English 410A (1): Satire and Sense: The Restoration and Early Eighteenth Century (Fall 1999)

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Writing the Modern Subject in the Restoration and Early Eighteenth Century

Course Focus: This course focuses on the role English literature of the period (c. 1660-1740) played in construction of what is, in many ways, a recognizably modern subject. We will consider some of the ways in which writers explored or registered their understanding of their world and their identities in many of the same ways that we still do: as differentiated from, related to, and affiliated with others by race/nation, class (or rank), and gender. During the Restoration and early eighteenth century, each of these categories of identity underwent processes of prescribing and recording, constructing and reconstructing, satirizing, correcting, and normalizing.

We will survey the major literary forms of the period: drama, poetry, fiction and non-fiction prose; and although particular attention will be paid to the major authors of the period—Dryden, Swift, Addison and Steele, Defoe, and Pope—we will also consider what several non-canonical writers (i.e., women and labouring-class writers) had to say about our topic of inquiry. We will explore some of the historical, social, and political contexts and implications of the ways each category of humanity was written and rewritten.

Course Objectives: Students will learn or practice the following: a.) to identify and discuss major forms, features, and issues in literature of the period; b.) to design and write a research essay; c.) to analyze and discuss the literature using a variety of appropriate critical and theoretical methods.

What are your own objectives?

Structure: Our sessions will combine lecture, discussion, and group and individual exercises, including brief assignments (“minute papers”) to be completed in class. Your participation grade (10%) will be assessed by these assignments. Attendance is worth 5% of the final grade. You will be expected to have prepared for each session by reading the assigned material and bringing questions and points for discussion.

Grades
Attendance and participation 15%
Essay Prospectus 2-4 pages 10% due October 5 in class
Conference to discuss prospectus 15 minutes 5% October 7, 12, or 14
In-class Essay/Midterm examination 50 minutes 10% November 2
Research Essay 2000-2500 words (8-10 pages) 30% November 18 in class
Final examination 30%

Essays: You will devise your own essay topic in consultation with me, and you are welcome to consult with me any time before the prospectus is due as well as after I have seen it. Your prospectus will consist of the following items: 1.) a working thesis statement (2%); 2.) a 1-page sketch detailing how you might address the problem you have set yourself (2%); 3.) a list of secondary critical sources (1 or 2 books or 2-5 articles or book chapters) you have consulted for preliminary study (2%); 4.) a formal outline of your essay or a briefly annotated bibliography (4%).
As the grades schedule indicates, 45% of your final mark is allocated to the process and product of the essay assignment; you are advised to read around early to find works, poets, and issues that interest you and to formulate some research questions about them.

Essays must conform to the specifications of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* in all regards. Protect yourself by photocopying anything you submit for grading and not sliding anything under my office door.

**Grading:** Assignments turned in late without appropriate documentation or prior permission may be penalized 2% per day and will not be accepted more than ten days after the due date. If you miss an assignment worth participation grades and wish to make it up, please see me within a week. Academic dishonesty and plagiarism (which the University of Waterloo defines as “the act of presenting the ideas, words, or other intellectual property of another as one’s own” and which includes submitting what is substantially the same work for credit in more than one course) will be dealt with according to University regulations; please familiarize yourself with these.

**Required Texts:**
- Robert DeMaria Jr., ed. *British Literature, 1640-1789: An Anthology* (Blackwell)
- *English 410A Readings* (supplement to DeMaria’s anthology; referred to as 410AR in Readings Schedule)
- Daniel Defoe, *Moll Flanders* (Oxford)

**Recommended Texts:** these books are on reserve at the Dana Porter Library. Look at as many or as few as you like; they’re there to help you start thinking about essay topics or to learn more about the period.

- Roy Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*
- Donald Greene, *The Age of Exuberance*
- James Sambrook, *The Eighteenth Century: The Intellectual and Cultural Context of English Literature, 1700-1789*
- Vivien Jones, *Women in the Eighteenth Century: Constructions of Femininity*
- Margaret Anne Doody, *The Daring Muse: Augustan Poetry Reconsidered*
- Ian Jack, *Augustan Satire: Intention and Idiom in English poetry, 1660-1750*

**Schedule of Readings**

**Week One: Introduction**
- **Tuesday September 14:** no readings; introduction
- **Thursday September 16:** major philosophical and political currents; Locke, selections from *An Essay Concerning the Human Understanding* (410AR); Locke, selections from “An Essay Concerning the True Original Extent and End of Civil Government” (DeMaria)

**Week Two: Writing the Political Subject**
- **Tuesday September 21:** Locke ctd.; Sprat, “Their Manner of Discourse” from *The History of the Royal Society* (DeMaria)
Week Three: Satirizing the Political Subject  
Tuesday September 28: Dryden, MacFlecknoe (DeMaria)  

Thursday September 30: Dryden ctd.; Rochester, "A Satyr Against Reason and Mankind" (DeMaria); sign up for prospectus conference  

Week Four: "With Equal Fetters Bound": Gender and the Restoration Subject  
Tuesday October 5: Wycherley, The Country Wife; essay prospectus due in class  
Thursday October 7: The Country Wife ctd.; first day of prospectus conferences  

Week Five: Gender ctd.: The Companionate Ideal: A Fiction?  
Tuesday October 12: Fox, Women’s Speaking Justified; Astell, A Serious Proposal; Chudleigh, selection in DeMaria; Defoe, Academy for Women; Barber, “Conclusion of a Letter” (all in DeMaria); second day of prospectus conferences  
Thursday October 14: Defoe, “True Born Englishman” (DeMaria); last day of prospectus conferences  

Week Six: Race/Nation and Gender  
Tuesday October 19: Behn, Oroonoko (DeMaria)  
Thursday October 21: Oroonoko ctd.  

Week Seven: Essays: Yours, Addison’s, Steele’s  
Tuesday October 26: selections from Addison and Steele, The Tatler and The Spectator (410AR); Thursday October 28: Addison and Steele ctd.; review for in-class essay  

Week Eight: A Rake, a Belle, and an Empire  
Tuesday November 2: 50 minute in-class essay/midterm examination; introduction to Pope  
Thursday November 4: Pope, Rape of the Lock (DeMaria)  

Week Nine: Speaking the Language of Distress  
Tuesday November 9: Rape of the Lock ctd; Pope, Eloisa to Abelard (CC); review of in-class essays  
Thursday November 11: Eloisa to Abelard ctd.  

Week Ten: A Novel, Yet No Novel: Negative Definitions of Race/Nation, Gender, and Class  
Tuesday November 16: Ramsay, “Give Me a Lass with a Lump of Land” (DeMaria); Defoe, Moll Flanders  
Thursday November 18: Essay due; Moll Flanders ctd.  

Week Eleven:  
Tuesday November 23: Moll Flanders ctd.  
Thursday November 25: Swift, “The Lady’s Dressing Room” and Miss W—, “The Gentleman’s Study” (410AR); Montagu, “The Reasons” (DeMaria); Swift, “Strephon and Chloe” (410AR)  

Week Twelve: Grubs, Hacks, and Dunces?  
Tuesday November 30: Duck, “The Thresher’s Labour” (DeMaria); Swift, “On Stephen Duck” (410AR); Collier, “The Woman’s Labour” (DeMaria); Barber, “To Mrs. Strangeways Horner,” “A True Tale,” and “To a Lady Who Commanded Me” (410AR)  
Thursday December 2: Swift, A Modest Proposal (DeMaria); essays returned  
Students will be requested to complete a course evaluation sometime during the last weeks of classes.