

Professor E. Bohls
Fall 2013
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Office: 527 PLC
Hours: W 12-3
& by appointment

ENGLISH 407: THE ROMANTIC NOVEL

Poetry has traditionally dominated the study of British Romantic literature. But the novel, invented a century earlier by Behn, Defoe and others, also took off in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This young, vigorous prose genre was ripe for experimentation, and the turbulent decades from 1790 to 1820 inspired a wide range of creative responses. We'll study Gothic novels, a "Jacobin" political novel, historical novels, and early science fiction. Authors include William Godwin, Ann Radcliffe, James Earle, Maria Edgeworth, Walter Scott, and Mary Shelley.

TEXTS (UO Bookstore): William Godwin, *Caleb Williams* (Broadview); Ann Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (Oxford World's Classics, 1998 ed.); James Earle, *Obi, or the History of Three-Fingered Jack* (Broadview); Maria Edgeworth, *Castle Rackrent and Ennui* (Penguin); Walter Scott, *Waverley* (Oxford World's Classics); Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein* (Norton Critical Ed., 2nd ed.). **Please get the specified editions:** they include supplemental materials that are required reading. Additional readings and critical articles or chapters for reports will be posted on Blackboard.

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADE BREAKDOWN

30% Paper I, 6-8 pages, due Thursday, Oct. 31, 5:00 p.m. in 527 PLC

30% Paper II, 6-8 pages (minimum length), due Thursday, Dec. 12, 12:00 noon, 527 PLC

15% Report and précis

10% Reading journal

15% Participation, including discussion questions and in-class writing

Attendance and participation: Since we meet just once a week, it's very important for everyone to attend every class session. Only serious illness or a real emergency justifies an absence. Active participation in class discussion is part of your grade and will help you master the material and get ideas for your papers. Bring a question to each meeting for the class to discuss (post these on Blackboard by noon Tuesday). Occasional in-class writing is also part of your participation grade.

Reading journal: You are required to keep a journal with an entry (300 words minimum, more is fine) for each class meeting. These can be hard copy or electronic. Record your experience of reading the novels. How do you respond to different characters? What do you notice about the author's craft—style, plotting, character creation, description, imagery, symbols? What surprises you? Puzzles you? Makes you angry? Please be frank: it's fine not to like a book as long as you articulate the reasons why you don't like it. Journals can also help generate ideas for papers. Please bring them to class. I'll collect them periodically (electronic ones via email) and will ask students to read journal entries in class to help generate discussion.

Report and précis: Each student will present a 15-minute report on a critical article or chapter about one of the novels. You should summarize the critic's argument and evaluate its usefulness for understanding the novel. A written précis (summary) of the article is due the day of the report.

Papers: I'm looking for polished gems: thoughtful, concise, graceful arguments with a clear focus. Every word counts. Plan on writing several drafts of each paper (this means getting an early start). Use of critical or historical sources is optional; if you use them, please document using MLA style. Late papers are docked 1/3 grade per day late. Late submission is not an option for paper II.

SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS

WEEK 1

Oct. 1 Godwin, *Caleb Williams*, pp. 55-175 (Vol. I)

WEEK 2

Oct. 8 Finish *Caleb Williams* and read Appendix A (pp. 435-67)

WEEK 3

Oct. 15 Radcliffe, *Mysteries of Udolpho*, through p. 310 (Vol II, Ch. IX) and Castle intro

WEEK 4

Oct. 22 Finish *Mysteries of Udolpho*

WEEK 5

Oct. 29 Earle, *Obi*, with Aravamudan intro and appendices A and B

ESSAY I (6-8 PAGES) DUE THURSDAY, OCT. 31, 5:00 P.M., 527 PLC

WEEK 6

Nov. 5 Edgeworth, *Castle Rackrent*, including glossary (pp. 61-138)

WEEK 7

Nov. 12 Scott, *Waverley*, through p. 161 (Vol II, Ch. VIII) and Duncan intro

WEEK 8

Nov. 19 Finish *Waverley*

WEEK 9

Nov. 26 Shelley, *Frankenstein*, and Hunter intro

WEEK 10

Dec. 3 Selected critical essays on *Frankenstein* in Norton Critical Edition (Second Edition)

ESSAY 2 (6-8 PAGES) DUE THURSDAY, DEC. 12, 12:00 NOON, 527 PLC