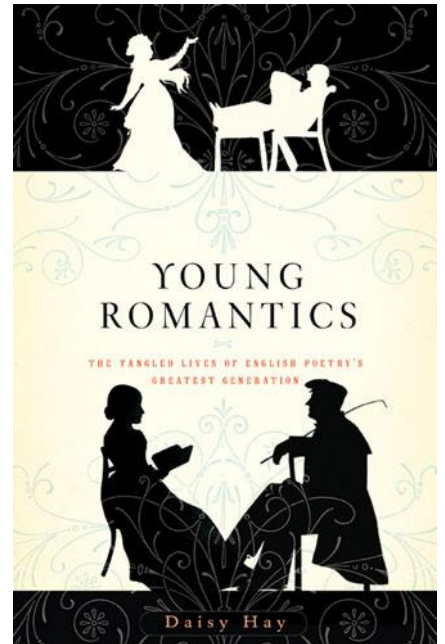


Reading Guide:

Young Romantics:

The Shelleys, Byron, and Other Tangled Lives

Daisy Hay (2010)



1. In the preface, Hay notes that *Young Romantics* “is not a biography or story of a group, rather, it explores the interlinked lives of a group of writers (pg. xiv).” Does Hay accomplish this?
2. In the chapter “Sisters,” Hay notes that the *Examiner* published the article “Young Poets.” (pg. 98) What was the significance of this article?
3. Also in the chapter “Sisters,” we hear about the development of Mary Shelley’s infamous text, *Frankenstein* while the coterie resides in Switzerland. Hay notes that *Frankenstein* was “Mary’s manifesto for the idealized community of enlightened individuals she and Shelley attempted to assemble.” (pg. 87) Do you agree with this statement, why or why not?
4. After the deaths of Byron and Shelley, Mary Shelley writes two novels, *Lodore* and *Falkner*. They center on the Byronic hero, charismatic, embittered, and lonely. Do you think Byron and Shelley, in their brief lives, were examples of “Byronic heroes?” Why or why not?
5. *Young Romantics* focuses on the theme of friendship and its influences. Are there any standout examples in the text where the friendships of the romantics directly influenced their work?
6. *Young Romantics* is split into 3 sections: Do you think these sections accurately “sections off” the different periods of their “tangled lives?”
7. *The New York Times* published a book review of *Young Romantics* when it was first published in 2010. In it, they inform readers “be prepared to become outraged and depressed.”¹ After reading the book, do you think this is accurate? Were you outraged?

¹ <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/11/books/review/Downing-t.html>

About Daisy Hay

Daisy Hay received a doctorate in English literature from Cambridge University and lives in London, where she is writing a book about the Disraelis. *Young Romantics* is her first book.²

Other related texts:

- ***Wildly Romantic: The English Romantic Poets: The Mad, the Bad, and the Dangerous***, Catherine M. Andronik (2007) | A look at the original “bad boys”: Shelley, Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Keats.
- ***The Age of Wonder: The Romantic Generation and the Discovery of the Beauty and Terror of Science***, Richard Holmes (2010) | How scientific discoveries in the late 18th century influenced William and Caroline Herschel, Humphrey Davy, as well as Shelley, Coleridge, and Keats.
- ***Being Shelley: The Poet’s Search for Himself***, Ann Wroe (2008) | A biography of Percy Bysshe Shelley told not through external events, but his internal struggles.
- ***Byron: Child of Passion, Fool of Fame***, Benita Eisler (2000) | A complex biography of one of the world’s first celebrities.

² Courtesy of *Young Romantics*