

Instructor: Roger Whitson
Period: MWF 5
Section: 7922
Meeting Place: LIT 233
email: rwhitson@english.ufl.edu
URL: <http://www.clas.ufl.edu/users/rwhitson>

ENL 3241: Romantic Materialisms

Course Description:

This class will attempt to chart a certain non-empirical materialist strain in Romantic poetry. Traditionally, Romanticism is understood as a rejection of British materialist thought in favor of German Idealism. This characterization ignores the immense impact philosophers like Spinoza and Leibniz had on Romanticism. Focusing on William Blake, Samuel Coleridge, Percy and Mary Shelley, John Clare, and George Gordon Byron, we will look at how arguments over materialism impacted their work, and the poetic history of what could be termed a visionary materialist tradition that rejected the influence of British empiricism. We will spend a good amount of time considering the materialism of Thomas Hobbes, move through the empiricism of John Locke and Issac Newton and into more radical interventions by Spinoza and Leibniz. Then we shall see how Coleridge's transmission of German Idealism and Spinozism impacted the development of the "Romantic Period" and its supposed disdain for the material world. Class requirements include two five page papers and a final exam.

Required Books: at Goerings Book Store

Blake, William. *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. Mineola: Dover, 1994.
---. *The Book of Urizen*. Mineola: Dover, 1994.
Deleuze, Gilles. *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*. Tran. Robert Hurley. San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1988.
de Quincey, Thomas. *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*. London: Penguin, 2003.
Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein*. Ontario: Broadview Press, 1999.
Spinoza, Baruch. *Ethics*. Tran. Edwin Curley. London: Penguin Classics, 2005.
Wordsworth, William. *The Prelude*. London: Penguin, 1996.
Course Packet of Sources.

Online Sources:

Blake, William. *Milton*. <http://www.english.uga.edu/nhilton/Blake/blaketxt1/milton.html>
---. *Jerusalem*. <http://www.english.uga.edu/nhilton/Blake/blaketxt1/jerusalem.html>
Clare, John. *Selected Poetry*. <http://www.johnclare.info/>
Kant, Immanuel. "Analytic of the Sublime."
<http://etext.library.adelaide.edu.au/k/kant/immanuel/k16j/part6.html>
Milton, John. *Paradise Lost*.
<http://www.literature.org/authors/milton-john/paradise-lost/chapter-02.html>
Shelley, Percy. *Alastor, or The Spirit of Solitude*. <http://www.bartleby.com/139/shel112.html>
Warminski, Andrzej. "Returns of the Sublime: Posting and Performative in Kant, Fichte and Schiller."
<http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/mln/v116/116.5warminski.html>

Online Romanticism:

Romantic Circles: <http://www.rc.umd.edu/>
Romanticism on the Net: <http://www.ron.umontreal.ca/>
Voice of the Shuttle, Romantics page: <http://vos.ucsb.edu/browse.asp?id=2750>
The Blake Archive: <http://www.blakearchive.org/>
Romanticism Online: <http://www.users.muohio.edu/mandellc/eng441/urllist.htm>
Romantic Canons: A Bibliography <http://www.orgs.muohio.edu/anthologies/canon.htm>

Class Policies

Attendance

Because class attendance is critical to your understanding of class material, you are only allowed three unexcused absences over the course of a semester. After three unexcused absences, your final grade will be dropped a letter grade for every day missed. An absence due to illness or family crisis may be excused if properly documented to the instructor's satisfaction. In addition, if you participate in a university-sponsored event (athletics, music, theater, field trip), you must provide me with documentation from an appropriate authority, preferably within the first two weeks of class. Whether or not an absence is excused, you are responsible for contacting a classmate or me to find out what material you missed and any work that was assigned. If work is due in class on the day of the absence, the work is due in my mailbox by 4:00 pm that day. No student (including athletes) who misses more than 12 days of class will pass. I reserve the right to give up to four pop quizzes during the semester. These will effect your participation grade.

Tardies

One or two tardies will be excused if the reasons are acceptable. Otherwise tardiness is not acceptable because it is disruptive, and, beyond any excused tardies, class participation and overall grade will be affected (two tardies equals one absence.)

Format

All work is due at the end of class on the day it is due or by 4:00 in my mailbox. All major essays should be typed on one side of 8 1/2" by 11" white paper and double spaced with 1" margins on all sides.

Plagiarism

All work must be individual. Evidence of collusion (working with another student or tutor not connected with class) and plagiarism (use of another's ideas, data, and/or statements without acknowledgement or with only minimal acknowledgement) will lead to the procedures set up by the University for Academic Dishonesty.

Late Work/Rewrites

All late assignments will drop one letter grade for every class period that they are late. If the assignment is more than one week late, it will receive a zero. See me if you have extenuating circumstances.

Keeping a Copy of Your Assignments

I require you to keep copies of every assignment. If I can't find your paper, I will simply ask you for another copy. If you can come up with another copy, no problem. If you cannot come up with another copy, problem.

Classroom Behavior

This class relies heavily upon class participation. During that participation, I expect all students to be shown respect for their opinions. Everyone's ideas are valuable in class and may lead to unexpected and extremely interesting investigation. Please share your ideas with us! Students must also demonstrate respect for gender, racial and ethnic differences among fellow students and myself. Neither ad hominem (arguing against the person and not the issue at hand) arguments nor harassment will be tolerated in this class.

Challenging a Grade

Any complaints about separate assignments should be addressed to me and not to the Department. If you have complaints about the final grade, you may see me at the beginning of next term. If you find you still have complaints after our meeting, you may express your complaints on a form (you must include all

written work performed during the semester as well as a record of absences and a review of class participation) in the English Department Office (4012 TURL). The form and accompanying course material will be given to the Director of the Writing Program for further action. A committee of faculty members will review each student's work and decide on the final grade. The committee may decide the grade should remain as it is, be raised, or be lowered; the decision is final.

Disabilities

The University of Florida complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students requesting accommodation should contact the Students with Disabilities Office, Peabody 202. That office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

If you have a learning disability, hardship, or other special dispensation that has been approved by the Office of Student Affairs, please meet with me to discuss your requirements as early in the term as possible.

One Note: I have recently become a little hard of hearing due to an illness suffered over the summer months. Please be patient, speak loudly and clearly when you participate in class.

Grade Breakdown

5 Page Paper: The first five page paper will focus on British empirical philosophy, and its rejection by one Romantic writer of your choice. 20% or 200 points

10 Page Paper: The ten page paper will focus on the philosophy of Leibniz and Spinoza and its relationship to a Romantic writer of your choice. 40% or 400 points

Final Test: 20% or 200 points

Participation and Attendance: 20% or 200 points You will be asked not only to participate in class, but to contribute 10 questions and five quotes to help direct class discussion for one day.

Class Schedule

This is a tentative schedule and may change.

* denotes an essay in the course packet

** denotes an available online

Aug. 21-25

M: School doesn't start yet!

W: Introduction to the Course.

F: Hobbes, *Leviathan*, "Introduction," "Book 1"*

Sept. 4-8

M: Labor Day--No Classes

W: John Yolton, from *Thinking Matter**

F: continue Yolton*

Sept. 18-22

M: Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*--**1st Paper Due***

W: continue Coleridge chapter 9*

F: finish Coleridge, chapter 13*

Oct 2-6

M: continue Spinoza, Deleuze

W: continue Spinoza, Deleuze

F: finish Spinoza, Deleuze

Oct 16-20

M: Blake, *Urizen*

W: finish Blake

F: Leibniz, from *Monadology**

Oct. 30-Nov. 3

M: No Classes, optional conferences

W: No Classes, optional conferences

F: Wordsworth, Book V

Nov. 13-17

M: de Quincey, *Confessions*

W: de Quincey, *Confessions*

F: de Quincey, *Confessions*

Nov 27-Dec 1

M: Percy Shelley, "Alastor"***

W: continue Shelley**

F: Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*

Aug. 28-Sept. 1

M: Continue Hobbes*

W: Locke, *Essay Concerning.. "Book 1"**

F: Continue Locke*

Sept. 11-15

M: Hume, "Of the Association of Ideas"*

W: Kant, "A of the Sublime" SS 23-27**

F: continue Kant/skim Warminski**

Sept 25-29

M: Spinoza, *Ethics*, and Deleuze *Spinoza*

W: continue Spinoza, Deleuze

F: continue Spinoza, Deleuze

Oct. 9-13

M: Milton, Book 2 of *Paradise Lost***

W: Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*

F: Blake, sel. from *Jerusalem* and *Milton***

Oct 23-27

M: continue Leibniz*

W: Deleuze, excerpt from *The Fold* (handout)

F: Wordsworth, Book II of *The Prelude*

Nov. 6-10

M: Wordsworth, Book XI--**2nd paper due**

W: Poems by John Clare**

F: Veteran's Day--No Classes

Nov 20-24

M: finish *Confessions*

W: No Class--Thanksgiving

F: No Class--Thanksgiving

Dec 4-6

M: Continue *Frankenstein*

W: finish *Frankenstein*

FINAL ON FINALS WEEK