

English 211: Women and Literature

Writing and Sexuality in English Romantic/early Victorian White Women's Literature

Contact information: Professor Caballero

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Office hours: MW: 4:45-6:00

Tuesdays and Thursdays: 11-12:00 noon

Tuesdays: 3-4:30

Required texts:

A Letter to the Women of England and *The Natural Daughter*, Mary Robinson

Maria, or the Wrongs of Woman, Mary Wollstonecraft

Sense and Sensibility, Jane Austen

The Records of Woman and Other Poems, Felicia Hemans

Jane Eyre, Charlotte Bronte

The Blood of the Vampire, Florence Marryat

Sakai material*

Objectives:

The Romantic and early Victorian eras were an exciting and also complicated time for white British women writers. With ideas of Revolution in the air and the sense that all old world orders could or would be dismantled creating a new and free society, writers believed themselves at the forefront of this new world order. Yet even though revolutionary ideas were percolating in England, the place and role of women in late 18th, early 19th and then mid-nineteenth century British culture emerged as a central source of debate and discussion. Unlike later Victorian ideals of the "angel in the house" and the carefully codified domestic sphere, the Romantic era was a time of upheaval and questioning with reference to gender expectations and this included questions about gender and literary production. Women writers published over 500 pamphlets, novels, and poems in the years 1780-1830; yet they also contended with pervasive ideas of women's inferior intellectual and literary capabilities. In this class we will explore this period of literary culture and read key women writers of the era. The general theme of the class engage questions of gender, sexuality and literary production. Questions we will consider include: What is the role of the woman writer in this revolutionary period? What are the portrayals of marriage available? What are the portrayals of erotic relationships? How do these women writers represent desire, sexuality, and race? What is the function of writing for women writers of this period? What are the implicit assumptions of gender and literary production?

Requirements:

Note * Students are encouraged to avail themselves of the tutors in the Learning Commons as they begin and work through assignments.

- 1 formal, interpretive/literary essays, no outside research – 8-10 pages (45% of final grade)
- 1 Take-home written mid-term: (10% of final grade)
- 1 Take-home written final (15% of final grade)

- 2 short essays– 2 pages (there are 4 times listed on the calendar to hand these in; students choose 2 of these to write these and hand them in.) (20% of final grade)
- Class participation/attendance/homework, discussion groups, etc. – (10% of final grade)

Please be aware that all writing that is not done in class must be typed, double-spaced with 1” inch margins and in an appropriate font (Times New Roman in 12 point is usually standard), paginated, dated, and with your name at top of the first page. Do not add any unnecessary spaces between paragraphs or before the first line of your essay. Use MLA (Modern Language Association) documentation format when necessary.

Participation and attendance:

Sakai: Get comfortable with it. Learn to love it, and learn to use it. All reading material not found book will be on Sakai. You will deliver your essays, out of class writing, etc. via Sakai. Essay topics will be posted here as well. All relevant information, discussion questions, etc. will be on Sakai. And you’ll receive graded essays this way too. If you’ve got questions, ask, and get familiar with Murray Hall, and with the help desk, ext. 2755. No excuses for not being able to do this, etc.

Class Participation:

Class participation is central to the success of your experience in this class. This means that you have carefully read each assignment, have thought about it in the context of our other classes and conversations, are ready with questions and concerns that you have, and are energized and excited about our class time. You may find the material difficult to follow and hard to read, and for this reason, class discussion is a crucial. This is not a time to be “timid” or “shy;” remember that a well-asked and well thought out question is as valuable in a discussion as a declarative statement. Keep in mind, however, that quantity of comments and questions does not trump quality. Talk often and insightfully. Not doing so will detrimentally affect your grade.

A participation is marked by its active nature, its consistency, and its quality. An **A** participant doesn’t wait to respond to questions that the instructor poses but initiates discussion by coming prepared with questions, ideas, observations about the reading assigned that day. This participant will also be consistently engaged in class discussion, always letting me know that she/he has engaged the reading thoroughly and thoughtfully. Finally an **A** participant will not try to substitute quantity of participation for quality (being consistent is not the same thing as dominating a discussion). To earn the highest grade for your participation, you will want to make it possible for others to participate productively too (this is not a competition); thus, habits such as interrupting others and taking up too much conversational space will not enhance your grade. It will also do you no good to participate if you haven’t done the reading. I expect participation to be firmly grounded in careful and thoughtful reading. As the **A** reader reads, she or he prepares to participate in a class discussion with other readers.

A **B** discussant is less consistent than an **A** in initiating discussion but is active in responding to questions or problems posed by the professor and other students. To get a **B** in participation, you will need to be in class and talk regularly-- more, certainly, than once during a class session once a week or so. Regular means regular. This level of class participation will also communicate clearly to me that you have done all the reading for the day and that you have done it thoughtfully. This level will also include productive discussion habits, such as engaging the ideas of others, not dominating, listening carefully, etc.

A **C** grade for participation means that you have contributed in an average way to the discussion. Your contributions have been less frequent than those of the **B** participant or have let me know that you are not always keeping up with the reading or have, in some way, interfered with good discussion—for instance, a “dominator” would get credit for participating often but would get knocked down to a **C** for taking over and not engaging others in discussion. In short, you have not been silent or absent or altogether uninvolved, but your involvement did not work consistently to make the class a productive learning experience.

A **D** grade means that you were there physically most of the time and maybe even piped up three or four times during the semester but that's it. It's just the grade it should be—a minimal passing grade.

An **F** grade should need no explanation.

All work must be submitted to pass the course. Active, engaged class participation and attendance are expected. Four or more absences will result in automatic failure for the class. Remember that excused and unexcused absences are not distinguished. Late essays are not accepted and will be knocked down one full letter grade for each day they are late, including weekend. Late response essays are not accepted.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If you do not bring your books, handouts, materials to class, you will be asked to leave and get them and then return to class. Too many of these incidents will detrimentally affect your final grade.

Other Information:

Students should schedule appointments during office hours. Students may contact Professor Caballero via email. Please allow 2 business days for email responses.

Students will conduct themselves in a responsible and respectable manner towards fellow students and professors.

Please turn off cell phones, **not on vibrate**, for class. If a cell phone rings or vibrates, I'll take the call.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is another word for stealing; it means you took something that was not yours to take and tried to pass it off as your own. It is the worst way to honor intellectual community and freedom. When you plagiarize you directly or indirectly use the ideas and/or language of another person or persons without acknowledgement and claim these words and ideas as your own. Not only is it a serious and grounds for academic expulsion, it is also against the law. You are plagiarizing if you do any or all of the following, though please keep in mind that these are not the only ways to plagiarize: 1) Use others' words directly without proper citation and quotations, 2) Use others' ideas and wording so closely (paraphrasing) that you are essentially quoting them without proper acknowledgement, 3) re-use assignments not written for this class and pretend that they are written for this class, 4) Borrow, buy, steal, download (you get the idea) others' essays, ideas, words, language, etc. and pass them off as your own. I should say that I regularly visit on-line websites that sell college essays and that I belong to a large

network of websites that assist me in finding stolen essays students have bought on line. Please see me at any time if you have citation and documentation questions.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination status that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation for their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Learning Commons at 332-2898. It is your responsibility to do this and inform your professors ahead of time, not after assignments, tests, exams, etc are due or in progress.

Calendar is subject to change.

Calendar

Week 1 Thursday, Sept. 1	Introduction Historical context, Charlotte Smith "On Being Cautioned..."
Week 2 Tuesday, Sept. 6 Thursday, Sept. 8	Anna Letitia Barbauld, "Washing Day," Mary Robinson "London's Summer Morning" (Sakai) Wollstonecraft, <i>Maria, or the Wrongs of Woman</i> pg 3-53
Week 3 Tuesday, Sept. 13 Thursday, Sept. 15	<i>Maria</i> pg 54-107 <i>Maria</i> pg 108-138 and AL Barbauld "The Rights of Woman" (Response #1 due)
Week 4 Tuesday, Sept. 20 Thursday, Sept. 22	Mary Robinson "A Letter to the Women of England" pg 41-88 Mary Robinson "A Letter to the Women of England" pg 41-88
Week 5 Tuesday, Sept. 27 Thursday, Sept. 29	Mary Robinson <i>The Natural Daughter</i> pg 91-160 Robinson <i>The Natural Daughter</i> pg 160-230 (Response #2 due)
Week 6 Tuesday, Oct. 4 Thursday, Oct. 6	Robinson <i>The Natural Daughter</i> pg 230-296 Jane Austen, <i>Sense and Sensibility</i> pg 5-80
Week 7 Tuesday, Oct. 11 Thursday, Oct. 13	Austen <i>Sense and Sensibility</i> pg 80-135 Austen <i>Sense and Sensibility</i> pg 136-190
Week 8 Tuesday, Oct. 18 Thursday, Oct. 20	Fall Break, no class Austen <i>Sense and Sensibility</i> pg 190-236
***Take home mid-term due on Sakai by 5 pm Friday, Oct. 21st	
Week 9 Tuesday, Oct. 25 Thursday, Oct. 27	Austen, <i>Sense and Sensibility</i> pg 236-269, plus Mary Wollstonecraft pg 284-290, Hannah More pg 296-299, "The Lady's Magazine" pg 299-300 Felicia Hemans, <i>The Records of Woman</i> : "Arabella Stuart" pg 7-15, "The Bride of the Greek Isle" pg 17-23, "Properzia Rossi" pg 29- 33, "Edith, A Tale of the Woods" pg 39-46 (Response #3 due)
Week 10	

Tuesday, Nov. 1 Hemans, *The Records of Woman*: “The Indian City” 47-53, “The Peasant Girl of the Rhone” pg 54-57, “The Indian Woman’s Death Song” pg 57-59, “Joan of Arc, in Rheims” pg 59-62,

Thursday, Nov. 3 Hemans, *The Records of Woman*: “Pauline” pg 63-67, “Juana” pg 67-69, “The American Forest Girl” pg 69-71, “Madeline, a Domestic Tale” pg 75-79, “The Grave of a Poetess” pg 84-86

Week 11

Tuesday, Nov. 8 Hemans, *The Records of Woman*: “The Homes of England” pg 89-90, “The Sicilian Captive” pg 90-94, “To Wordsworth” pg 117-118, “The Spells of Home” pg 146-147, “The Graves of a Household” pg 153-154

(**Response #4 due**)
Thursday, Nov. 10 Bronte, *Jane Eyre* pg 5-70

Week 12

Tuesday, Nov. 15 Bronte, *Jane Eyre* pg 70-166
Thursday, Nov. 17 Bronte, *Jane Eyre* pg 167-253

Week 13

Tuesday, Nov. 22 Bronte *Jane Eyre* pg 253-331
Thursday, Nov. 24 Thanksgiving break, no class

Week 14

Tuesday, Nov. 29 Bronte *Jane Eyre* pg 331-385
Thursday, Dec. 1 Florence Marryat, *Blood of the Vampire* pg 3-76
(**8-10 pg interpretive essay due**)

Week 15

Tuesday, Dec. 6 Florence Marryat, *Blood of the Vampire* pg 77-152
Thursday, Dec. 8 Florence Marryat, *Blood of the Vampire* pg 153-227

Week 16

Tuesday, Dec. 13 Florence Marryat, *Blood of the Vampire* continued

Final Exams

Study Days: Thursday Dec. 15-Friday, Dec. 16th
Exam schedule: Saturday, Dec. 17-Wednesday, Dec. 21st

*** Take home Final Exam written due by Wednesday, Dec. 21st at 5 pm.**