

Heather Anne Wozniak – Sample Syllabus
BRITISH LITERATURE SINCE 1800: MEMORIES, MONSTERS, AND MACHINES

Course Description

This course will introduce you to literary and cultural developments that occurred in Britain since 1800. In particular, we will pay attention to changing definitions of the human. How does the human mind perceive and remember the world? What distinguishes human from fellow human, from inhumane monster, from automated machine? How does the writer understand his or her role in shaping human experience? Our texts will be drawn from the three major genres—poetry, prose, and drama—which in turn include a variety of subgenres, from lyric to flash poem, melodrama to tragicomedy, aesthetic criticism to gothic fiction. In analyzing how Britons made sense of themselves since the eighteenth century, we shall come to understand the origins of—and some alternatives to—modern Anglo-American traditions and beliefs.

Course Requirements

1. **Participation** – Attentive listening and active participation is required. You must attend class in order to participate! (10%)
2. **Website Discussion** – You will be required to post a question or comment pertaining to the readings at least once per week on the course website. These comments may be used to guide in-class discussion, and you will find them useful in working out ideas for your papers. Further instructions on this requirement will be distributed in class. (10%)
3. **Quizzes** – There will be four unannounced in-class quizzes. These quizzes will allow you to practice the close reading and analytical skills needed for your papers and final exam. No make-ups for missed quizzes, but the lowest quiz score will be dropped. (10%)
4. **Papers** – Three papers, all requiring you to develop and express a critical argument. The first two will emphasize close reading of specific passages and the third will require you to respond to issues raised in essay prompts (using close reading to support your arguments). (10%, 10%, 20%)
5. **Final Exam** – Three sections will test your familiarity with the authors, texts, and themes covered in the course. Part 1 will ask you to define key terms, characters, and phrases. Part 2 will ask you to identify and explicate passages from the readings. And Part 3 will give you the opportunity to discuss how three writers address a given issue or problem. (30%)

Course Readings

William Wordsworth, Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, “Tintern Abbey,” “Resolution and Independence,” “I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud”
Samuel Taylor Coleridge, “Eolian Harp,” “Frost at Midnight,” “Kubla Khan,” *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*
Percy Shelley, “Mont Blanc,” “Ode to the West Wind,” *Prometheus Unbound*
George Gordon, Lord Byron, *Manfred*, *Don Juan* Cantos 1 and 2
Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*
Richard Brinsley Peake, *Presumption; or, the Fate of Frankenstein*
John Keats, “Ode to a Grecian Urn,” “Ode to a Nightingale,” selections from letters
Felicia Hemans, “Casabianca,” “The Homes of England,” “Properzia Rossi”
Letitia Landon, “Love’s Last Lesson,” “Erinna”
Emily Brontë, *Wuthering Heights*
Charles Darwin, selections from *The Origin of Species*
John Ruskin, selections from *Modern Painters* and *Stones of Venice*
Elizabeth Barrett Browning, “The Cry of the Children,” “Runaway Slave at Pilgrim’s Point,” selected *Sonnets*
Robert Browning, “My Last Duchess,” “Porphyria’s Lover”
Alfred, Lord Tennyson, “The Lady of Shalott,” *In Memoriam*
Christina Rossetti, *Goblin Market*, “Up-Hill,” “The Lowest Place,” “A Birthday”
Walter Pater, selections from *The Renaissance* and *Appreciations*
Oscar Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest*
Wilfred Owen, “Dulce et Decorum Est,” “Anthem for Doomed Youth”
Isaac Rosenberg, “Returning, We Hear the Larks,” “Dead Man’s Dump”
William Butler Yeats, “The Lake Isle of Innisfree,” “Easter 1916,” “A Dialogue of Self and Soul”
T. S. Eliot, “The Love-Song of J. Alfred Prufrock,” *The Wasteland*
Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One’s Own*, *Mrs. Dalloway*
Samuel Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*
Seamus Heaney, “Digging,” “Punishment”
Kazuo Ishiguro, *Remains of the Day*
John Cayley, “windsound,” “wotclock”
Kate Pullinger, *Inanimate Alice*
Donna Leishman, *RedRidingHood*, *Deviant: The Possession of Christian Shaw*