

Discussion I. *Radicals, Romantics, and Revolutionaries:
British Literature and the French Revolution*

- I. Introduction
 - a. the Purpose of the Background
 - b. the Definition of Theme
- II. Real Romanticism
 - a. Not just reactors but actors
 - b. Championed reform, care of poor
 - A. Student readings of Wordsworth and Barbauld
 - B. Poems about beggars , the poor, and the maimed also written by Blake, Southey, Coleridge
 - c. literary characters also form prototypes for Darnay and Carton
 - A. the Byronic anti-hero
 - B. the Eastern tales
 - d. above all, Romantics inspire for their psychological interest in human inconsistency, what scientists of psychology call counterfactual thinking, with its corollary, cognitive dissonance.
 - A. example of Burke
 - 1. idealization of Marie Antoinette (handout)
 - 2. “dead hand of the past”
- III. Dickens and human inconsistency
 - a. England in the 1850s
 - A. Crystal Palace
 - B. Voting debates
 - b. England and bloody Revolution
 - c. The insubstantiality of the Future
- IV. The Theme of *A Tale of Two Cities*