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ENG 5004-001: Writing and Reading Gender in Restoration and 18th-Century Prose

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Required Texts

- Aphra Behn’s *Oroonoko* (Bedford)
- Daniel Defoe’s *Moll Flanders* (Norton)
- Samuel Richardson’s *Pamela* (Penguin)
- *Anti-Pamela and Shamela* (ed. Ingrassia, Broadview)
- Fanny Burney’s *Evelina* (Norton)
- Ann Radcliffe’s *Mysteries of Udolpho* (Oxford)
- Mary Wollstonecraft’s *Maria* (Norton)
- Jane Austen’s *Northanger Abbey* (Penguin)

Goals

We have entered a second wave in the study of gender and sexuality in the prose forms that emerged during the Restoration and developed over the course of the 18th Century. For example, having recovered the writing of Eliza Haywood, whose novel *Love in Excess* sold on par with Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* but then was relegated to the footnotes of literary history, we are in a position to map the details of her place in her literary and cultural moment. What existing genres were available to her and what shape did they take in her gendered hands? To what group of readers did she turn? What traces are left of her desire to shape not just their ideas but also their very habits as readers? In short, our primary goal will be to historicize the complex relationship between developing early modern gender norms and the innovative prose forms of the “long 18th century.” We will read letters, essays, and novels (early radical experiments and the progressive and conservative texts that followed), as well as recent theories on the novel’s emergence at this time and in this place.
Course requirements and assignments

1. Conversation: All of us need to be present and actively engaged to make the class a success. To achieve this, I ask that you—

   • be fully prepared (actively reading assignments—annotating, taking notes, preparing substantive questions, gathering issues or readings you have discovered outside of class, and completing all writing assignments)
   • take a responsible and active part in class discussions (being alert, involved, critical—in all the best sense of the word, respectful, tactful, and courteous). Taking part in discussion might include raising issues, as well as asking well-informed questions based on close and critical reading of assignments, responding to questions, and entering into general discussions.

2. A critical/exploratory reading journal: By class each Thursday (weeks 2-14), please complete a 400-500 word journal entry exploring what is for you ONE central or intriguing question raised by the readings. Be sure to focus on a single idea—this is not meant to be review, plot summary or freewriting. Gender and genre should be your primary concerns, but these can be quite broadly defined. Entries might focus on the texts (for example a few selected passages being compared), critical readings, or a connection you make between or among texts. Refer to specific passages/pages in the novels. Return to the topic immediately after class and revise and extend it (to perhaps 750+ words) in light of class discussion and your advanced thinking on the issue. Both pre and post entries should be placed in your folder/binder. The goal is to use writing to further our individual and collective thinking about the class, the readings, the genre, the themes. It is also a place to generate and then to refine ideas for your longer formal essay. I will collect these randomly, so please bring the journal with you to each class (including the pre entry of the day’s reading). Because of this process, I suggest you do your entries on computer and print copies that you place into a file folder. I do not expect polished prose here; instead, I am looking for focus and for serious, interested critical thinking. The full journal should be turned in 4/28.

3. Novel group presentation: At the end of the semester some of you will read the Wollstonecraft novel and others the Hays. Each group will present on its selection. We will discuss the details later in the semester.

4. A 10-12 page critical essay. Preliminary topics (most likely drawn from journal entries) should be cleared with me by 3/28/11 at the latest. I’d then like you to prepare an expanded proposal, including possible sources, to be presented during a conference with me the week of April 4th. The essay is due on April 28th. Please use MLA format to produce the final essay. Also, be sure you are familiar with both the University’s and the English Department’s policies on plagiarism. ALTERNATIVE: If you have another project idea, for example a pedagogy-related approach, please consult with me well before the 3/28 deadline.
Grading
Journal (30%); Class Participation (20%); Group presentations (15%); Essay (35%)

Information for Students with Disabilities
If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.
Course Syllabus

In order to accommodate the needs of the class, the following schedule of discussion, reading, and writing assignments is tentative. You will be notified of any changes in class.

Week 1 (1/13): Introductions

Week 2 (1/20)

• Behn’s *Oroonoko*: Please read these pages in the following order—pp. 34-100, 3-31
• Hammond and Regan “Introduction: Modelling the Novel” (handout)

Week 3 (1/27) (PLEASE READ IN THE LISTED ORDER)

• In Backscheider and Richetti: Haywood pp. 153-224, 226-248
• In Backscheider and Richetti: Intro pp. ix-xiii
• In Backscheider and Richetti: Manly intro pp. 45-51

Week 4 (2/3)

• In Backscheider and Richetti: Davys 250-320
• In Rogers and McCarthy: Montagu pp. 171-3, 178-81, 186-90, 201-5