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ENG 4300-001: The Gothic Tradition

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English 4300 (Senior Seminar): The Gothic Tradition
spring 2001

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Course description and objectives: To the extent that this course traces generally the development of the British Gothic tradition from the eighteenth century to the twentieth, it is literary-historical in nature. The assigned readings are major works of the genre, ordered more or less chronologically. These books we will discuss in our seminar meetings and together come to terms with gothic as both a hybrid and transgressive form of literary expression. However, since it is a capstone experience in the major, the course also requires that you design, develop and complete a major research project during the semester on a subject of your choice, for which conference meetings with me and oral reports to the class will be necessary. The overall goal of the course is to increase your knowledge of an important literary development – gothic - and to provide you with an opportunity to exercise your expertise as a finishing student in English studies with dependable skills in close reading, analytical discussion of primary and secondary works, research, and clear writing.

Course requirements and grading:

- preparation of assigned readings
- regular participation in seminar discussions – 10%
- seminar report(s) – 20%
- research project – 40%
- final exam – 30%

Readings:

Walpole, The Castle of Otranto
Lewis, The Monk
Radcliffe, The Mysteries of Udolpho (selections)
Austen, Northanger Abbey
Stevenson, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde
Wilde, The Picture of Dorian Gray
Stoker, Dracula
James, The Turn of the Screw
Carter, The Bloody Chamber (selections)
selected secondary writings as distributed
primary and secondary works necessary for completion of the research project
Tentative Schedule:

Jan. 9: course introduction

Jan. 11: Punter, "Introductory: dimensions of Gothic" (handout)
          Ellis, "Introduction" (handout)

Jan. 16: The Castle of Otranto

Jan. 18: The Castle of Otranto; Botting, "Introduction: Gothic Excess and
          Transgression" (handout)

Jan. 23: The Mysteries of Udolpho, vol 2, chapters 1-4

Jan. 25: The Mysteries of Udolpo, vol 2, chapters 5-8

Jan. 30: The Mysteries of Udolpho, vol 2, chapters 9-12
          Ellis, "Kidnapped Romance' in Ann Radcliffe" (handout)

Feb. 1: The Monk, chapters 1-3; statement of research project topic due

Feb. 6: The Monk, chapters 4-6

Feb. 8: The Monk, chapters 7-9

Feb. 13: The Monk, chapters 10-12

Feb. 15, 20, 22, 27, and Mar. 1: conferences; independent research; no class meetings

Mar. 6: Northanger Abbey, chapters 1-15
          Ellis, "The Language of Domestic Violence" (handout)

Mar. 8: Northanger Abbey, chapters 16-31

Mar. 12 -- 16: spring break

Mar. 20: Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde
          Rogers, "The Mirror Image" (handout)

Mar. 22: The Picture of Dorian Gray (1891), chapters 1-7
          Rogers, "The Mirror Image" (handout)

Research Project Report _________________________________
Mar 27: *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891), chapters 8-13

Mar. 29: *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891), chapters 14-20
Freud, "The Uncanny" (handout)

Apr. 3: *Dracula*, chapters 1-8

Apr. 5: *Dracula*, chapters 9-15

Apr. 10: *Dracula*, chapters 16-21

Apr. 12: *Dracula*, chapters 22-27

Apr. 17: *The Turn of the Screw*, I - XII

Apr. 19: *The Turn of the Screw*, XIII - XXIV

Apr. 24: *The Bloody Chamber* ("The Bloody Chamber"; "The Courtship of Mr. Lyon")
Apr. 26 "The Werewolf"; "The Company of Wolves"; "Wolf-Alice"

Apr. 30 -- May 4: final exam – date and time to be announced

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

English Department Statement on Plagiarism: "Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism – 'The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's own original work' (Random House Dictionary) – has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.

Research Project Topics

You are free to design your own research project, provided I determine that it falls within the scope of the course. You may work collaboratively, with one or two others, or work alone. (For collaborative projects, everyone in the group receives the same grade.) Your project may culminate in a traditional research paper or in some other medium or form, provided I approve of your design and plans from the beginning. I encourage creative thinking and expression, especially since this is one of your final courses as an undergraduate.

The following topics I offer as suggestions. Notice that I have not listed individual writers as topics. Try to design a project that focuses on an issue rather than on an individual writer.

Everyone is required to turn in a brief statement of topic on February 1. Please feel free to talk with me about your ideas before that date.

- vampire origins and tales
- gothic origins in Renaissance and Medieval literatures
- gender politics in contemporary gothic literature
- gothic and pornography
- vampires on film
- gothic art or music
- necromancy and gothic
- gothic urban legends
- gothic and the Romantics
- the double in gothic literature
- gothic in the 1790s, 1890s, and 1990s
- gothic and religion
- the gothic castle
- design and create a gothic web site
- produce a short gothic film
- create a syllabus for a high school gothic course
- create a gothic board or web game