

HL2004: Sensibility and Romanticism

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Fridays, 3:30 – 5:30p.m.

HSS Auditorium
Teaching Assistant: Kuah Ting Ting

Description

The Age of Sensibility and Romanticism witnessed a surge of interest in emotional responsiveness, imagination, and individual subjectivity. These inward explorations coincided with a series of political, cultural, and philosophical debates that reconfigured public life and continue to shape our modern sensibilities. Among these were issues concerning sociability, the notion of childhood, the relationship between Enlightenment thought and political radicalism, the role of the creative artist, the education of women and the working classes, and the organization of knowledge. Taking taxonomy as an overall theme, this course begins by delineating approaches to perception, reading, and emotion that emerged during the long eighteenth century. Following this, we will examine seminal texts by William Wordsworth and Jane Austen before embarking on a series of thematic lectures on the city, education and children's books, and the pleasures and pains of opium. In order to reflect the diversity of print culture between 1740 and 1820 this course explores a variety of primary source material. Literary works, such as poetry, fiction, and essays, will be examined alongside pedagogical theory, discourses on elocution and aesthetics, and visual art. Throughout the course, we will consider our own experience as readers of eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century texts in relation to reading practice during the period. How did rising literacy rates and innovations in textual production and circulation influence form, genre, and taste?

Learning Objectives

This course aims to develop critical reading, writing, and research skills through a study of eighteenth-century and Romantic literature and culture. It offers opportunities to engage with the concepts and networks of ideas that characterize literary discourse and to formulate independent, analytical arguments.

Required Texts

- Jane Austen, *Sense and Sensibility*. Ed. Margaret Anne Doody, Claire Lamont, and James Kingsley. Oxford World's Classics, Oxford University Press, 2008.
- All other texts are included in the Course Reader (available in B1 of HSS)

Assessments

Participation: 10%

Paper Proposal and Outline: 10%

Term Paper: 30%

Final Exam: 50%

Late Penalties

Late work submitted without an approved extension will be penalized one half-mark per day late – an A paper submitted one day late would drop to an A-, etc.

Lecture Schedule

1. 13th January - Introduction

2. 20th January - Ways of Seeing

- Edmund Burke, selections from *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1745)
- Uvedale Price, selections from *An Essay on the Picturesque* (1796)

3. 27th January - Ways of Reading

- Isaac Watts, "Of Books and Reading," from *The Improvement of the Mind* (1741)
- Thomas Sheridan, "Gesture," from *A Course of Lectures on Elocution* (1762)
- John Keats, "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer" (1816)

4. 3rd February - Ways of Feeling

- Jane Austen, *Sense and Sensibility* (1811)

5. 10th February - Ways of Feeling II

- Jane Austen, *Sense and Sensibility* (1811)

6. 17th February - Romantic Storytelling

- William Wordsworth, Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*, "Simon Lee," "She Dwelt Among the Untrodden Ways" (1800)

7. 24th February - Romantic Questioning

- William Wordsworth, "Anecdote for Fathers", "Resolution and Independence" (1807)

8. 10th March - Urbanity

- Joanna Baillie, "London" (1800)
- Charles Lamb, "The Londoner" (1802)
- William Hazlitt, "On Londoners and Country People" (1823)

9. 17th March - Constructing Childhood

- William Blake, "The Lamb", "A Cradle Song" (1789)
- Anna Laetitia Barbauld, "On Education" (1796)
- Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "Frost at Midnight" (1798)

10. 24th March - Writing for Children

- Anon., selections from *A Little Pretty Pocket-Book* (1787)
- Anna Laetitia Barbauld, selections from *Hymns in Prose for Children* (1781)
- William Roscoe, *The Butterfly's Ball and the Grasshopper's Feast* (1805)

11. 31st March - Intoxication and Imagination

- Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "Kubla Khan" (1816)
- Thomas De Quincey, selections from *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater* (1821)

12. 7th April - Conclusion

- Reading TBD

13. 14th April - Good Friday, NO CLASS