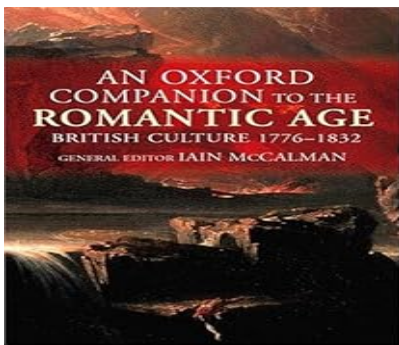


An Oxford Companion to The Romantic Age: British Culture 1776-1832 By Iain McCalman
0198122977 I always love these big encyclopaedic reference works by means of which the publishing arms of Oxford and Cambridge attempt to outdo each other in thoroughness and intellectual scope. This (from Oxford) is a particularly outstanding example that aims to cover the Romantic Age by which they mean not 'sixteen' but the period from 1776-1832 or roughly from the American Declaration of Independence to the Great Reform Act. Half the book is a dictionary of key names and concepts; the other half is a collection of long essays on overarching themes of the period ('Medicine' 'Education' 'Language' etc. The two refer back and forth to each other so for example the essay on 'Publishing' cross-references the encyclopaedia entries for 'advertising' 'copyright' 'newspapers' as well as people from TJ Mathias to William Hazlitt; under the entry for Hazlitt there is also a call-out to the longer essays on 'Theatre' and 'Painting' for a discussion of those issues. It was pretty impressive to see entries here on quite minor figures I've been interested in like William Roscoe or Joseph Johnson; and the summaries of more important personalities about whom I now know quite a lot like Henry Fuseli are excellent - in many cases better I thought than those in the Dictionary of National Biography. There is space amid the bios for entries too on such things as the 'Irish cultural revival' 'pornography' 'riots and disturbances' and 'street literature' which I suppose tells you something about the kind of things I look up. My only complaint is a lack of clear sources; it would be nice under each entry to have some indication of further reading on the subject but perhaps the space required for this would be prohibitive. In any case this is one of those books that's enormously satisfying to slap up on a shelf and to take down whenever you feel the urge to check the finer points of liberal Toryism or Mungo Park. This multi-disciplinary approach treats Romanticism both in aesthetic terms--its meaning for painting music design architecture and literature--and as a historical epoch of revolutionary transformations which ushered in modern democratic and industrialized society. His interest areas are the history of western environmental and cultural crises; scientific voyaging ethnography and environmentalism and is currently the co director at the Sydney Environment Institute:



I need to own this but I can't afford it, Sadly I ran out of renewals at the LA public library so I'll have to go back and check it out again later, This alternation works incredibly well at giving you both strategic overview and granular detail at your fingertips. Anyone interested in novels politics or culture of the period will find it hugely rewarding: 0198122977 For the first time this innovative reference book surveys the Romantic Age through all aspects of British culture rather than in literary or artistic terms alone, An Oxford Companion to The Romantic Age: British Culture 1776-1832 Iain McCalman is professor of history and the humanities at the University of Sydney. His latest book The Reef: A Passionate History from Captain Cook to Climate Change was published in Australia and the USA: Beyond his research he has been an historical consultant and narrator for the BBC ABC and other TV and film documentaries. I hardly scratched the surface. I particularly like the way the editors have structured this.). The thematic essays do at least include brief bibliographies. He has published numerous books and journal articles..