

ENG 455/ 555
Spring 2018
Deady 303
10-11-20

Professor Forest Pyle
Office: PLC 270
Hours: T,Th 12-1:30
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English Romantic Writers: What is Romanticism?

This course will be a sustained examination of the question: "What is Romanticism? This is a question which has no single or ultimate answer given that there seem to be as many answers as there are "askers." There is, however, a rich and complex body of literature and critical commentary to which we assign the adjective "Romantic." I've organized our readings of some of the principal writers of the period thematically rather than chronologically. I believe this offers us a better way to explore in a single term the conceptual issues posed by these texts and their resonance in subsequent periods. Our principal project will be the close reading and discussion of some of the most important and influential texts within that "tradition," from William Blake through Emily Bronte. We will consider the various historical, biographical, philosophical, political, and aesthetic contexts of British Romantic literature, but our primary focus will be on the texts themselves and on the theoretical and cultural responses to Romanticism.

Assignments Students will complete three writing assignments and a final project: one two-page single-spaced assignment (15%), two three-page single spaced assignments (25% each), and a take-home final exam project due **Thursday, March 23rd** (30%). The final 5% will be assessed for class participation and, if necessary, periodic in-class quizzes.

Attendance Mandatory. On the sixth absence (for any reason), a student will without warning lose one full letter from the final course grade. Discussion is crucial to the course. I expect students to come to class having read the assigned reading and prepared to participate in discussion. Please refrain from using mobile devices during class.

Text The Ninth edition of the Norton devoted to English Romanticism (Volume D) and the Norton critical editions of *Frankenstein* and *Wuthering Heights*. A few "unanthologized" poems and the other relevant critical, theoretical, and cultural texts will be uploaded to our canvas site.

**ENG 454: English Romantic Writers:
What is Romanticism?
Schedule of Readings and Assignments**

I. The Innocence Project

Apr 3: Introduction. **William Blake**, *Songs of Innocence* (112-125)

Apr 5: **Blake**, *Songs of Innocence* (112-125) **Guest Lecture: Anna Carroll**

Apr 10: **William Wordsworth**, "We Are Seven" (278-279), "Tintern Abbey" (288-291), from *The Prelude*, Book Second ("Blessed the infant babe," 375-378).

Samuel Coleridge, "Frost at Midnight" (477-479). **Zadie Smith**, "Notes on Attunement: (Visiting Tintern Abbey)" (canvas). **Peter de Bolla**, from "Equanimity: Wordsworth's 'We Are Seven'" (canvas)

II. The Art Project

Apr 12: **Blake**, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (148-158)
first writing assignment due

Apr 17: **Wordsworth**, Preface to *Lyrical Ballads* (292-304)

Apr 19: **Percy Shelley**, *A Defense of Poetry* (856-869). **John Keats**, Selections from Letters (965-980). **Walter Benjamin**, "Theses on the Concept of History" (canvas)

Apr 24: **Wordsworth**, from *The Prelude*, Books Sixth, Eleventh, Thirteenth (384-388, 395-402). **Immanuel Kant**, selections from *The Critique of Aesthetic Judgment* (canvas)

Apr 26: **Coleridge**, "Kubla Khan" (459-462), "Eolian Harp" (439-441), "Chamounix: Hymn Before Sunrise" (canvas). **Timothy Bahti**, "Coleridge's 'Kubla Khan'" (canvas). **Joy Division**, "Transmission" (canvas)

May 1 **Percy Shelley**, "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty" (773-776), "Mont Blanc" (770-773), "To a Skylark" (834-836), "Ozymandias" (776). **William Keach**, "Mont Blanc" (canvas), **Bryan Cranston**, "Ozymandias" (canvas)

May 3: **Keats**, from *Sleep and Poetry* (904-906), "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer" (904), "On Sitting Down to Read *King Lear* Once Again" (910), "On Seeing the Elgin Marbles" (906), "Ode to a Nightingale" (927-930), "Ode on a Grecian Urn" (930-931), "On Seeing a Lock of Milton's Hair" (canvas). **Paul de Man**, "The Negative Path" (canvas)

III. Life + Love = Loss

May 8: **Wordsworth**, the "Lucy" poems (305-307), "Mutability" (348), "The Ruined Cottage" (309-320) **second writing assignment due**

May 10: **Percy Shelley**, "On Life" (canvas), "On Love" (776), "Lift not the Painted Veil" (canvas), "Mutability" (751), "Ode to the West Wind" (791-793), "To Wordsworth" (752), "England in 1819" (790), *Adonais* (839-853)

May 15: **Keats**, "Ode to Psyche" (925), "Ode on Melancholy" (931-933), "This living hand" (964), "La Belle Dame sans Merci" (923-925)

May 17: **Coleridge**, "Dejection: An Ode" (479-483), *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (443-459). **Lord Byron**, "Darkness" (618-620)

May 22: **Emily Bronte**, *Wuthering Heights*

May 24: **Bronte**, *Wuthering Heights*. **Charlotte Bronte**, "Editor's Preface." **Georges Bataille**, from *Literature and Evil* (canvas)

IV. "Heaven Knows I'm Miserable Now"

May 29: **Blake**, from *Songs of Experience* (125-135) **third writing assignment**

May 31: **Byron**, from *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (620-638). **Mario Praz**, from *The Romantic Agony* (canvas). **The Smiths** "Heaven Knows I'm Miserable Now," "How Soon is Now?" "Bigmouth Strikes Again"

Jun 5: **Mary Shelley**, *Frankenstein*

Jun 7: **Mary Shelley**, *Frankenstein*. **Percy Shelley**, "Preface"

Jun 12: **Final Exam Project Due**