ENGLISH 190: Sherlock Holmes and the Gothic Imagination
3 Credits HU

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Course Description

From whence did the inestimable Sherlock Holmes come? Did he spring wholly from the brain of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle or is he instead the culmination of a century or more of literary characters, themes, and even real life inspiration? Join us on a journey through murky dungeons, dark castles, lurid laboratories, near madness and the slowly developing sense of reason that emerges full-blown in the world’s favorite “consulting detective.” Special attention will be paid to Scottish influences. Field trips will take us to some of the inspirations in our readings.

Course Proficiencies:
* Analyze, synthesize, evaluate and interpret information and ideas.
* Read and listen with comprehension and critical perception.
* Write clearly, precisely, and in a well organized manner.
* Employ and expand the imagination.

Required Texts:
I realize this course is only three weeks long. Don't be intimidated by the reading list. Most of these selections are quite short and, I think, fun to read.

Castle of Otranto, Horace Walpole, 1764
Selections from Frankenstein, Mary Shelley, 1818
The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner, James Hogg, 1824
Selected short stories by Sir Walter Scott, Edgar Allan Poe, and Louisa Alcott 1830-50
The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Robert Louis Stevenson, 1886
The Complete Sherlock Holmes, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, 1887-1927

Course Assignments

1) Readings: You will be responsible for finishing the readings by the given due dates and you will be expected to participate in class discussion on those readings.
2) Short written assignments: Respond to the questions on the reading guides.
3) Facilitation of one small group discussion: You will make a short presentation to the class and lead them in a group discussion on questions of your design over one of the readings assigned for the day for which you volunteer. This
will either be done solo or in pairs, depending upon class size and student preference.

4) Two short essays: You will write two short essays (3-4 pages typed) each on a different reading for the course. I will provide you with ideas for paper topics, but ultimately the choice is up to you.

Classroom Policies
Attendance:
Should you cease to attend, you might be suspected of having joined the realm of ghosts and spirits. We may have to exorcise you from the class.

Assignment:
You are allowed a grace period, but the assignment should be in my hands within two days of the deadline or I will consign it to the depths of my oubliette. If your work is tardy because of some difficulty with the assignments or interference from supernatural forces, visit me during an office hour or set up an appointment with your local seer.

Scholastic Dishonesty:
I have no sense of humor about plagiarism or cheating in any form. I assume we all enter the course in good faith. Do nothing to break with it.

Revision:
You may revise graded essays for reconsideration by the professor. The higher grade will stand. Revisions should be submitted within two weeks of your receipt of the graded essay or the end of the course, whichever comes first. Make every effort to entertain the professor with brilliant observations and finely tuned prose.

Course Outline—May 19 to June 5

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<td>Unit One—May 19-21</td>
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Introduction to the course, policies, and expectations.
The Origins of Gothic Literature
Castle of Otranto, Horace Walpole
Reading Responses
Field Trips—to Alnwick Castle, to Edinburgh—Mary King’s Close, Greyfriar’s Kirkyard, Rosslyn Chapel
Unit Two—May 22-May 26

Gothic Trappings and Scientific Wrappings
*Frankenstein*, Mary Shelley Essay One

**Field Trip to Scottish Storytelling Center**

Unit Three—May 27-28

The Emergence of Scottish Gothic
*The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, James Hogg Reading Responses

Unit Four—May 29

Mid-Century Masters—the development of the Medieval romance, the detective story, and “potboilers”

**Essay Two**

Selected Short Stories from Sir Walter Scott, Edgar Allan Poe, and Louisa May Alcott

**Field Trip to Abbotsford House**

Unit Five—May 30-June 2

Science Reconsidered Reading Responses

*The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, Robert Louis Stevenson

**Field Trip—Scottish Writers Museum**

Unit Six—June 3-5

Reason Reigns

*The Complete Sherlock Holmes*, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle Essay Two

**Field Trips—Picardy Place, The Conan Doyle, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle Center, Edinburgh Medical School (Edinburgh)**

Your class discussion facilitation will be scheduled the first week.