

Descriptive Syllabus: E 379N GHOSTS OF THE GOTHIC (35086) Spring, 2010

Professor John P. Farrell

Parlin Hall, Hrs MW 3:30-5pm

### Overview

The genre of gothic literature developed in the late eighteenth century and flourished in the Romantic era. A reaction set in during the Victorian period against the extravagant style and world of mystery featured in gothic literature. Victorian writers in general sought what they considered a more realistic representation of human experience, one that was grounded in the norms of everyday life, rational thought, and contained passion. And yet the darker experiences and mysterious illuminations that dominated gothicism proved too compelling as possibilities even for the presumably anti-gothic art of the Victorians. As a result many Victorian writers, while supposedly subscribing to realism, remained tempted by the portraits of inner human life that gothicism had explored. In effect, Victorian realism was haunted by ghosts of the gothic tradition. The course will study this haunting as it influences and shapes five major fictions of the Victorian period: *Frankenstein*, *Wuthering Heights*, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, and *The Turn of the Screw*.

Prerequisite: You must have completed E316K or equivalent.

### Lectures

Discussions and lectures will occur on **each of the dates listed in the syllabus**. In all cases we will be concerned with the literary history that is relevant to each of texts. We will also look at biographical information concerning the various authors. Primary focus will be on detailed literary analysis of the form and content of each work, and especially on the relation of form and content to one another. The goal here is to broaden your understanding of how a literary text works, what aesthetic principles shape its substance, and how the reader comes to critical judgment on, and evaluation of, a literary text. In every class the center of gravity will be located in these fundamental questions: how is this text to be read? what does reading a literary text mean? how does this particular text equip its reader to read it? what makes a literary work literature and not something else?

### **Books Required**

Mary Shelley: *Frankenstein* (World's Classics)

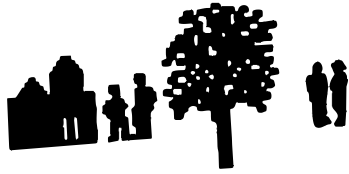
Emily Brontë: *Wuthering Heights* (Norton Critical Editions), ed. R. J. Dunn

Thomas Hardy: *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (World's Classics 1988),  
eds. J. Grindle, and S. Gatrell

R. L. Stevenson: *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde: & Other Tales of  
Terror* (Penguin)

Henry James: *The Turn of the Screw* (Dover Thrift Editions)

Many of these texts can be found, sometimes in older editions, as used books either at the bookstore or on Amazon. The important thing is that you get the version put out by the **publisher** as specified above.



Jan.	20	Introduction	
	25	The Gothic Imagination	
	27	<i>Frankenstein</i>	
Feb	1	<i>Frankenstein</i>	
	3	<i>Frankenstein</i>	quiz
	8	<i>Wuthering Heights</i>	
	10	<i>Wuthering Heights</i>	
	15	<i>Wuthering Heights</i>	
	17	<i>Wuthering Heights</i>	
	22	<i>Wuthering Heights</i>	
	24	<i>Wuthering Heights</i>	paper due / see BB
Mar	1	<i>Tess of the D'Urbervilles</i>	
	3	<i>Tess of the D'Urbervilles</i>	
	8	<i>Tess of the D'Urbervilles</i>	
	10	<i>Tess of the D'Urbervilles</i>	
sp bk			
	22	<i>Tess of the D'Urbervilles</i>	
	24	Hitchcock: <i>Rebecca</i>	
	29	<i>Rebecca</i>	paper due on <i>Tess</i> / see BB
	31	"Olalla" (Stevenson text) & Wharton, "Pomegranate Seed" (photocopied handout)	
Apr	5	Stevenson: <i>Jekyll and Hyde</i>	quiz
	7	Poe: "The Fall of the House of Usher"	BB for text
	12	Faulkner: "A Rose for Emily"	BB for text

14	<i>Turn of the Screw</i>	quiz	
19	<i>Turn of the Screw</i>		
21	DVD		
26	Oates: "Cursed Inhabitants"	print out text online	
		" <a href="http://www.english.upenn.edu/~nauerbac/bly.html">http://www.english.upenn.edu/~nauerbac/bly.html</a>	
28	Oates: "The Doll"	for text see photocopied handout	
		"Further Confessions" print at BB (pdf file)	
May 3	Writing final paper		see BB
5	Final Paper & Review		

---

### Writing Required

There are three main papers (as listed on the syllabus) required in this course. Each paper will address a set of questions about issues of form and content in the prescribed work. These topic questions will be posted on *Blackboard* about a week before the paper is due. There are also 3 quizzes listed on the syllabus.

### Grading Policy

Each paper counts as 20% of the final grade. Grades for the quizzes will be averaged and count as 20% of the final grade.

Class discussion is crucial in this course. I want to hear what you think (since I already know what I think). A composite grade for discussions will count as 20%.

Plus/ minus grades will be used in this class.

### Late Papers and Absences

One of the three papers may be turned in within two days (**not** 2 classes) of the due date. Otherwise I do not accept late papers. *If you want to exercise this option, mark your paper clearly as the optional late paper.*

A missed quiz is a missed quiz. No make-ups.

No one who does not attend the class regularly can receive a grade of A even if grades average that high (regularly means no more than 3 missed classes for any reason.)

Note: students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259.