**Blake 2.0: William Blake in Popular Culture** Joseph Viscomi (jsviscom@email.unc.edu)

English 66, FYS, Fall 2019 office GL 504, hrs: T-Th 12:45-1:45; & appt. 962-8764

11:00 – 12:15, Tues & Thurs Greenlaw 318 <https://englishcomplit.unc.edu/faculty-directory/joseph-viscomi/>

<http://jsviscomi.web.unc.edu> [for collected essays]

William Blake, the visionary poet, artist, and printmaker of the British Romantic period, has had enormous influence on modern art and popular culture. His illuminated poetry integrated word and image anticipating graphic novels and influencing many modern musicians, poets, and writers. Using the Blake Archive, a hypertext of Blake's poetry and art, we will study key Blake works as well as the digital medium that enables us to study these works in new ways and performances and adaptations of them. Students will share their discoveries with the class through postings on Sakai and produce a final critical or creative response to a work by Blake or by an artist or writer influenced by him.

**Texts**: *Blake’s Poetry and Designs*. Eds. Mary Lynn Johnson and John E. Grant. NY: Norton Critical Edition, 2008.

[*The William Blake Archive*](http://blakearchive.org/) at http://blakearchive.org [**WBA**]

**WEB RESOURCE** page [**WR**] with extra readings and selected criticism at:

<http://viscomi.sites.oasis.unc.edu/viscomi/coursepack/> [userid: blake; password: catherine]

[Zoamorphosis](http://zoamorphosis.com/), The Blake 2.0 Blog <<http://zoamorphosis.com/>>

Blake's illuminated books are reproduced in excellent facsimiles by the William Blake Trust, copies of which are in the Dept, of Rare Books, Wilson Library, and in my office. The Blake Archive also contains bibliographies on Blake’s work, a profusely illustrated biography, and an essay on his illuminated printing technique.

8/20, 22 **Introduction** to Blake and the **William Blake Archive**

[Blake in Popular Culture](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Blake_in_popular_culture) <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Blake_in_popular_culture>>

8/27, 29 **Early Blake**: **WBA/***About Blake*: [Illustrated Biography](http://blakearchive.org/exhibit/biography) sections 1 and 2. <http://blakearchive.org/exhibit/biography>

Selections from the *Poetical Sketches* (1783), *Blake’s Poetry and Designs* (355-59).

9/3 *An Island in the Moon* (c. 1784) in *Blake’s Poetry and Designs* (360-76) and in **WBA**/Manuscripts.

Video of adaption of [*An Island in the Moon*](https://romantic-circles.org/reference/island) for the stage by J. Viscomi; music by M. LaFrance

<https://romantic-circles.org/reference/island>

9/5, 10 **Poetic Genius**

**WBA**/Illuminated Books: *All Religions* *are One*; *There is No Natural Religion* (1788), and *Blake’s Poetry and Designs* (3-7). **Sakai: 9/4 and 9/11**

9/12 **Illuminated Printing**: <http://www.blakearchive.org/exhibit/illuminatedprinting>

Technical and aesthetic origins of illuminated books

[Illustrated Biography](http://blakearchive.org/exhibit/biography), sections 3 and 4 <http://blakearchive.org/exhibit/biography>

**Prospectus** for illuminated books (377): Letters: two to Cumberland, 1800 (471-73);

to Dawson Turner, 1818 (491); to Cumberland 1827 (492).

**WR**, *Selected Criticism*: Viscomi, “[The Illuminated Word](http://viscomi.sites.oasis.unc.edu/viscomi/Illuminated_Word/index.html)”

<http://viscomi.sites.oasis.unc.edu/viscomi/Illuminated_Word/index.html>

9/17, 19, 24 **Ideas of Innocence**: **WBA**: *Songs of Innocence* (1789); **Sakai: 9/16 and 9/25**.

*Blake’s Poetry and Designs*: Criticism, Coleridge, Letter to Tulk (498).

9/26, 10/1, 3 **Ideas of Experience**: **WBA**: *Songs of Experience* (1794); **Sakai: 9/25 and 10/4**.

*Blake’s Poetry and Designs*: *Criticism*, Allen Ginsberg, “My Vision of Blake” (519-24; google Allen Ginsberg)

10/8, 10 **Desire Awakens**: **WBA**/illuminated books: *The Book of Thel* (1789); **Sakai: 10/7 and 10/11**.

10/15, 22 **Desire Repressed**: **WBA**/illuminated books: *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* (1793); **Sakai: 10/14 and 23**. *Blake’s Poetry and Designs*: *Criticism*, Ostriker, “Desire Gratified and Ungratified” (560-70).

**10/17 FALL BREAK**

10/24, 29, 31 **Reason and Energy, Heaven and Hell**:

**WBA**/illuminated books: *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (1790); **Sakai: 10/23 and 11/1**.

**WR**: *Blake:* letters: 1799 to Trusler (2 letters on Vision and Imagination);

**WR**: *Select Criticism*: Eaves, Essick, Viscomi, “Introduction to *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell”* [*http://viscomi.sites.oasis.unc.edu/viscomi/coursepack/criticism\_etc/Viscomi-Introduction\_to\_MHH.pdf*](http://viscomi.sites.oasis.unc.edu/viscomi/coursepack/criticism_etc/Viscomi-Introduction_to_MHH.pdf)

11/5, 7 **Ideas for Final** **Projects Discussed; Sakai 11/4, 8**

11/12, 14 **Idea of Art and Artist**:

*Laocoon* (c. 1827), *Blake’s Poetry and Designs* (349) and WBA/illuminated books: **Sakai: 11/11 and 11/16**. *Blake’s Poetry and Designs*: selections from Annotations to Reynolds (c. 1808); from the *Descriptive Catalogue* (1809) cat. # IX; *Public Address* (c. 1809)

**Progress Reports on Final Projects; Sakai 11/17**

11/19 **Blake’s Masterworks as Printmaker and Painter:**

WBA/Separate Plates: 12 Large Color Printed Designs of 1795

11/21, 26 **Student Presentations of Final Projects**

11/28 **Thanksgiving**

12/3 **Student Presentations of Final Projects**

12/4 **final projects due**

**Requirements:** Students are required to read the assigned materials **BEFORE** we discuss them in class and **again** during the week we are discussing them. Students are required to participate in the class’s Sakai conversations by posting links to works they have discovered that are relevant in some way (thematically, visually, adaption, performance, et al) to one of the Blake works that **will** be discussed in class during that section; the **link** should be accompanied by a few sentences (preferably a **paragraph)** of commentary and should be **posted by 6pm** the day **before** the first class of the section. A selection of the best and most interesting discoveries will be discussed that week in class. By the end of the section, the student should return to the original post and develop it further: do you see it the same way when you posted it? Different? If so, why? How? Students should also comment on the first and/or second posts of one or more of your fellow students. Sakai postings are 40% of grade.

Students are required to write three short critiques (2-3 pages double spaced) on assigned poems, passages, or images by Blake (due dates tba, 15% of grade). These can be elaborations of Sakai postings.

The final project can be a critical research paper on or creative response to either a work by Blake, a Blakean inspired work that you (or fellow student) have discovered, or a work that expresses Blakean ideas or themes; it can be based on your Sakai postings or critiques; it can be collaborative and/or digital. It could also be in the form of a personal journal, with at least one entry per week reflecting on what and how you are learning. The final project is worth 30% of your grade. In place of a final exam, students will discuss their project while it is in progress (3%) and present it to the class when completed (7%). Attendance and class participation make up the rest. Three *unexcused* absences are grounds for dismissal from the course.

**Projects:** discuss your projects with your classmates and anyone else you want to, including the Writing Center. The crucial thing to remember is that in your papers you must give citations for ideas and words that are not your own (use your Freshman Composition guidelines). The honor code is in effect in this class.

“[**Counseling and Psychological Services**](https://caps.unc.edu/): CAPS is strongly committed to addressing the mental health needs of a diverse student body through timely access to consultation and connection to clinically appropriate services, whether for short or long-term needs. Go to their website: [https://caps.unc.edu](https://caps.unc.edu/) or visit their facilities on the third floor of the Campus Health Services building for a walk-in evaluation to learn more.”

“[**Accessibility Resources & Service**](https://ars.unc.edu/about-ars/contact-us): UNC-Chapel Hill facilitates the implementation of reasonable accommodations for students with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, mental health struggles, chronic medical conditions, temporary disability, or pregnancy complications, all of which can impair student success. See the ARS website for contact and registration information: <https://ars.unc.edu/about-ars/contact-us>”