

English 350
Romantic Poetry and Prose
Fall 2011
M/W 3:00-4:15
Palmer 203

Prof. Seth Rudy
310 Palmer Hall
Office Hours: W 1-2, T/R 2-3:30, and
by appt.
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A relatively brief period that originated during the Age of Enlightenment and continued to develop throughout the early Industrial Revolution of the nineteenth century, the Romantic era produced some of the perhaps best-known and most lionized figures of the British literary canon: Blake, Burke, Byron, Coleridge, Keats, Mary and Percy Shelley, Wollstonecraft and Wordsworth all published the greatest part of their works between the 1780s and 1830s. This course will approach the major poetry and prose of these and other important authors of the period through several critical and methodological frameworks that will place the literature of British Romanticism in the contexts of massive social and political change, startling advances in knowledge production and scientific inquiry, and challenging contemporary conceptualizations of the past, present, and future of British Literature itself.

Course Objectives

To develop analytical acumen and evaluative approaches to primary texts and critical arguments
 To develop familiarity with major works of British literature representative of the Romantic period
 To ground that familiarity in the context of political, scientific, philosophical, and literary history

Required texts

The Longman Anthology of British Literature, Bundled Package (includes Volume 2A – The Romantics and Their Contemporaries
Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus. By Mary Shelley (The Longman Cultural edition is included with your anthology)
The Monk. A Romance. By Matthew Lewis

Electronic Texts, available via Moodle*

*Readings are subject to change; substitutions, deletions, and additions may be made.

Written Assignments

Grammar and stylistics will be taken into consideration as part of your grade for ALL of these assignments. Word-count floors and ceilings are hard boundaries; make sure you land within them! All written assignments should be submitted on paper and electronically in double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman with 1" margins and the appropriate information in the header (your name, paper title, class, and date). Whenever possible, save your files as .doc (Microsoft Word) documents and in the following format: lastname-paper#.doc. For example: Smith-paper1.doc.

Essay 1 (20%)

4-6 pages (1200-1600 words)

This paper will be a close textual analysis of a short selection of poetry or prose. A set of selections will be provided, but alternatives may be discussed. Close reading calls for sustained critical thinking and in-depth analysis of language in order to discover as much information about your chosen material as possible. *In close reading, you should consider not just what a passage says, but how it says it; consider*

the ways in which diction, syntax, imagery, connotation, and/or metaphor create meaning within the passage and relate to the piece as a whole.

Essay 2 (20%)

4-6 pages (1200-1600 words)

This paper calls for a concise, focused, analytic response to a specific aspect of the text(s). Prompts will be provided in advance, but need not necessarily be used; alternatives may be discussed with me in advance. These papers are intended to provide an opportunity for further concentrated critical consideration of issues that have come up during discussions in class and/or during your reading.

Final Essay (30%)

10-12 pages (3000-3600 words)

The paper calls for you devise a course of secondary research and execute a sustained, coherent, and well-supported argument about any of the primary texts we have read during the semester. Your arguments should be specific to your chosen text(s) and offer some engagement with the conditions (historic, economic, social, and/or intellectual) of its production. If you wish, you may revisit a text (or texts) and topic about which you have already written or presented; however, I will expect a substantial revision and development of your earlier effort in addition to the integration of secondary sources.

Presentations

Apparatus (10%)

5-10 minutes (approx. 3-5 pages/900-1500 words)

Romantic era poetry and prose often appears to stand alone or transcend its temporal bounds, but our understanding of it can be greatly aided by a historical and critical framework. In order to build that framework, you will be asked to contribute to the class a brief oral presentation on one of several topics related to the period or to the day's reading. These presentations will introduce historical facts, critical terminology, and/or secondary arguments to our discourse and form a part of each day's discussion.

Exams

Final Exam (10%)

The final exam will require you to synthesize terms, texts, and/or critical arguments in a series of brief (three or four paragraph) essays.

Engagement

Discussion/Contribution/Presence (10%)

Perfect attendance by itself will not merit full credit in this area. Engagement—whether in the form of your reading responses, quizzes, essays, presentations, discursive participation, office appointments, etc.—should be thoughtful and substantive. Your full intellectual engagement in this course, both inside and outside the classroom, is crucial to its success as well as yours. Of course, you should come to each class prepared to discuss the day's readings and respond to each other's observations. You can advance arguments, ask questions, introduce new topics, or make connections to ongoing and prior conversations by pointing the class to a passage or moment in the text.

You are encouraged to make use of my office hours or make an appointment to speak with me at *any* point during the semester to ask questions about or discuss any aspect of the class. Email is the best way to reach me at all other times.

Late Assignments

ALL late assignments will be subject to a grade reduction of 1/3 of a letter grade per day; **assignments more than four days late will receive NO credit (a score of zero)**. If, for example, an assignment is due Monday at 2:00PM, then as of 2:01PM that day, it is one day late and you have until Wednesday at 2:00PM to hand it in. At 2:01PM Wednesday, it is two days late, and so on. Failure to turn in any major assignment (which category includes all those assignments given a specific percentage weight above) may result in automatic failure of the entire course.

Attendance

Attendance will be taken in each class. **You may miss up to two classes without penalty or explanation; further unexcused absences will result in an overall grade reduction of one-third of a letter grade and possibly failure of the course.** Three instances of significant tardiness will count as an unexcused absence.

Intellectual Honesty

Please familiarize yourself with the terms of the Rhodes College Honor Code. All work done for this class must be your own and not originally written for, submitted to, or presented in another class. Such work will be considered a violation. Intellectual dishonesty of any type or degree will not be tolerated, and consequences for infractions may be severe. If you are ever uncertain whether you are violating the code, please contact me or another faculty member.

Classroom Decorum

Please refrain from eating in class. Beverages are permissible where circumstances allow.

Please turn off cellular telephones and other devices.

If you are unable to take notes without a laptop, you may use one in class; however, web browsing and checking email during class is absolutely prohibited.

Academic Accommodations

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services at x3885 as soon as possible.

Department of English
Expectations and Policies

A college course is more than simply a set of assignments; it is an intellectual process, one which requires active engagement from beginning to end in order to achieve its intended results. With this in mind, the Department of English has formulated a number of expectations and the policies that support them. If you have questions about how these policies relate to the syllabus for a particular course, you should address them to the instructor.

Attendance: The success of a course depends to a significant extent upon the presence of students alert and prepared to address the subject under discussion. Unavoidable absences should be discussed with the instructor, ideally before they occur. Excessive absences will result in a lowering of grade, in some cases to an F.

Deadlines: Writing assignments, test, etc., are carefully scheduled as stages toward the fulfillment of the course's goals and cannot be indefinitely deferred without frustrating those goals. Brief extensions for good reasons may be permissible with the instructor's prior approval; otherwise, late assignments will be penalized and may result in their not being accepted for credit.

Submission of all work: All major assignments are integral to the goals of the course. Failure to complete any major assignment will result in a grade of F for the course.

Intellectual honesty: All work is assumed to be the student's own and produced exclusively for the course in which it is submitted. Papers written for one course, even if revised, are not to be submitted in another without the instructor's prior approval. Borrowing of ideas or language from other sources (including published material, other student papers, the internet or other electronic resources, etc.) must be carefully documented. Students are advised against posting their work on the internet since doing so may lead to suspicion of plagiarism. Students are advised to maintain drafts of their work to verify its originality. Cases of suspected plagiarism will be referred to the Honor Council, and the student if convicted will receive a grade of F in the course in addition to sanctions assigned by the Council. Carelessness in documenting sources, even if not technically plagiarism, will be penalized as the instructor deems appropriate. If you are uncertain about how or whether to document sources, consult your teacher.

Introduction

W, Aug. 24 Introduction
John Keats, “To George and Thomas Keats (December 1817)” (951).

Romanticism and Enlightenment

M, Aug. 29 What is Enlightenment?
Alexander Pope, “An Essay on Man” (Electronic Text)
Immanuel Kant, “What is Enlightenment?” (Electronic Text)

W, Aug. 31 What is Romanticism?
Immanuel Kant, from *Critique of Pure Reason* (Electronic Text)
William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, “Preface to the Lyrical Ballads” (Electronic Text); “Expostulation and Reply” (387), “The Tables Turned” (388), “Lines written a few miles above Tintern Abbey” (390-93)

M, Sep. 5 **Labor Day – No Class**

W, Sep. 7 The Sublime, the Beautiful, and the Picturesque
Edmund Burke, from *Enquiry into the Origins of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (Electronic Text)
Immanuel Kant, from Book II, *Analytic of the Sublime* (Electronic Text)

Presentation: Longinus

M, Sep. 12 Growth and Memory
William Wordsworth, from *The Prelude* of 1805, Books 1 and 2

Presentation: Dorothy Wordsworth

Presentation: Clifford Siskin, Chapters 1 and 2 from *The Historicity of Romantic Discourse*

W, Sep. 14 Continuity and Myth
Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (567-82)

Presentation: Jerome McGann, “The Ancient Mariner: The Meaning of Meanings,” from *The Beauty of Inflections*

Romanticism and Revolution

M, Sep. 19 Spirituality and Religion
William Blake, *Songs of Innocence and Experience* (165-88), *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (188-201)

Presentation: The Gordon Riots

Presentation: Letter Press Printing

W, Sep. 21 The French Revolution I
Helen Maria Williams, from “Letters Written in France” (105-109, 134-39); *The Anti-Jacobin, or Weekly Examiner* (145-48); Hannah More, “Village Politics” (148-56);

Arthur Young, from “Travels in France During the Years 1787-1788, and 1789,” and from “The Example of France, a Warning to Britain” (156-61); Robert Burns, “Scots, wha hae wi’ Wallace bled” (364)

Presentation: Jacobins, Girondists, and the Terror

M, Sep. 26 **The French Revolution II – PAPER 1 DUE**
 Edmund Burke, from *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (Electronic Text)
 Thomas Paine, from *The Rights of Man* (127-34)
 Mary Wollstonecraft, from *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (286-210)
 William Wordsworth, from *The Prelude* of 1805, Books 9 and 10 (475-88)

W, Sep. 28 Matthew Lewis, *The Monk* (1-91)

Presentation: Gothic Romance and *The Mysteries of Udolpho*

M, Oct. 3 Matthew Lewis, *The Monk* (91-191)

Presentation: The Spanish Inquisition

W, Oct. 5 Matthew Lewis, *The Monk* (192-279)

Presentation: The Cult of Reason

M, Oct. 10 Matthew Lewis, *The Monk* (280-376)

Presentation: Zong

W, Oct. 12 Matthew Lewis, *The Monk* (377-442)

M, Oct. 17 **Fall Recess – No Class**

Romanticism and Science

W, Oct. 19 Age of Wonder
 Gilbert White, “A Balloon Journey, Oct. 19, 1784” from *The Life and Letters of Gilbert White* (Electronic Text, 134-38)
 Anna Letitia Barbauld, “The Mouse’s Petition to Dr. Priestly” (62-3); “Washing Day” (66-68)
 William Herschel, from *A Preliminary Discourse on the Study of Natural Philosophy* (Electronic text, paragraphs 368-77)
 Humphry Davy, “The Sons of Genius” (Electronic Text)
 Samuel Coleridge, “Letter to Davy, 15 July 1800” (Electronic Text)

Presentation: M. Montgolfier, Joseph Priestly, and Humphry Davy

M, Oct. 24 Too Much Like a Poet
 William Herschel, “Construction of the Heavens,” from *Philosophical Transactions* Vol. XXXV) (Electronic Text)
 Erasmus Darwin, from *The Loves of the Plants* (Electronic Text)

Presentation: Uranus

W, Oct. 26 The Organic, the Fragmentary, and the Transcendent
Samuel Taylor Coleridge, “Christabel” (585-600), “Kubla Khan” (602-604)

Presentation: Marjorie Levinson, Chapters 4 &5 of *The Romantic Fragment Poem*

Presentation: Opium

M, Oct. 31 Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus* (Volume 1)

Presentation: Maureen McLane, chapter three of *Romanticism and the Human Sciences*

Presentation: Galvanic Electricity

W, Nov. 2 Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus* (Volume 2)

Presentation: Sympathy

M, Nov. 7 Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus* (Volume 3)

Presentation: The Picturesque

Romanticism and Revision

W, Nov. 9 Heroism and Epicism I
George Gordon, Lord Byron, “So we’ll go no more a-roving,” (647); *Manfred* (648-83)

Presentation: Faust

M, Nov. 11 Heroism and Epicism II – PAPER 2 DUE
George Gordon, Lord Byron, *Don Juan* (Canto 1, 716-67)

Presentation: Greek War of Independence

W, Nov. 16 Radicalism I
Percy Bysshe Shelley, “To Wordsworth” (775-76); “Sonnet: England in 1819” (783); *The Mask of Anarchy* (783-93); *Prometheus Unbound* (Electronic Text, 206-55)

Presentation: The Peterloo Massacre

M, Nov. 21 Radicalism II
Percy Bysshe Shelley, *Prometheus Unbound* (Electronic Text, 255-86)

W, Nov. 23 **Thanksgiving Recess – No Class**

M, Nov. 28 The Odes of 1819
John Keats, “Ode to Psyche” (908-911), “Ode to a Nightingale” (911-13), “Ode on a Grecian Urn” (913-15), “Ode on Indolence” (915-17), “Ode on Melancholy” (917-18), “To Autumn” (918-19)

Presentation: Helen Vendler, Introduction to *The Odes of John Keats*

W, Nov. 30

Legacies

John Keats, “On First Looking into Chapman’s Homer” (882), “Sonnet: When I have fears” (893), *The Fall of Hyperion: A Dream* (936-49)

Presentation: Mary Poovey, “The Model System of Literary Criticism” (*Critical Inquiry*)

M, Dec. 5

Last Day – Final Exam

FINAL PAPER DUE TBD