

English 262g: English Literature since 1800

Anthony Kemp

Spring 2024

Tuesday, Thursday 12:30-1:50

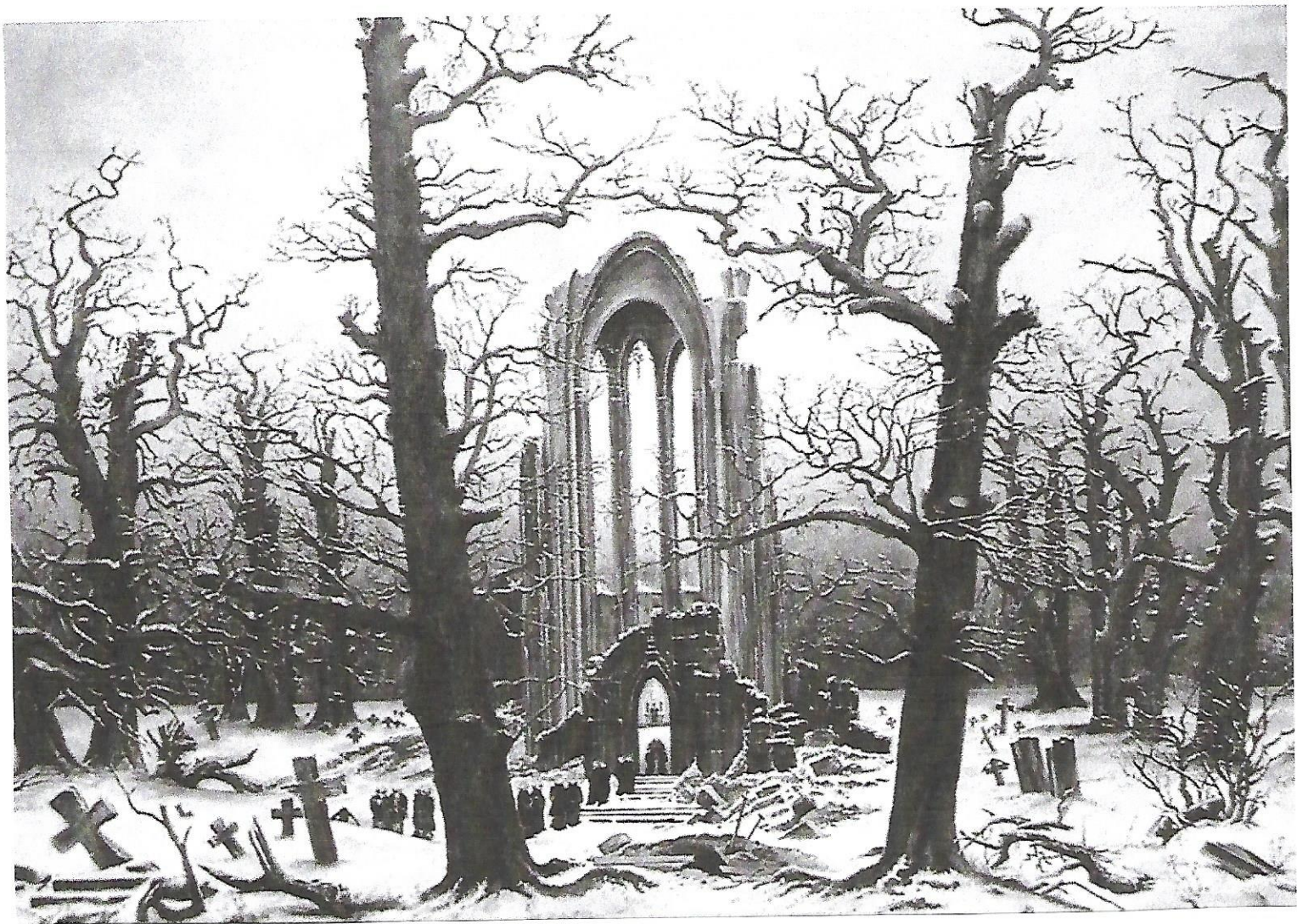
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Course Description

A study of the development of English literature from the Romantic period to the near present. Rather than attempting a relatively superficial survey of many extracts, we will drill a limited number of deep cores into English literature and culture.

Learning Objectives

1. Reflect on what it means to be human through close study of human experience throughout time and across diverse cultures. The period we will be studying had cultural practices, beliefs, values, even feelings, very different from our own. Is there a common humanity we share? How different were the minds and physical, lived experiences of the past from our own?
2. Cultivate a critical appreciation for some of the most profound and innovative forms of human expression.
3. Understand and engage critically with the cultural and intellectual movements that these works propose, examine, oppose. Thought, like matter, is clumpy. As matter tends to constellate into planets, stars, solar systems, galaxies, so ideas tend to constellate into movements and forms. By the end of the course, the student will understand and be able to give accounts of the following concepts: Romanticism, Romantic Epiphany, Aestheticism, the Gothic, Symbolism, Modernism, Decadence.
4. Learn to read and interpret actively and analytically, to think critically and creatively, and to write and speak persuasively. With this in mind, we will write two substantial long-form papers. I will give extensive written instructions on what works and what does not. The goal is to learn from the first paper, in order to improve your thinking and writing substantially in the writing of the second. Every student should budget at least one hour to go over your first paper with me.

Required Reading

Charlotte Bronte, *Jane Eyre*, Norton 0393264874
Henry James, *The Turn of the Screw*, Norton 039395904X
W. B. Yeats, *Yeats' Poetry, Drama and Prose*, Norton 0393974979
T. S. Eliot, *The Wasteland*, Norton 0393974995
C. S. Lewis, *Till We Have Faces*, Harcourt 0156904365
W. H. Auden, *Selected Poems*, Vintage 0307278085
Ian McEwan, *Atonement*, Anchor 038572179X

Schedule

January

- T 9: John Keats, "Ode to a Nightingale"
Th 11: John Keats, "Ode on a Grecian Urn"
T 16: Charlotte Bronte, *Jayne Eyre*
Th 18:
T 23:

Th 25: Henry James, *The Turn of the Screw*

T 30:

February

Th 1: W. B. Yeats

T 6:

Th 8:

T 13:

Th 15: T. S. Eliot

T 20:

Th 22:

T 27:

Th 29:

March

T 5: C. S. Lewis, *Till We Have Faces*

Th 7:

T 12: Spring Recess

Th 14: Spring Recess

T 19:

Th 21:

T 26: W. H. Auden

Th 28:

W 29:

April

T 2:

Th 4:

T 9:

Th 11:

T 16: Ian McEwan, *Atonement*

Th 18:

T 23:

Th 25:

May

W 8: Final Exam 2-4

Evaluation

This syllabus is subject to revision, particularly in matters of schedule. The reading list will be supplemented by handouts. There will be two papers (5 pages minimum each; some students choose to write papers of 10-20 pages), and midterm and final examinations, each piece of written work accounting for 25% of the final grade. Papers should conform to the written instructions that will be provided to each student. Examinations are objective and test knowledge of the texts and of the concepts presented in class. Students need to attend every class meeting, unless excused by exceptional circumstances. No student may anticipate or omit the final examination.