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Office: 203 South Hall
Class Time: M-F from 9-11; T & Th from 1-3
Office Hours: W, F, 1:00-2:00, at Zamora's

Block 3, 2016-17, Cole Library, 4th Floor

ENG 331: LITERATURE OF THE ROMANTIC PERIOD (1798-1832) : THE GOTHIC

Living between the beginning of the French Revolution (1789) and the Great Reform Act (1832), the writers we call the British Romantics witnessed rapid social change and radical shifts in power. In this course, we will explore the ways that writers of two generations translated their concern with revolution and power into art, with particular focus on the Gothic, and its intersection with three discourses of the period: the abolition of the slave trade, and the rights of men and women, and the sublime. The poetry, essays, and novels we read will illuminate the aesthetic, philosophical, social, and political context of the period.

OBJECTIVES

- be introduced to writers and issues of the Romantic Period
- deepen understanding of the Gothic, and its critics, during this historical period
- develop “close reading,” analytic skills, writing and speaking skills
- develop ability to write a sustained, cohesive, and well-informed argument about literature
- develop an awareness of the world of online Romantic Gothic scholarship and new media
- be able to accurately recall and discuss key writers, texts, and issues from this period

FORMAT

We will typically begin class with a reading quiz, and most of the class period will consist of discussion of our readings. I expect balanced participation each day: if you tend to talk a great deal in classes, use your abilities to encourage others to speak; if you tend to be quieter in classes, risk contributing more of your thoughts to the conversation. As the instructor, I am responsible for facilitating discussion (verbally working through the texts and the issues they raise) but you are responsible for making the discussions meaningful learning experiences by coming to class prepared and engaging with the material in an intentional, collaborative, and inquisitive way.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- *Longman Anthology*, 4th edition, Volume 2A (If you have an earlier edition, you may need to photocopy some texts.)
- Anne Radcliffe, *Mysteries of Udolpho*
- Matthew Lewis, *The Monk*
- Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey*
- “Practical Advice for Writing in English” (Moodle)
- Additional Readings on Moodle: always print to read and mark them up, and bring your copy to class.

CORNELL'S EDUCATIONAL PRIORITIES

This course dovetails with the College's educational priorities, and emphasizes in particular Knowledge, Inquiry, Reasoning, and Communication. Through the study of a historical time and place different from our own, the course will also stress the importance of Intercultural Literacy.

SCHEDULE (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

All reading should be completed prior to the day on which they appear. Always read author head notes, for which you are responsible. Class will meet M-F from 9-11 and T, Th from 1-3. I will hold office hours and conferences on W and F from 1-2, so please keep this time free for meetings.

WEEK I

Mon. Oct. 31

Introductions

"The Romantics and Their Contemporaries"

Tues. Nov. 1

Perspectives: The Sublime, the Beautiful, and the Picturesque.

Handout on Prosody (distributed in class)

Introduction, Edmund Burke, "Philosophical Enquiry"; William Gilpin, "Three Essays"; Mary Robinson, "Ode to Beauty"; Felicia Hemans, "The Image in Lava" (class handout), "Casabianca"; Keats, "Ode on a Grecian Urn," "On Seeing the Elgin Marbles," "Bright Star"; Percy Bysshe Shelley, "Mont Blanc."

Wed. Nov. 2

Gothic Novels

"Gothic" (Moodle); Ann Radcliffe, *Mysteries of Udolpho*, Vol. 1

Thur. Nov. 3

Gothic Novels

Radcliffe, *Mysteries*, Vol. 2

Fri. Nov. 4

The Feminine Gothic

Radcliffe, *Mysteries*, Vol. 3

WEEK II

Mon. Nov. 7

Paper 1 Due; Readings in Digital Humanities and Mapping (Moodle)

Tues. Nov. 8

Abolition of Slavery and The Slave Trade

Introduction; Olaudah Equiano, from *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*; Mary Prince, from *The History of Mary Prince*, a West Indian Slave; from Thomas Bellamy, *The Benevolent Planters*, from *Amazing Grace*; William Cowper, "Sweet Meat has Sour Sauce;

Wed. Nov. 9

Abolition of Slavery and the Slave Trade, Continued

William Blake, "Little Black Boy," "Visions of the Daughters of Albion"; Coleridge, "Rime of the Ancient Mariner"; Felicia Hemans, "Bride of the Greek Isle"; Excerpts from Lewis's West Indies journal; **RECOMMENDED:** Thomas Clarkson, from *The History of the Rise, Progress, & Accomplishment of the Abolition of the African Slave-Trade by the British Parliament*.

Thurs. Nov. 10

Rights of Man and the Revolution Controversy

Introduction, Helen Maria Williams, "Letters"; Edmund Burke, "Reflections"; Thomas Paine, "Rights of Man"; William Godwin, "An Enquiry"; Hannah Moore, "Village Politics"; Percy Shelley, "The Mask of Anarchy"; Anna Letitia Barbauld, "The Mouse's Petition to Dr. Priestley."

Fri. Nov. 11

The Rights of Women.

Introduction. Mary Wollstonecraft, "The Rights of Women"; William Godwin, from

Memoirs (Moodle); Richard Polwhele, "The Unsex'd Females; Anna Letitia Barbauld, "To Mary Wollstonecraft."

Week III

Mon. Nov. 12

Paper 2 Due;

Altered States & Medieval Malevolence

Thomas DeQuincy, "Confessions of an English Opium-Eater"; S. T. Coleridge, "Pains of Sleep," "Kubla Khan"; Coleridge, "Dejection, an Ode"; "Christobel"; "The Eve of St. Agnes."

Tues. Nov. 13

Masculine Gothic

Lewis, *The Monk*, Vol. 1

Wed. Nov. 14

Masculine Gothic

Lewis, *The Monk*, Vol. 2

Thurs. Nov. 15

Masculine Gothic

Lewis, *The Monk*, Vol. 3

Fri. Nov. 16

Article Presentations

Gothic Parody

Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, Vol. 1

Project Time

Week IV

Mon. Nov. 17

Gothic Parody II

Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, Vol. 2.

Tues. Dec. 18

Project Time;

Wed. Dec. 19

Project Time and Paper/Project Presentations

POLICIES

Attendance: I'll expect you to come to every class and to participate constructively. I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. Points (usually ½ letter grade) will be deducted from your final course grade for each absence after two missed *class periods*.

Deadlines: Because getting behind on the block plan can be fatal for later assignments, and because this is a relatively large class, I typically will not accept late papers. If a true emergency arises and you cannot meet a deadline, it will be excused if you provide documentation and I consider it a true emergency. If you fall behind, speak with me sooner rather than later about whatever might be challenging so that I can help you to strategize.

Accessibility: Cornell College makes reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities. Students should notify the Coordinator of Academic Support and Advising and their course instructor of any disability related accommodations within the first three days of the term for which the accommodations are required, due to the fast pace of the block format. For more information on the documentation required to establish the need for accommodations and the process of requesting the accommodations, see <http://www.cornellcollege.edu/academic-support-and-advising/disabilities/index.shtml>.

Academic Integrity: Plagiarism is using others' words, research, or ideas without crediting them fully and accurately, and it is a serious academic offense. Plagiarism can include writing a classmates' paper, stealing (or buying) an essay and submitting it as your own, or paraphrasing an article but forgetting to document it. The proper way to

document sources in an English paper is by following the MLA style, and a summary of MLA is available in your Little Brown Handbook and on our class website. We will talk more in class about what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it, but whatever the form, know that you are ultimately the person responsible for maintaining academic integrity. If you plagiarize or cheat, whatever the method, you'll receive an F as your final course grade. Feel free to ask questions about documentation any time.

Writing Studio: I strongly encourage you to bring a draft of your papers to the Writing Studio and to revise them in advance of the due date. They can also help you to develop ideas and to generally get started.

Contacting Me: I would be happy to discuss your coursework during my office hours or by appointment. I can be reached most easily by email or text during the day. If you need to reach me during the evening or on weekends, you may call me, but as a courtesy please do not call after 9:00 p.m.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING

Participation, Class Preparation, Reader's Notebook (10%)

Throughout the block, I expect you to complete each day's reading before we meet, come to every class period, and participate constructively in class discussions. Good participation includes acknowledging what you may not understand and asking specific questions, listening and being responsive to classmates' ideas, and respectfully challenging interpretations with which you disagree. It includes readily volunteering to read aloud and raising your hand when you think you may be able to address a question posed. You should, while reading, keep a reader's notebook in which you record a brief summary (several sentences) and some of your thoughts on each day's readings. This will ensure that you have contributions to make to discussion, and provide you with a resource for developing papers and studying for the final exam.

Paper 1 (20%)

Close Reading. Choose a prose passage (or poem) from the first week of the syllabus in which the speaker's language is highly emotional, political, or philosophical. Write a detailed, close analysis of the passage in which you explain its content and analyze the formal elements with which it attempts to provoke responsiveness. Consider factors like word choice, punctuation, and sentence structure. Your thesis should address the question: What response does this passage seek to evoke in the reader and how does it try to do it? Integrate quotations to illustrate your analysis and use MLA-style citations. The paper should be 4-5 pages. See handout on close reading.

Class Discussion Facilitation (10%)

On two days of the term, you'll lead class discussion for approximately 1 hour; you should prepare questions in advance. This is not a formal presentation, but feel free to incorporate visuals and participatory activities. Your goal should be to help the class to "dig into" the material in order to better understand it and to grapple with problems it presents.

Scholarly Article Presentation (15%)

Once during the term, you'll present your analysis of a scholarly article to the class relevant to the works we're studying and to the Gothic.

Paper 2 (25%)

A Close Reading as before; or a thoughtful, well-grounded, academic blog post, incorporating research and developing thoughtful ideas. Details to come.

New Media Project (20%)

This class project (or projects) will be designed by you, with help from myself and Brooke Bergantzel. Projects should emerge from engagement with class readings, and include a product that will help future readers to better understand the Romantic Gothic texts we've studied. I expect you to be both disciplined and creative in your design and approach!

| Grading Scale | | | | | | | End-of-Term Conversion | | | | | | | | |
|---------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|------------------------|--------|----|-------|----|-------|----|-------|----|
| | | B+ | 88 | C+ | 78 | D+ | 68 | | | | | | | | |
| A | 95 | B | 85 | C | 75 | D | 65 | 93-100 | A | 88-89 | B+ | 78-79 | C+ | 68-69 | D+ |
| A- | 92 | B- | 82 | C- | 72 | D- | 62 | | | 83-87 | B | 73-77 | C | 63-67 | D |
| | | | | | | | | 90-92 | A- | 80-82 | B- | 70-72 | C- | 60-62 | D- |

CLOSE READING (or EXPLICATION) of a prose passage:

A close reading/explication breaks down the elements of a passage to show how it works. It means going over the whole passage with a magnifying glass, paying very close attention to each little detail of the way it is put together. NARRATIVE STRUCTURES (the story and movement of the passage) and LANGUAGE CHOICES (diction, tone, etc.) are keys to the function and meaning of the passage.

STEP ONE: Translation:

Read the passage aloud, several times. Translate each sentence into your own words on a separate sheet of paper, avoiding oversimplification. As you translate, take into account shifts in tone which convey shifts in the speaker's relationship to his/her subject or listener, and note any irony and double meanings that might be present. Keep a list of questions about terms and comments which you may not immediately understand.

STEP TWO: Working Up the Passage:

Re-type at least one long paragraph of the text, triple spacing with wide margins. The re-typing allows you to focus on the most detailed material of the text, so you notice significant aspects that might elude you otherwise. Plus, the triple spacing and wide margins allow you to have room for detailed commentary. PROOFREAD CAREFULLY TO BE SURE IT IS EXACT. Print up the part you have typed and go through and circle and make comments about word choice, structure, theme and so on, gathering raw material for analyzing the text. It may help to use different color pencils for different aspects to demonstrate patterns (say purple for diction, red for syntax, green for image; yellow highlighter for changes in narrative consciousness), or to circle some elements, underline others, and star yet others. Whatever code you come up with, be sure you provide a key for it. If you are doing a mark-up for a paper or presentation, attach it as an appendix.

What to look at through the microscope:

LANGUAGE:

Pay attention to overall uses of LANGUAGE. The language choices the writer makes have an impact on you as a reader, so look at them closely to get the most from the passage.

GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT HOW THE LANGUAGE OPERATES: Having translated each sentence, consider the following. What is your first impression of the passage? What is it "about"? What does it do? How does the language work, overall? Is the language elevated in style? hyperbolic? understated? vivid? low-key? sarcastic? erratic? What effect does the language have on you as a reader? Once you have a general impression, it is time to delve into the details.

SPECIFIC QUESTIONS ABOUT LANGUAGE CHOICES IN THE PASSAGE:

DICTION (word choice) What kinds of words does the writer use in this passage? Are they everyday, vernacular (conversational) words? slang? elevated language? poetic language? How do the words sound? How do they look? What do they mean? What do they say about the speaker's gender, class, level of education, profession, etc.? Circle words that characterize the diction. Every word is chosen carefully, so brainstorm about the words to make sure you get the most out of each one.

SYNTAX (sentence structures, length, complexity). What are the sentences like? long? short? a mix? Are they easy to follow? complex? Do they follow a simple grammar of “subject-predicate” or do they unfold in a more complex layering of clause after clause? Use your grammar book to tackle one or two of the sentences and see if you can unwind them. What is the effect of the sentence structure on you as a reader? Do the sentence structures make you read differently? Do you read them quickly or slowly? Do the structures make you have to re-read some sentences before you understand them? What kind of work or attention do they require of readers?

RHYTHM (this is created by a combination of word length, punctuation, and syntax) Another way to envision rhythm is to consider the sentences as moving elements. Would you describe them as sentences that run, walk, or dance? Do they stay still? meander? wander? race? trip over themselves? You get a better sense of the rhythms in a passage if you read aloud. What patterns of rhythm emerge? Are they smooth? interrupted? Does it change directions abruptly? What elements of the passage create the rhythm? Short staccato words or long many-syllabled words would play a role in creating rhythm, so be sure to circle/note such words. Punctuation plays a key role too. Short sentences break up the rhythm. Long, convoluted sentences created a different wandering rhythm with subtle nuances within the sentence, rather than actual breaks. Commas create pauses that are less than the pauses of a semi-colon, which are less than the full-stops of a period. And what of dashes? question marks? exclamation points? parentheses? All of these elements work to create visual and aural rhythms. What does the rhythm suggest about the speaker or narrative consciousness? about the tone?

IMAGE(S) (the sensory elements such as visual images, sounds, textures, that play a role in shaping the reader’s response to the passage). What objects are in the passage? Are they literal, or symbolic? What sensory data do you get? One object might be a tree. But how is the tree described? Are things heard, seen, tasted, touched? The images (visual, aural, or tactile) in a passage help to shape its meaning.

TONE indicates the speaker’s attitude toward his or her subject. Is the tone sarcastic, bitter, melancholy, euphoric, fearful, depressed? Diction and rhythm often provides the best clues as to tone. Also, what a writer does *not* say about the subject, but could have, can also indicate tone. Reading aloud is a good way to test for tone. If you are unsure, try reading the passage in several tones: funny, sarcastic, sincere—to see which one fits best. The tone is often subtle, so you have to pay close attention to all the details that can inflect tone.

NARRATIVE AND RHETORICAL STRUCTURES:

Persona/voice: From whose point of view is the passage given? If fiction, are we within the mind of a character, the omniscient narrator? Or both? How do you know? What markers in the passage tell you which narrative consciousness we are in? (Sometimes Language elements such as diction, tone, and images will be clues.) Does the narrative consciousness shift in the passage? How can you tell? Mark each consciousness in the passage separately. Is this narrative consciousness the same one as in the rest of the novel or essay? Or does it relate in some way to other narrative consciousnesses in the novel?

Implied audience: What does the writer assume about the audience, particularly if the passage is excerpted from an essay? For example, can you determine the implied reader’s gender? class? age? level of education? Diction can be a clue, as can tone. Does the writer assume that the reader will challenge her assumptions? agree with them? have particular kinds of questions?

STEP THREE: From Close Reading to Critical Essay: Shaping your raw material

After you have completed a thorough mark-up of the passage, the next step is pulling it together into a coherent and intelligent essay, that still does justice to its complexities. *What about the passage is the most ambiguous or ironic or difficult to interpret?* The main idea that emerges may be the thesis, or organizing idea, of your essay. It may be something as simple as that a sentence which could be taken as straightforward should in fact be read as rich in ironies. You will also need to explain why that interpretation is important for understanding the passage and the work as a whole. Why does that moment in the passage carry such importance? why does this passage itself matter? what is its significance to the piece as a whole? does this passage work to build a theme? a character? a social critique? show consciousness? anticipate readers’ arguments? The significance of your interpretation, along these lines, should be summarized in your introduction, and will probably lead directly into your thesis. Next, you need to support and develop that main idea by bringing in the materials from your mark-up. Review all the material you have generated and see if

ideas begin to emerge that you can develop into coherent paragraphs to support your main idea. Find minimally 3 or 4 clusters of interesting observations that would each make a good solid paragraph. You might have paragraphs on observations about diction, images, rhythm and syntax, for example. Or, you might choose to organize your essay chronologically, following the flow of the paragraph. Either organization could work—but in either case be sure to support each point with solid detail and/or quotations.

Remember, the main point of a close reading is to explore how the passage works. Don't get sidetracked into thinking you have to craft a rigid thesis and make everything fit into it. The goal is to explore, not to dictate. If your thesis requires you to ignore or twist elements in the passage, rewrite your thesis.

Adapted from a handout by L.K. Hankins.