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**Online English 3220: British Literature from 1750 to the present**

**Texts:**

Broadview Anthology of British Literature, Concise Volume B.

ISBN 9781554811335/1554811333

**Aims and Organization:**

This course surveys the development of British literature from the beginning of the fully modern Enlightenment or “Age of Reason” up to the present. The “Age of Reason” is often considered a misnomer since while rational philosophies increasingly competed with religion during this period, religious sentiment remained strong and the same era witnessed the birth of Romanticism, where nature worship at times combined with as well as competed with Christianity. This period is foundational because it also ushered in a new emphasis on the rights of “Man,” sometimes but not always limited to white males, on the political and personal rights of women, and the beginnings of the anti-slavery movements. We will read important texts declaring these new rights and all the great Romantic poets before moving into the Victorian era, which while placing more emphasis on family values, also inaugurated our current concerns about individualism, the evils of industrial development and the preservation of the environment. These concerns further stimulated a nostalgia for a romanticized past summarized by the term “Gothic,” which in this context means the older Visigoth or Medieval Germanic and English culture—in other words, the era of knighthood, monasticism, crusades and kings. After exploring Victorian culture we turn to the beginnings of the twentieth century and the birth of literary Modernism and Postmodernism, progressive movements dedicated to both social and literary experimentation. Throughout all three periods we will read works by writers of all genders and nationalities within the general spectrum of British literature and its colonial subjects, so both the birth and death of the British Empire and the colonial period will be important themes.

**Assignments and Written Work:**

Regular class attendance will consist of two online responses to each bi-weekly set of readings. Students will choose from at least 4-5 questions on each set, thus allowing for a maximum of individual choice. After choosing a question students should submit a solid, detailed paragraph answer online and respond to at least one other student paragraph; these two weekly responses take the place of class discussion. There will also be three quizzes on background historical material in the textbook, a midterm exam, a formal paper, and final exam. The students’ weekly responses, graded on a scale of 0-10, together with the quizzes constitute 25% of their grade. The midterm exam and a relatively short, 4-5 page formal essay constitute another 25% each, while the final exam makes up the final 25%. In all borderline grades, regular contributions and improvement in student work during the course will be a strong factor.

**Learning Outcomes:**

Increased understanding of the following:

- 1) The modern age, its literature, and its prehistory in the watershed era of Romanticism.
- 2) Interpretation and discussion of major symbols, images, and themes in all genres.
- 3) Understanding of modern social values and how literary social criticism as well as fiction contributed to their development.

**Accommodation/Disability Statement:** Students with a disability or condition that may impair their ability to complete assignments or otherwise satisfy course criteria should meet with the Student Disabilities Services Center to identify, discuss, and document any feasible instructional modification or accommodations.