In this course students will read four novels and an anthology of poets including Lamartine, Hugo, Leconte de Lisle, Gautier, Nerval, Baudelaire, Verlaine, and Mallarmé. In the novels, *René* and *Atala* of Chateaubriand and *La Recherche de l'absolu* of Balzac, we shall explore Romantic idealism and its struggle with questions of religious faith, the dilemma of science, and the utopian fervor brought about by the revolution. In Zola's *L'Assemoir* and Barrès' *La Colline inspiré* we shall look into what is called Naturalism and its tie to the fin de siècle's decadence. We shall have two hour exams, a two-hour final, and a term paper concerning some of our readings.