

Eng 495/ID 450
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ROMANTICISM AND GENDER

Fall 2001
Tues 6:55-9:35
449 Lucas Hall, U.M.-St. Louis

for Master's in English and the Graduate Certificate in Women's and Gender Studies

Like the culture wars of the 1990s, the international movement known as Romanticism took shape as a struggle over traditional and transgressive ideas of gender. Influenced by Rousseau and others, British writers such as Wollstonecraft, Blake, Wordsworth, Keats, and Byron offered their revisions of femininity and masculinity. These included male sentimentality, a female version of Reason, an idea of Nature as feminine, and new cross-dressed hero(in)es such as the woman warrior and Don Juan-as-ingenue. In this course we will read Romantic literature for its revisions of gender and their influence on us. The course introduces students to theories of gender including influence theory, specularity, "différance," queer theory, and post-modern theories of desire. Articles by Harold Bloom, Camille Paglia, Deleuze and Guattari, Eve Sedgwick, and others will offer perspective on Romanticism as part of today's "gender wars." Students will write four 1-page responses to the readings, one 2-page theory "position paper," and a 15-18 page seminar paper on a topic of their choosing. They will give one "discussion opener" orally (one of their four responses) and one report on a critical article. Critical readings and syllabus questions should help stimulate and guide discussion, responses, and papers.



Wollstonecraft



Byron