Literature of the Romantic Period 1

Course Description

In this course we will focus on reading a selection of exciting and significant poems from the Romantic era by three magnificent and influential poets--Blake, Coleridge, and Wordsworth--and by some of their important poetic contemporaries (such as Charlotte Smith and Phillis Wheatley). Passionate, democratic (or at least republican), imaginative, and often personal, Romantic poetry explodes onto the English cultural scene at the turn of the eighteenth into the nineteenth century. Romantic poetry is the literary embodiment of a larger movement that deliberately challenged the old ways of understanding with new ideas of self-formation, new ideas of society, new ideas of government, and new ideas of art. So influential, in fact, were Romantic ideas that we are all, even today, still living by many of the notions they pioneered: that we all matter as individuals; that peoples (nations) have a destiny; that self-expression is authentic expression; that convention is bad and innovation is good; that there is a deep self worth knowing; and that imagination is a primary human value.

Objectives

By the end of the course students will:

1. Have a sophisticated grasp of some key works by Blake, Coleridge, and Wordsworth.

2. Understand some of the principal developments in the literary history of British Romanticism.

3. Be familiar with a range of approaches to Romantic poetry.

4. Construct insightful, well-evidenced, and clearly-written arguments about literary works.

5. Communicate verbally ideas and insights about poems and other texts clearly and effectively.

6. Develop advanced skills in literary research and analysis.
Logistics

Office: Hagey Hall 253, ext. 33359
Office hours: 2:30-3:30 pm Tuesday, 12:00-1:00 pm Thursday, or by appointment

Required Texts

Duncan Wu, ed., Romanticism: An Anthology, 3rd ed. (Blackwell)

Assignments

Attendance and active preparation for and participation in class discussions and exercises (10%); in-class midterm essay or in-class seminar (your choice = 20%); 7-page paper (30%); and a final examination (40%).

Students must prepare course readings ahead of the relevant classes. Working on and with our readings, in the context of class discussions, will be a key part of your learning in this course. Class exercises will include preparing responses to five of the texts we are studying for in-class discussion on set days. These five texts will be announced by the second week of classes. In-class seminars, for those who choose to deliver one, will be scheduled for dates starting in the third week of classes; a sign-up sheet for texts and seminar dates will be circulated starting in the second week of classes.

For those who choose to write it, the midterm will be held on October 14. The paper MUST be handed in to the instructor at the start of class on November 18. Due to my administrative and research responsibilities, I am not able to mark or comment on papers handed in at other times. For this reason, papers handed in before or after the November 18th class will be graded but not marked or commented upon. Late papers will be penalized 3% for the first day, and 1% for every day thereafter.

Papers must be typed, double-spaced, printed out, and fastened with a staple (DO NOT use plastic report folders or other fasteners or covers); please do not use right justification. A page is 250 words. Papers must follow the format for paper presentation, quotations, and references laid out in the MLA Handbook, 7th ed. Except when there is a serious documented medical reason, uncompleted or missed assignments will be graded 0.

Note: Please keep a photocopy of any paper you submit, and NEVER hand a paper or any other assignment in by sliding it under (or sticking it to) my office door.

Finally, students are must follow at all times both university and departmental regulations on plagiarism (in particular, all work apart from group assignments must be your own, and the words and ideas of others must appear within your work inside quotation marks and with complete references in foot- or end-notes).
Academic Integrity

**Academic Integrity**: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. [Check http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/ for more information.]

**Discipline**: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infsec/Policies/policy71.htm. For typical penalties check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infsec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm.

**Grievance**: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infsec/Policies/policy70.htm. When in doubt please be certain to contact the department’s administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

**Appeals**: A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infsec/Policies/policy72.htm.

**Academic Integrity website (Arts)**: http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html

**Academic Integrity Office (UW)**: http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

**Note for students with disabilities**: The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.
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SYLLABUS


I. Sexuality and Dissent: Blake

September 21, 23, 28 & 30 and October 5, 7 & 12: Burke, selections; Paine, selections; Weatley, Selections (H = handout); Wollstonecraft, selections from A Vindication of the Rights of Woman; Blake, All Religions are One, There is No Natural Religion, The Book of Thel, Songs of Innocence and Experience, The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, Visions of the Daughters of Albion, Letter, “The Mental Traveller,” “And did those Feet in Ancient Time.”

October 14: Midterm

II. Realism and Romance: Wordsworth (& Coleridge)

October 19, 21, 26 & 28 and November 2, 4, 9 & 11: Barbauld, Eighteen Hundred and Eleven; Smith, Elegiac Sonnets I, II, III, IV, V, IX, XI, XII, XIII, XXI, XXV, XXVIII; Cowper, “Sweet Meat has Sour Sauce”; More, “The Story of Sinful Sally”; Clare, Selections (H); Wordsworth and Coleridge, Lyrical Ballads; Wordsworth, The Two-Part Prelude, “There was a Boy,” “Nutting,” “Strange Fits of Passion have I Known,” “Three Years She Grew,” “Preface to Lyrical Ballads,” “Michael,” selections from Poems in Two Volumes (1807); “Surprised by Joy.”

III. Of Other Times and Places: Coleridge (cont.)


*Note that your paper is due at the start of class on Thursday, November 18th.

December 2: Conclusion and Review