MOVING FROM NATURE → BEAUTY IN THE ROMantics: Wordsworth (High Romantic), Shelley & Byron (Later Romantics)
Dr. Katherine Harris

Shelley’s “A Defense of Poetry” (1822)
- written in response to Peacock’s “Four Ages of Poetry”
- **Reason**
  - instrument of imagination (lesser faculty)
- **Imagination**
  - mind contemplating the relations borne by one thought to another (spirit)
- **Poetry**
  - expression of the Imagination
  - image of life expressed in its eternal truth (it’s all knowledge)
  - comprehends science
  - not subject to control of active power of the mind (it’s uncontrollable)
  - makes the familiar become unfamiliar because it exposes Beauty
  - all language is poetry (only used by a poet)
  - as soon as a poet begins writing his/her poem, the inspiration is already on the decline because the creation is best only in the mind
  - exposure to the outside world will corrupt the creation

- **Poets**
  - legislators of the world
  - poets are privileged because they have insight and vision
  - poets have the ability to comprehend fundamental truths which ordinary people’s habits keeps hidden from ordinary consciousness

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shelley</th>
<th>Wordsworth</th>
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<td>Science is a part of the imagination (see Mary Shelley’s Intro.)</td>
<td>Science is Reason and is therefore mechanical (not part of imagination)</td>
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<td>Poetry is the remedy for public strife (see “England in 1819 &amp; Mary Shelley’s Intro.”)</td>
<td>Poetry shouldn’t be used for politics (partisan)</td>
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<td>Poetry’s composition is uncontrollable and not translated through the poet (“self”)</td>
<td>The poet writes poetry after long contemplation and translates it through himself</td>
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<td>Hope and hopelessness are essential contraries (like Blake; see “England in 1819”)</td>
<td>Contraries cancel themselves out</td>
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<td>Beauty is truth; uses images of Beauty in poetry to portray experiences that are beyond the physical senses (see “Hymn to Intellectual Beauty” &amp; Byron’s “She Walks in Beauty”)</td>
<td>Nature is truth; uses landscape imagery in poetry to portray Nature</td>
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