

English 3221: British Literature of the Romantic Period

Fall 2014

Dr. Stephen Tabachnick

An alternative title for this course, which will cover the high points of British literature from approximately 1760-1840, might be *Mysticism and Fantasy in the Romantic Age*. We will study the poets William Blake, William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Lord Byron, and John Keats as well as Gothic novelists William Beckford, Mary Shelley, and Emily Bronte, and several prose writers, including Thomas De Quincey. The emphasis will be on the wayward, wandering, dream-like, sometimes drug-induced, and religiously and psychologically profound aspects of romanticism, which resulted in the writing of some of the greatest mystical and fantasy literature of all time. A skeptical, balanced, and satirical view will also be provided by the reading of Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey*, which parodies some of these tendencies. Students will become adept in formal analysis, including scansion, as well as in the intellectual themes of the period--including the Sublime, the Byronic Hero and the Orient--and their implications for the future.

Texts:

*The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, Vol. D: The Romantic Period. 8th edition.

*Three Gothic Novels: The Castle of Otranto, Vathek, Frankenstein*. Penguin.

Austen, Jane. *Northanger Abbey*. Norton Critical Editions.

Bronte, Emily. *Wuthering Heights*. Norton Critical Editions.

Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein: The Graphic Novel*. Classical Comics.

Course work will include three midterms and a final, each involving passage identifications and an essay.