

English 9145B: Romanticism and the Idea of Literature

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Course Description

This course will focus on ideas of the aesthetic in the Romantic period. Whether because the New Critics traced their notions of organic form back to Coleridge, or because later critics such as Clifford Siskin

literature, criticism has often attributed ideologically or philosophically conservative conceptions of literature and/or the aesthetic to the period. In contrast, I will suggest that new conceptions of history and the life sciences, including medicine had a deeply deconstructive impact on the Romantic practice and (in Germany) theory of art. In the light of a new sense of what constitutes life and organized bodies, as well

profound revolution in its sense of what counts as literature and the intertextual relationships between the parts of an author

discuss and the aesthetic dilemmas that they thematize, but will also include what Romantic writers saw , and what they saw as the role of prose fiction in relation to the emergent social discipline of the Novel.

Readings

Percy Bysshe Shelley, *Zastrozzi* and *St.Irvin*, ed. Stephen Behrendt (Broadview Literary Texts)

Percy Bysshe Shelley, *Shelley's Poetry and Prose*, ed. Donald H. Reiman and Neil Fraistat (Norton)

William Blake, *Blake's Poetry and Designs*, ed. Mary Lynn Johnson and John E. Grant (Norton).

Mary Wollstonecraft and Mary Shelley, *Mary, Maria, Matilda*. (Penguin) [we will only do *Matilda*].

Mary Hays, *Memoirs of Emma Courtney*. (Broadview)

Keats, *Complete Poems and Selected Letters of John Keats*, ed. Edward Hirsh.

readings will be provided, but you can substitute something else after consultation with me. This essay is intended as a first outline or trial balloon, which may form the basis for your final paper. The essay must be submitted in hard copy, and will be due at the end of February.

Response and Participation: 10%-