February 9th. If you don’t have your paper on that day, you must wait until the next opportunity, which is Topic 2 “Aesthetic Rebellion” due on February 23rd. The “pros” of this system are that you can write on what most interests you, turn in assignments when it best fits your schedule, and have several chances to do well. The main “con” of this system is the potential for procrastination, which you’ll have to manage. My advice: write early and often!

Quizzes

Quizzes will examine all the material we have encountered *since* the last quiz, not just the last thing we’ve read!

Participation

Being repeatedly absent from class (more than three times over the course of the semester) will seriously affect your participation grade. To receive an “A” for the participation portion, you must be both present and actively engaged with the class during discussion. I define “active engagement” as the following: answering and/or asking questions, responding to your classmates’ ideas, and volunteering to read passages.

Exam

The exam will be cumulative (covering the entire semester).

Academic Integrity and General Rules

Plagiarism

Refraining from plagiarism or cheating in any form fosters an environment of fairness vital to your academic success and that of your peers. Because “grey areas” can appear in a variety of situations, please review the Rutgers Camden academic integrity policy: <http://www.camden.rutgers.edu/RUCAM/Academic-Integrity-Policy.php>. You will be held accountable to this standard. If you have any questions about citations, group work, or exam preparation, please do not hesitate to contact me. I am happy to help you steer through these perilous waters.

Late assignments

See description on “papers” above. Because you have a choice of 4 out of 6 due dates, there will be no late papers.

Cell phones

Cell phones should be turned off or on silent mode during class. Texting is not permitted at any time.

Assignments

I. What is “Romanticism” Exactly?

Wednesday, 01.19.11

Introduction to the course

Monday, 01.24.11

“The Romantics and Their Contemporaries” [7-33] †

II. British Responses to the French Revolution

Wednesday, 01.26.11

CLASS CANCELLED

Monday, 01.31.11

Helen Maria Williams, from *Letters Written in France, in the Summer of 1790* [104-109];

Edmund Burke, from *Reflections on the Revolution in France* [109-118]

III. An Aesthetic Rebellion

Wednesday, 02.02.11

Thomas Paine, from *The Rights of Man* [127-134]; William Godwin, from *Political Justice* [140-145]; Hannah More, “Village Politics” [148-156]

QUIZ 1

Monday, 02.07.11

William Blake, from *Songs of Innocence and Experience* [163-188]; Explore the William Blake Archive. (Link in Sakai Resources.)

Wednesday, 02.09.11

William Wordsworth, Preface to *Lyrical Ballads* [394-404]; “The Thorn” and Note to “The Thorn” [380-387]; S.T. Coleridge, From *Biographia Literaria* Chs. 13, 14, 17 [619 - 628] and “Christabel” [585-601]

PAPER TOPIC 1 DUE

Monday, 02.14.11

John Gibson Lockhart, “On the Cockney School of Poetry” [887-892]; Letter from John Keats to John Hamilton Reynolds, 3 February 1818 and 3 May 1818 [952-953 and 954-956]; “Ode on a Grecian Urn” [913-915]; “To Autumn” [918-919]; “Bright Star” [949-950]

† Numbers in brackets refer to pages in the Longman anthology. Always read the small headnote on each new author before proceeding to the text.

IV. The Rights and Wrongs of Women: Marriage, Motherhood, and Sexuality

Wednesday, 02.16.11

Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, introduction pp. xiv-xxiv and volume I, pp. 5-119

QUIZ 2

Monday, 02.21.11

Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, volume II, pp. 119-208

Wednesday, 02.23.11

Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, volume III, pp. 208-329

PAPER TOPIC 2 DUE

Monday, 02.28.11

Mary Wollstonecraft, from *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* [286-307]; “Jemima’s Story” from *Maria* (e-reserves); Hannah More, from *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education* [323-327]; Rev. James Fordyce, from *Sermons for Young Women* in P&P edition, pp. 385-389.

V. Romantic Responses to Slavery

Wednesday, 03.02.11

Olaudah Equiano, from *The Interesting Narrative* [215-224]; Mary Prince, from *The History of Mary Prince* [224-229]; View Josiah Wedgwood’s Jasper Medallion and J.M.W. Turner’s “Slavers Throwing the Dead and Dying Overboard” (Links in Sakai Resources)

Monday, 03.07.11

Thomas Bellamy, “The Benevolent Planters” [229-235]; William Cowper, “Sweet Meat Has Sour Sauce” and “The Negro’s Complaint” [241-244]; Robert Southey, “The Sailor Who had Served in the Slave-Trade” [253-256]

PAPER TOPIC 3 DUE

VI. Romantic Drama

Wednesday, 03.09.11

Joanna Baillie, from *Plays on the Passions* [340-344] and *Orra*, Acts I & II (e-reserves)

Monday, 03.14.11 SPRING BREAK

Wednesday, 03.16.11 SPRING BREAK

Monday, 03.21.11

Joanna Baillie, *Orra*, Acts III-IV (e-reserves)

VII. *Frankenstein*

Wednesday, 03.23.11

Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*, editor's introduction pp. xi-xlvii, author's introduction, preface, and volume I, pp. 5-90

PAPER TOPIC 4 DUE

Monday, 03.28.11

Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*, volume II, pp. 93-151

Wednesday, 03.30.11

Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*, volume III, pp.156-225

QUIZ 3

VIII. *Frankenstein* in Context: the Gothic

Monday, 04.04.11

S.T. Coleridge, "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" [567-582]

IX. *Frankenstein* in Context: the Sublime

Wednesday, 04.06.11

Edmund Burke, from *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* [37-43]; Percy Shelley, "Mont Blanc" [776-780]

PAPER TOPIC 5 DUE

X. *Frankenstein* in Context: the Over-reacher

Monday, 04.11.11

Lord Byron, "Prometheus" [686-687]; S.T. Coleridge, "Satanic Pride and Rebellious Self-Idolatry" [689-690]

XI. Nature and Religion

Wednesday, 04.13.11

William Wordsworth, "Lines written a few miles above Tintern Abbey" [390-394]

Monday, 04.18.11

Dorothy Wordsworth, "Grasmere—A Fragment" [527-529]; "Floating Island" [533]; from *The Grasmere Journals* [538-544]

Wednesday, 04.20.11

S.T. Coleridge, "The Eolian Harp" [572-3]

PAPER TOPIC 6 DUE

XII. Orientalism

Monday, 04.25.11

Lord Byron, *The Giaour* (.pdf available under Sakai Resources) pp. 167-179, lines 1-385
(There are a series of *s at the ending point.)

Wednesday, 04.27.11

Thomas De Quincey, "Introduction to the Pains of Opium" from *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*, 27-39 (E-text available through IRIS and linked under Sakai Resources.); S.T. Coleridge, "Kubla Khan" [602-604]

QUIZ 4

XIII. Review

Monday, 05.02.11 Final Exam Review

FINAL EXAM: WEDNESDAY MAY 11, 2011 9 AM-12 NOON FA 221