

ENG 331 British Literature of the Romantic Period

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(No phone calls please).

Block 2: Monday, September 29-Wednesday, October 22
18 South Hall

We will meet mornings 9-10:30am and again in the afternoon, from 1-3pm (a few times earlier, at 12:30, when we have a film to watch...).

Texts:

The Longman Anthology of British Literature: Volume 2A: The Romantics and Their Contemporaries (5th Ed). Eds: Damrosch, Dettmar, Wolfson, and Manning.
Frankenstein by M. Shelley. Ed. Wolfson, Longman Cultural Edition.
Persuasion by Austen. Ed Bree. Broadview (Literary texts)
Paul and Virginia by Bernardin de Saint Pierre, Translated by Helen Maria Williams. Wildside Press.

This course will cover the basics of Romanticism by focusing on the literary culture of Romantic-era writers, their literary output (primarily poetry), and the historical events driving Romanticism. The literary culture of the era stemmed from aesthetic theories of the sublime, the focus on “natural” or native language—as opposed to “poetic” language—in Wordsworthian terms, the belief in the power of the individual and his or her imagination, the importance of sensibility as correct emotional response, and the desire to find, in medieval or non-modern sources, an innocence lost in burgeoning modernity.

The “big six” poets, namely Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley, and Keats, will be covered alongside less famous male authors like Burns, as will important women writers of the era like Mary Shelley, Barbauld, Hemans, Smith, Wollstonecraft, and Austen. Poetry will drive the semester, but quick dips into the novel will provide a sense of how the genres of poetry were imagined. It will also provide us a fuller context for how poetry was quoted, read, and memorized during the period. Nonfiction from Wordsworth, Burke, Wollstonecraft, and others will also give us context for the poetry and a sense of the historical issues driving Romanticism.

Various histories, such as the French and American Revolutions, women’s rights, the industrial revolution, and religious revivals and their causes like the abolition of slavery, will be studied as part of the culture of Romanticism. Our contemporary takes on similar issues—gender and sexuality, expanding/globalizing democracy, race and nationalism, among others—will occasionally give us greater insight into how the culture of Romanticism might live on today. Still, Romantic era literary culture will be the focus of the course and what we return to throughout the term.

Your **grades** will be based on your performance on both in class work and longer assignments. The breakdown for the worth of these assignments is as follows:

Participation 10%

Quizzes 20%

8 reading responses, annotated bib (will count for 2) 30%

Leading class 10%

Final paper 30%

The **quizzes** are simple and you will either receive full credit or no credit. This is my way of ensuring that students complete all the reading on time and have a good understanding of it. If you are not on time for class you will not be allowed to take the quiz.

The **reading responses** are short papers due periodically throughout the semester. Developing any idea from class discussion (and not just summarizing it) is a good way to start thinking about these papers. They should be one and a half to two pages each, contain evidence (in the form of quotations), and have a single, central idea. You can be a bit outlandish with these topics, but the quality of the idea and the writing will be graded. You do not have to “prove” your point, but you should be able to suggest it vividly. These will be graded on a 10 point scale.

The **participation** grade is simple. You will receive credit for participating if you contribute anything at all to the discussion on any given day: a complex thought, clarification, any kind of question related to the assignment, etc. If you do not participate in the discussion you will receive no credit.

At some point in the semester you will **lead class discussion**. You can use this as a chance to present some point from a reading response or take the class through a detailed reading of a poem or novel. You should be prepared with three discussion questions, which shall be turned in, and you should be prepared to lead discussion for between thirty minutes and an hour.

The **final paper** will be approximately twelve pages in length and will involve research and an annotated bibliography. More detailed instructions will follow. You may expand a reading response or two. Topics must be approved in advance.

Missing more than five classes (morning and afternoon count as two) will constitute reason for failure. Religious holidays and college events are the only things that count as excused absences (nota bene: **illness is NOT an excused absence**). Please notify me in advance if you will miss a class for either of the excused reasons. And, of course, missed daily work, quizzes, and participation reflect negatively on those components of the final grade.

Cornell College expects all members of the Cornell community to act with **academic integrity**. An important aspect of academic integrity is respecting the work of others. A student is expected to explicitly acknowledge ideas, claims, observations, or data of others, unless generally known. When a piece of work is submitted for credit, a student is asserting that the submission is her or his work unless there is a citation of a specific source. If there is no appropriate acknowledgement of sources, whether intended or not, this may constitute a violation of the

College's requirement for honesty in academic work and may be treated as a case of academic dishonesty. The procedures regarding how the College deals with cases of academic dishonesty appear in *The Catalogue*, under the heading "Academic Honesty."

Students who need **accommodations for learning disabilities** must provide documentation from a professional qualified to diagnose learning disabilities. For more information see cornellcollege.edu/disabilities/documentation/index.shtml

Students requesting services may schedule a meeting with the disabilities services coordinator as early as possible to discuss their needs and develop an individualized accommodation plan. Ideally, this meeting would take place well before the start of classes.

At the beginning of each course, the student must notify the instructor within the first three days of the term of any accommodations needed for the duration of the course.

Tentative reading schedule:

Please have each selection read *before* the class period it is due. Always read the notes to each work.

September/October

- M/29 Morning: Getting to know each other; Syllabus; Short readings... Wordsworth's "Emma," Coleridge, "Frost at Midnight"
- Afternoon: 12:30 Meeting time! View Ang Lee's *Sense and Sensibility*
- T/30 Morning: "Reading Poetry," W, Wordsworth "The Thorn," 419—read the note too, 425, "Michael" 457, Smith—ALL poems 86-on, including the "Beachy Head" fragment, skip "The Emigrants;"
- Afternoon: Longman textbook Introduction, sections "Literature and the Age" 7; "Romance, Romanticism, and the Powers of the Imagination" 8; "Authorship, Authority, and 'Romanticism'" 27; Abrams, *Natural Supernaturalism*; Curran Chapters 2 and section III of chapter 3
- W/1 Morning: W. Wordsworth, "Prefatory Sonnet/Nuns fret not" 474, "Composed upon Westminster Bridge" 475, "The World is too much with us 475, "Lines written a few miles above Tintern Abbey" 429, Coleridge "Sonnet to the River Otter" 625
- Afternoon: W. Wordsworth, Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*, 433 (read all sections of the preface... to page 446); John Clare, "Written in November"—both versions—962 and 963; **Reading response due**
- R/2 Morning: Coleridge, "Dejection: An Ode" 674, "Christabel" 652
- Afternoon: W. Wordsworth, "The Prelude" Book First 478, "Travelling in the Alps. Simplon Pass" 507, "Climbing Mount Snowdon" etc. 535-539
- F/3 Morning: *Paul and Virginia*. Have read the whole novel. There are plenty of places to skip and skim in this novel.
- Afternoon: Writing workshop—have a reading response drafted. Starr; Zimmerman

- M/6 Morning: *Persuasion*. Have read the whole novel. **Reading response due**
- Afternoon: More *Persuasion*; Rowland's "Romantic Poetry and the Romantic Novel" Price, "Introduction"
- T/7 Morning: Wollstonecraft, all 302-330
- Afternoon: Helen Maria Williams, Letters, 108 and 138; Edmund Burke, "Reflections on the Revolution" 113; Hannah Moore, "Village Politics" 153; Shelley, "To Wordsworth" 870
- W/8 Morning: Dorothy Wordsworth, "Grasmere—A Fragment" 594, "Lines intended for ..." 601, from "The Grasmere Journals" read all, 605; Discuss final paper assignment
- Afternoon: Literary Ballads (Headnote) 390; All Ballads/Reliques of Ancient English Poetry, 392-409; Walter Scott, "Lord Randall" 1062; St. Clair, Chapters 7 and 12; **Reading response due**
- R/9 Morning: Barbauld, "Washing Day" 70, Robinson, from "Sappho and Phaon" (all the sonnets excerpted) 292, "The Haunted Beach" 297; Baillie, "A Mother to Her Waking Infant," 385, "Song: Woo'd and Married and A'" 389
- Afternoon: Burke, "A Philosophical Enquiry" (read all sections excerpted) 37, Jane Austen, from *Pride and Prejudice* 54, from *Northanger Abbey* 55
- F/10 Morning: Keats, "The Eve of St. Agnes," 988; "The Odes of 1819" (read all) 1003-1014; Keats/WW handout, Hazlitt too (pdf)
- Afternoon: Hemans, "The Wife of Asdrubal" 932, "Records of Woman" (read all) 940-955 **Reading response due**
- M/13 Morning: *Frankenstein*. Have read the whole novel.
- Afternoon: More *Frankenstein*; **Reading response due**
- T/14 Morning: P. B. Shelley, "Alastor," (pdf), "Ode to the West Wind" 889

- Afternoon: P.B. Shelley, “Adonais,” 894, “Ozymandias” 877, “Sonnet: England in 1819” 878
- W/15 Morning: “Popular Prose and the Problems of Authorship” all, 1086-1158 (skip De Quincey—we’ll read him for Monday)
- Afternoon: More from “Popular Prose” M. Shelley, “The Swiss Peasant” 1159; John Clare “The Lament of Swordy Well” 965; **Reading response due**
- R/16 Morning: **Annotated Bibliography due**; Read Keats in class—bring your books!
- Afternoon: 12:30 Meeting time! View Jane Campion’s *Bright Star*
- F/17 Morning: Byron, from *Don Juan*, “Dedication,” 782 “Canto 1,” 786
- Afternoon: NO CLASS. Writing time.
- M/20 Morning: De Quincey, *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater* 1115, “On the Knocking ...” 1142, “What is it that we mean by *literature*” 1145; Coleridge, “Kubla Khan” 669
- Afternoon: Full paper draft due
- T/21 Morning: Blake, “Songs of Innocence and of Experience” (read all excerpted) 176
- Afternoon: View—we shall pick as a class
- W/22 Morning: **Final paper due**