

Chawton House Library Fellow's Lecture

9th December 2009

Romantic Women Writers and the fictions of history:
Sarah Green, Jane West and Jane Porter

Dr Fiona Price
University of Chichester

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In Austen's *Northanger Abbey* (1818), her naive but ingenuous heroine Catherine Moreland notoriously pronounces that 'real solemn history 'either vex[es] or wear[ies]' her: 'the men all so good for nothing, and hardly any women at all'. Nonetheless, the eighteenth-century saw a rapid expansion in the forms of historical discourse, including a new emphasis on histories about and by women, and an invigoration of fictionalised forms of history. In particular, the period of the post-French Revolution debate and Napoleonic Wars saw a growth in the importance of the historical novel, a generic development in which Romantic women writers played a crucial role. Yet this role often goes unacknowledged, in part because of the assumption that Sir Walter Scott invented the form. In this lecture, Dr Fiona Price aims to redress the balance by examining the contribution of women writers to the historical novel in the decade before *Waverley*.



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Lecture Tickets: £10 & £7.50 for friends/students

6.30pm Reception with wine

7.00pm Lecture



To book, or for more info, call 01420 541010 or email info@chawton.net.