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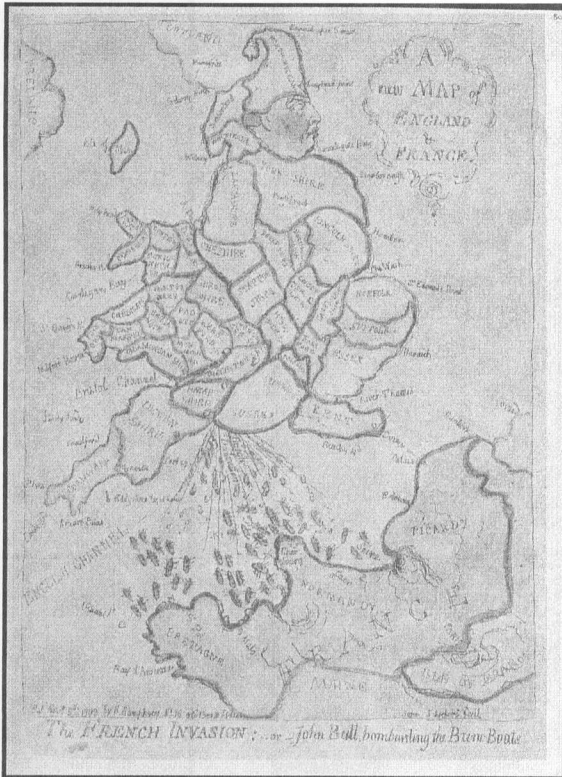
## ENGL 350-01, Imagining the Nation: Romantic-era Poetry and Prose, Fall 2009

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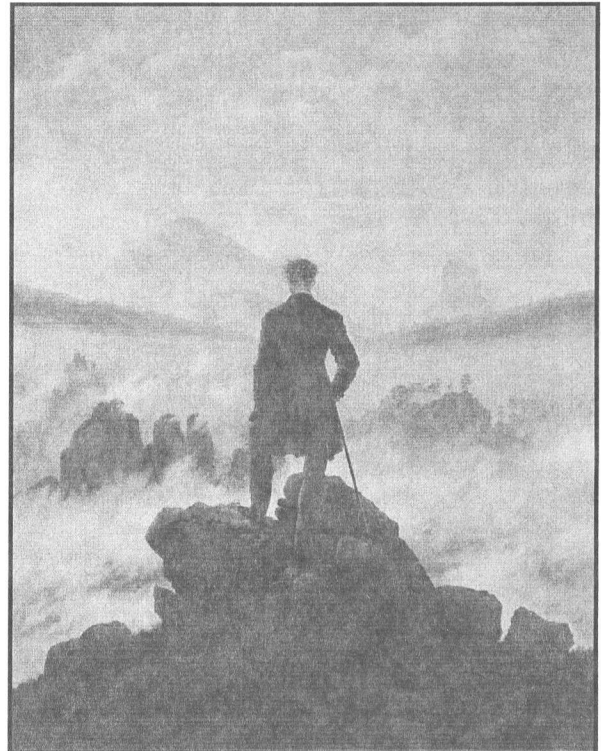
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R 1.30-2.30pm

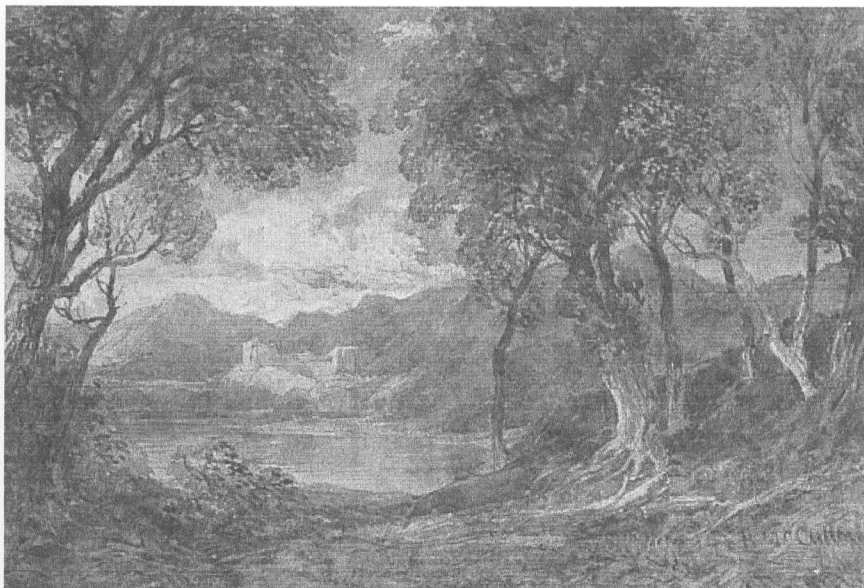
English 350:  
**Imagining the Nation:  
Romantic-era Poetry and Prose**



James Gillray, *The French Invasion*, (1793)



Caspar David Friedrich, *Wanderer above the Sea of Fog* (1818).



Horatio McCulloch, *Inverloch Castle* (1857) – National Gallery of Scotland

Literary critics have often bestowed a disproportionate degree of attention on the period known as 'Romantic'. Only fifty or so years in duration, that era produced some of the most recognizable names in canonical literary and intellectual history. Yet while the number of novelists, poets, dramatists and writers of other stripes may distinguish the period as a moment of extraordinary creativity, it was also a moment of great political and social significance in the identity of what we call 'Britain'. From January 1801, with the Act of Union between Britain and Ireland, England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales were now tied together in a single polity, despite their distinct differences. This act once again intensified interest in the problem of the new collective 'British' identity, and the lost individual sovereignty of its composite parts. While many celebrated the new powerful political unity of Britain as a response to external threats – the American and French revolutions that had rocked British confidence and ongoing conflicts with France – writers of all kinds imagined the nation in terms that grieved, rejoiced, questioned and derided: an enormously rich outpouring of literature that revived interest in local attachments, national cultures, places and the past.

In this course we will examine the literature of the Romantic-era in response to these events. Our program will begin with what Shelley called, the 'master-theme of the epoch in which we live' – the French Revolution, and the complex series of reactions to that series of events in the tumultuous decade of the 1790s. We will also study in some detail the evolution of the fictional form in the period, and the relationship between nation and novel, from the gothic writing of Ann Radcliffe, to the 'national tale' and 'historical novel' in the work of Maria Edgeworth and Walter Scott. Finally, our program will end with texts from the 1819 and the successive years, those moments of crisis for so-called 'English liberty' which set the stage for the decades beyond.

### **The course has three primary goals:**

- **To enable students to learn about Romantic-era British Literature.** In the course of the semester, you will be introduced to a considerable variety of canonical British writers, all of whom had a profound effect on early nineteenth century literary culture. You will be expected to research and absorb any contextual information provided and to read the introductions to each of the texts we consider. Occasionally there may be quizzes to assist you in assimilating this material. We will also spend some time working towards an understanding of Romantic ideology, and its significant debates on subjectivity, imagination and historical consciousness.
- **To develop skills in the critical analysis of literature, and to evaluate the role and relevancy of historical context.** Class periods will be devoted to detailed discussion of the literary works assigned for the day. In some cases, we will only talk about one or two of the poems, or a few lines from a longer work. The goal is for you to practice "close reading", and for you to be able to apply those techniques to the literature we *haven't* explicitly discussed. A good reader is a reader sensitive to the nuances of written communication, and its relationship to social and historical context. As such, you should be able to understand aspects of literary form as well as the particular contextual meanings of writings.
- **To develop skills in communicating your knowledge of literature.** The course includes a number of written assignments arranged to encourage the development of your critical analysis and research abilities. You will be writing two shorter essays on literary texts, and one extended essay where you bring in outside sources to create argument. As part of that extended essay, you will submit a plan and an annotated bibliography earlier in the semester.

### **Course Format**

The class meets twice a week in a seminar and discussion format. Often this will be preceded by a short introduction by me introducing a topic or proposing a new idea. You will be expected to complete all readings assigned for the class and prepare for class discussions upon them. Sometimes I will supply you with particular questions of tasks to guide you in your preparation. This will mean preparing the answers in advance to particular questions so you are able to talk about

them when called upon. Participation in discussion is a vital part of this course and your overall semester grade will reflect that. With each reading you should expect to comment or pose questions about it, as well as challenge or test the ideas within it. By participating in class discussion, your analytic skills and interpretative strategies will be strengthened and your experience of a particular text will be enriched. This may seem like a daunting task, but if you are nervous about speaking up in class, look on this as a personal challenge. I would like everyone to set themselves the task of saying something in each class.

### Course Requirements

#### Formal Essays

• Essay 1	4-6 pages (1500)	20%
• Essay 2	4-6 pages (1500)	20%
• Proposal & Annotated Bib.	3-5 pages (1000)	10%
• Extended Essay	10-12 pages (3000)	30%
• Class presentations/ final		10%
• Participation & Discussion		10%

**PLEASE NOTE: You will not receive a passing grade unless you submit all written assignments.**

You will complete two shorter essays of 4-6 pages (1500 words). These will be on a selection of subjects from each half of the semester. These need not involve use of outside critical sources, though you may use them if you wish. There will also be one extended essay (10-12 pages – 3000 words), which will also require a formally submitted plan and annotated bibliography two weeks in advance of the final essay submission. This paper explicitly requires the use of secondary critical sources and historical context, thereby improving and testing your skill as a researcher. More information will be given in the course of the semester on this project. I encourage students to choose some aspect of the course texts which interests them, and upon which they have not already submitted work.

All assignments must be typed in 12pt Times New Roman font, double-spaced with margins of one inch. Full format details can be found in the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers (sixth or seventh edition) in the library or by emailing me. Although I assume this will mean there are approximately 300 words on each page, every paper must include **a word count, your name, my name and a title. Your name should go at the end of your paper.** Every paper must be proofread for grammatical and spelling errors. Your grade will reflect the appropriate penalties if errors are not corrected. Every paper must be proofread for grammatical and spelling errors. Your grade will reflect the appropriate penalties if errors are not corrected. I allow 10% leniency in the word count. So if the paper should be 1500 words long, I will not penalize if it is between 1350 and 1650. For papers under 90% of the word count, I will deduct at least 0.3 of a grade point. Submissions at less than 60% of the word count will automatically receive a fail, regardless of their other merits.

#### Email and Online Readings

Please check your email **each day** for notices about the course. This is the easiest way for us to communicate. On several occasions over the course, I might pose a question on email to the whole group, which may ask for electronic responses from you. In all email communications, please remember appropriate formal protocols for addressing a faculty member and your colleagues in the class. Occasionally I will also include online readings for the course, which should be printed out and brought to class. This will often be from books which are out-of-print or from texts where we are only using a small section. These can be found in my public folder on the academic fileserver:

\\Fileserver1\acad\_dept\_pgm\English\Newman\_Rebecca\Public\Romantic\_era\_Poetry and Prose

**Final exam**

At the end of the course there may be an in-class assignment that will ask you to demonstrate your understanding of the course concepts and discuss a variety of the works which we have read in class.

**Participation and Discussion**

Your participation is crucial to this course and it involves not only attendance, but reading and preparation before class, and contribution during. I will expect each person I call on during class time to be prepared and willing to speak. If at any point a student is not able to participate in an adequate manner or is unprepared for the class, they will be counted as absent for that session.

**Attendance Policy:**

You are expected to be in class everyday. This means that you will be present, fully awake, prepared and ready to contribute to class activities. Failure to meet the terms of that definition may result in a student being marked absent. You may miss three classes in the term without penalty (for illness, sickness, religious holidays or other absences). Further absences will result in your final grade for the entire course being lowered a third of a point (i.e. From B+ to B, from B- to C+). More than six absences will result in failure of the course.

**Honor Code:**

Please make sure you are absolutely clear about the terms of the honor code. All written work must be your own. Under no circumstances will any form of intellectual dishonesty be tolerated. You should be aware that the consequences are severe. If you are ever unsure whether you might be violating the code, please contact me or another professor to find out. Work originally written or submitted for other classes will be considered a violation of the honor code. Work that has been written for and/or presented in another class cannot be submitted again in this course.

**Disabilities**

If you have a disability, please contact me in advance of the class to discuss any additional requirements you may have, such as large print handouts or extra time in assessments.

**Grading Scale**

Essays and the final grade are calculated on scale from A-F, including pluses and minuses in between. You will have an opportunity to ask questions about criteria in detail before each assignment. A grade of 'A' indicates excellent and outstanding work; 'B' is a good grade and, in the case of B+, a very good grade; 'C' is a passing grade; 'D' indicates poor or shoddy work; 'F' is a failing grade and indicates work that is unacceptable.

**ENGLISH 350:**

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing Due:</b>
Thursday 27 Aug	Introduction to the Syllabus	
Tuesday 1 September	Richard Price, <u>A Discourse On the Love of Our Country</u> (1789) Edmund Burke, <u>Reflections on the Revolution in France</u> (1790) Tom Paine, <u>Common Sense</u> (1776), <u>The Rights of Man</u> (1791, 92) James Gillray, <u>Selected Cartoons</u> (1793)	
Thursday 3	William Wordsworth, <i>from</i> <u>The Prelude</u> (Book X) (1805) Coleridge, <u>Fears in Solitude</u> – (1798)	
Tuesday 8	William Blake, <u>America: A Prophecy</u> (1793)	
Thursday 10	William Godwin, <u>Caleb Williams</u> (1794)	
Tuesday 15	William Godwin, <u>Caleb Williams</u>	
Thursday 17	William Godwin, <u>Caleb Williams</u>	
Tuesday 22	William Godwin, <u>Caleb Williams</u>	
Thursday 24	Preparation for writing	
Monday 28		<i>Paper 1 due 2.30pm Palmer 305</i>
Tuesday 29	Ann Radcliffe, <u>The Italian</u> Ann Radcliffe, <u>The Italian</u> – (1797)	
Thursday 1 October	Ann Radcliffe, <u>The Italian</u>	
Tuesday 6	Ann Radcliffe, <u>The Italian</u>	
Thursday 8	Ann Radcliffe, <u>The Italian</u>	
Tuesday 13	Maria Edgeworth, <u>Castle Rackrent</u> (1800)	
Thursday 15	Maria Edgeworth, <u>Castle Rackrent</u>	
Tuesday 20	<b>NO CLASS – FALL BREAK</b>	
Thursday 22	Walter Scott, <u>The Bride of Lammermoor</u> (1819)	
Tuesday 27	Walter Scott, <u>The Bride of Lammermoor</u>	
Thursday 29	Walter Scott, <u>The Bride of Lammermoor</u>	
Tuesday 3	Walter Scott, <u>The Bride of Lammermoor</u>	
Wednesday 4		<i>Paper 1 due 2.30pm Palmer 305</i>
Thursday 5	Shelley, “England in 1819”; ‘Ode to the West Wind’; ‘A Defence of Poetry’ (1819; 1821)	
Tuesday 10	Thomas De Quincey, <u>Confessions of an English Opium-Eater</u> (1821)	
Thursday 12	<u>Confessions of an English Opium-Eater</u>	
Tuesday 17	<u>Confessions of an English Opium-Eater</u>	
Thursday 19	<u>Confessions of an English Opium-Eater</u>	
Tuesday 24	<i>Research workshop</i>	<i>Annotated Bibliography Due</i>
Thursday 26	<b>THANKSGIVING</b>	

Tuesday 1 December	<u>Student Conferences</u>	
Thursday 3	<u>Student Conferences</u>	
Tuesday 8	Final Class	
Monday 14		Paper 3 due at 9.30am.

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**Department of English**  
**Expectations and Policies**

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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, tests, etc., are carefully scheduled as stages toward the fulfilment 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.