The course in the Romantic Novel will begin with readings in a representative selection from the
gothic, specifically Matthew Lewis's *The Monk*, and Ann Radcliffe's *The Romance of the Forest*. Readings in the gothic will be followed by readings of such antigothic gems as Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey* and Thomas Love Peacock's *Nightmare Abbey*. We will move from the gothic and parodies of it into readings in historical fiction, which is sometimes thought to have been born with Maria Edgeworth and Walter Scott. Edgeworth's *Castle Rackrent* and Scott's *Old Mortality* are my choices from the works of these two founding figures in the historical novel. We will read Scott's *Old Mortality*, first, because it is a novel of considerable merit in itself, but also because it deals informatively and instructively with the history of the Scotch Covenanters and thus will serve as a very helpful lead into a reading of our third historical novel, James Hogg's *Confessions of a Justified Sinner*. We will move from the general historical novel to a more particular form of it, the so-called Jacobin novel, that is, the novel influenced by the ideas of the French Revolution and sympathetic to them—works thought by many at the time to be dangerously inflammatory. Our selections among the Jacobin novels will be the two works most often cited as the most powerful of the type: William Godwin's *Caleb Williams* and Charlotte Smith's *Desmond*. The course will conclude with two novels simply remarkable as works of art: the third volume of Mary Shelley's *The Last Man* (which can stand apart from the first two volumes as a separate novel, and, in quality, does stand apart from them as a work of an entirely higher order) and Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*, in my view one of the half-dozen greatest novels in the history of the English novel.

The course will feature historically significant generic types, such as the gothic novel, the historical novel and the novel of ideas. It will feature major canonical figures such as Jane Austen, Walter Scott, Mary Shelley and Emily Bronte, as well as important minor figures such as Ann Radcliffe and William Godwin. It will be about evenly divided in its reading of men and women. It will look at truly experimental narratives such as *Confessions of a Justified Sinner* and *Wuthering Heights*. It will introduce students, through works like *Nightmare Abbey* and *Desmond*, to key debates in the history of ideas, and, through the works of Scott and Edgeworth, to the idea of history itself, as well as to key moments in history.

There will be two papers, one short (assigned early in the semester for diagnostic purposes) and a term paper (in the area of 15 pages). There will also be simple reading quizzes in order to assure that everyone is conversation ready for all our classes.