Department of English, University of Waterloo

English 200B: Survey of British Literature 2
Spring 1998

Instructor: Professor Linda Warley
Office: HH 251 ext. 5379
e-mail: lwarley@watarts.uwaterloo.ca
Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:30 - 4:00 p.m.

I. Course Description

This course complements English 200A and represents a broad survey of some of the major authors and works from the Romantic and Victorian periods and the first half of the twentieth century. Our focus will be on the trends and developments that are characteristic of each period. We will also undertake close readings of selected literary texts with an eye not only to learning the content and themes of particular works but also to considering the conventions of particular literary forms and the relationship between form and content.

II. Books

A: Required

B: Highly recommended

Note 1: A good dictionary, a writing handbook, and a glossary of literary terms are essential resources in English studies. English majors in particular should acquire these reference works early in their programs. In my marking, I will use editing symbols shown on the last page of the *Handbook* and refer to specific sections of the book where you can find instruction on particular writing problems you may be experiencing. All essays must be written and documented according to the MLA citation style, which is also outlined in *The Little, Brown Compact Handbook*.

Note 2: All royalties earned from the sale of the *Little, Brown Compact Handbook* go to the Department of English Scholarship Fund.
III. Schedule of classes

Romanticism

Background reading: The Romantic Period (1-13, omit sections on essay, drama, and novel); Author notes: William Blake (18-22); Mary Wollstonecraft (98-101); William Wordsworth (126-29); John Keats (766-69)

May
5
Introduction

7

12
Blake, “The Marriage of Heaven and Hell” (53-64)

17
Mary Wollstonecraft, from *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, “Introduction” and “Chapter two” (101-19)

19
William Wordsworth, “Ode: Intimations of Immortality” (189-93)

21

26
John Keats, “Ode on a Grecian Urn” (792-94)

28
Mid-term test

Victorian literature and fin de siècle

Background reading: The Victorian Age (891-910); The Nineties (1612-13)
Author Notes: Thomas Carlyle (910-15); Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1052-56); Robert Browning (1182-87); Oscar Wilde (1616-18)

June
2
Thomas Carlyle, from *Past and Present*, “Democracy” and “The Captains of Industry” (965-74)

4
Alfred, Lord Tennyson, “The Lady of Shalott” (1059-63)

9
Tennyson, “The Lotos-Eaters” (1063-67)

11
Robert Browning, “My Last Duchess” (1190-92), “Andrea del Sarto” (1222-28)

16
Emily Brontë, *Wuthering Heights*

18
*Wuthering Heights*

Essay plans due

23
*Wuthering Heights*

25
Oscar Wilde, “The Importance of Being Earnest” (1629-67)
"The Importance of Being Earnest"

July 2  "The Importance of Being Earnest"

Modernism and beyond

Background reading: Author notes: William Butler Yeats (1859-63); James Joyce (2003-08); T.S. Eliot (2136-39); Katherine Mansfield (2183-84); George Orwell (2227-28); Stevie Smith (2221-22)

July 7 Siegfried Sassoon, "The Rear-Guard" (1832-33); Wilfred Owen "Anthem for Doomed Youth" (1843), "Dulce Et Decorum Est" (1845-46)
9 William Butler Yeats, "The Second Coming" (1880-81); "Sailing to Byzantium" (1883-84)

Essays due

14 T.S. Eliot, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (2140-43)
16 James Joyce, "The Dead" (2008-36)

21 Katherine Mansfield, "The Daughters of the Late Colonel" (2184-2198)
23 George Orwell, "Shooting an Elephant" (2228-33)

28 Stevie Smith, "Is It Wise?" (2222), "Our Bog is Dood" (2222-23), "Pretty" (2226-27)
30 Essays returned and exam preparation
IV. Assignments

A. The mid-term test
The in-class mid-term test will cover only the Romantic period. You will be asked to analyze a poem that we have not discussed in class, though it will be written by a poet we have studied. You should be able to analyze the poem in detail, as well as comment on its relationship to other works of the Romantic period. There will be a choice of poems.

B: The essay
Writing the essay involves a two-step process:

1. formulating a thesis and an essay plan which you will hand into me for comment and grading
2. writing the essay

Note: Even if you choose one of the more “creative” topics, you are still expected to come up with some sort of argument that substantiates your interpretation of the texts analyzed.

I will assess your essay plan according to the following criteria: the refinement and focus of the argument and approach; the structure and coherence of the planned discussion; the appropriateness of the suggested textual evidence.

The final version of the paper will be graded according to the following criteria: the persuasiveness of the argument and approach; the integration, relevance and analysis of the evidence presented; the logic and coherence of the discussion; mechanics (organization, sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, etc.).

C: The final exam
The final exam will cover all of the material studied throughout the course; however, most of the emphasis will be on the last two units. The exam will be in three parts: identify and write short responses to selected passages; essay question; identify and define key terms and concepts.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mid-term test</td>
<td>May 28, 1998</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay plan</td>
<td>June 18, 1998</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>July 9, 1998</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final examination</td>
<td>Tba</td>
<td>40%</td>
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Late policy
I will not be granting extensions; however, emergencies, for which you will require official documentation, will be fairly dealt with. Computer problems, though frustrating, do not count as an emergency. A penalty of 3% per day, including Saturdays and
Sundays, will be levied against late papers. This is a stiff penalty, and it is a lousy way to lose marks. Please make every effort to get your essay in on time.

**NB:** I will not accept any papers at all after the last day of classes.

**Plagiarism**

Presenting the words, ideas, or other intellectual property of someone else as your own is plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense, and it will be dealt with most harshly. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with the University of Waterloo Policy #71 (in the Undergraduate calendar 1:10) for a complete explanation of plagiarism and its consequences. In written assignments, all direct quotations from texts (primary and secondary), all paraphrases of another’s words, and all presentations of another’s ideas must be properly documented.

**Note:** If you are in any doubt as to how to handle borrowed material, please ask me for clarification and instruction. Incorrect or sloppy documentation could lead to academic penalty.

V. Essay topics and instructions

Write an original, thoughtful, and well-organized essay of approximately eight double-spaced, typed pages (2000 words) on one of the following topics. Please number your pages and leave at least one inch margins on both left and right sides of the page. A separate title page is not necessary. A works cited list—in proper MLA citation format—is.

As a general rule, you should discuss only those texts that are on the course syllabus or which I have directed you to consult. If you vary from this practice, you must gain my prior permission.

For your own protection, keep a copy of your essay.

1. Choose one or two stanzas from one of the longer poems and construct a formal analysis of it. The object is to engage in close textual analysis, identifying and considering the overall effect of the poet’s stylistic choices. There are many techniques you might discuss depending on the selection, but among these might be tropes, rhyme and meter, diction, line length, punctuation, syntax, tone, etc. Obviously you would not necessarily have to discuss all of these techniques. You should, however, consider the relation of the textual selection to the work as a whole and how formal and stylistic choices construct meaning.

2. Imagine that two writers we have studied are engaged in a dialogue about the function of art and/or writing and the role of the artist and/or the writer in society. In an imaginary series of letters between the two (a minimum of two letters from each writer), construct a defense of each writer’s views, making references to particular
literary works written by them as part of your evidence. For this topic, you may also wish to make use of whatever critical writings by your authors that are included in the Norton anthology (e.g. letters or essays they have written). However, you should not rely on the introductions written by the Norton editors. Keep your focus on the writers’ words and trust your own understanding of how these writers think and write.

3. As the number of footnotes supplied by the Norton editors suggest, allusion is a common literary device employed by many writers across the periods. While the Norton editors often supply the source of the allusions, they do not usually comment on the relevance of them to the work as a whole. That is, they do not analyze the function(s) or meaning(s) of particular allusions in particular works. Write your own analysis of the use of allusion in works by two writers. In your essay, you should comment on both the general function of allusion and its more particular effect in the works analyzed.

4. This is a two part essay: 1) Create a journal entry of no more than four pages written in the voice of any character or narrator of a prose or poetic work. The journal entry should represent further reflection on a particular issue that has been presented in the original work. The journal entry must also be consistent with the character’s or narrator’s language usage and style. You should quote selectively from the original work, but use your imagination to truly inhabit the character’s mind and, as it were, write beyond the original text. Keep in mind, however, that you must be able to substantiate everything you create in terms of the original text. 2) Then write a four-page analysis of your journal entry, commenting on why you made certain writing decisions, and stating what you were hoping to achieve.

5. Analyze in depth and detail the narrative perspective and rhetorical style of any of the writers whose prose works we have studied in the course. The purpose of this essay is to look very closely at how narrative works. Issues you might consider (which ones depends on the text you choose) include the following: point of view, tone of voice, reliability and degree of omniscience of the narrator, narrative structure, shifts in narrative perspective, audience addressed, etc. In other words, in this essay you will consider HOW a story is told or an argument made, not just the content of the work.