

ENG 454/ 554
Winter 2017
Condon 201

Professor Forest Pyle
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Hours: T 12-1:30, W 1:30-3
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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 "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

Jan 10: Introduction. **William Blake**, from *Songs of Innocence* (112-125)

Jan 12: **Blake**, from *Songs of Innocence* (112-125)

Jan 17: **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**, "Visiting Tintern Abbey" (canvas). **Peter de Bolla**, from "Equanimity: Wordsworth's 'We Are Seven'" (canvas).

II. The Art Project

Jan 19: **Blake**, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (148-158)

first writing assignment due

Jan 24: **Wordsworth**, Preface to *Lyrical Ballads* (292-304)

Jan 26: **Percy Shelley**, *A Defense of Poetry* (856-869). **John Keats**, Selections from Letters (965-980). **Walter Benjamin**, "Theses on the Concept of History" (canvas)

Jan 31: **Wordsworth**, from *The Prelude*, Books Sixth, Eleventh, Thirteenth (384-388, 395-402)

Feb 2: **Coleridge**, "Kubla Khan" (459-462), "Eolian Harp" (439-441), "Chamounix: Hymn Before Sunrise" (canvas). **Timothy Bahti**, "Coleridge's 'Kubla Khan'" (canvas)

Feb 7: **Percy Shelley**, "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty" (773-776), "Mont Blanc" (770-773), "To a Skylark" (834-836), "Ozymandias" (776). **William Keach**, "Mont Blanc" (canvas)

Feb 9: **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

Feb 14: **Wordsworth**, the "Lucy" poems (305-307), "Mutability" (348), "The Ruined Cottage" (309-320)

second writing assignment due

Feb 16: **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)

Feb 21: **Keats**, "Ode to Psyche" (925), "Ode on Melancholy" (931-933), "This living hand" (964), "La Belle Dame sans Merci" (923-925)

Feb 23: **Coleridge**, "Dejection: An Ode" (479-483), *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (443-459). **Lord Byron**, "Darkness" (618-620)

Feb 28: **Emily Bronte**, *Wuthering Heights*

Mar 2: **Bronte**, *Wuthering Heights*. **Charlotte Bronte**, "Editor's Preface." **Georges Bataille**, from *Literature and Evil* (canvas)

IV. "Heaven Knows I'm Miserable Now"

Mar 7: **Blake**, from *Songs of Experience* (125-135) **third writing assignment due**

Mar 9: **Byron**, from *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (620-638). **Mario Praz**, from *The Romantic Agony* (canvas)

Mar 14: **Mary Shelley**, *Frankenstein*

Mar 16: **Mary Shelley**, *Frankenstein*. **Percy Shelley**, "Preface."

Mar 23: **Final Exam Project Due**