

English 435—Topics in Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Literature
“Libertinism, Disguise, and Identity, 1660-1740”
T/Th 9:30-10:45, Oddfellows 206
Spring 2011

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Office Hours: T 11-1; Th 10:45-12:15; F 12-2:30; by appointment

“And, after all, what is a lie? 'Tis but the truth in a masquerade”
~Alexander Pope



Course Description:

In May of 1660, Charles II (also known as the “merry monarch”) was restored to the throne of England. Charles’ return marked the end of a period of strict Puritan rule and the beginning of a new era of theatre life and culture, one fueled by libertine ideology and the growing popularity of the “masquerade.”

In this course, we will consider the ways in which Restoration notions of performance, performativity, and libertine identity inform and shape the development of narrative through the mid-eighteenth century in England. Seminar participants will read theories of performance and narrative and study the contentious discourse surrounding both the theatre and the emergence of the “novel.” Of particular interest to our discussions will be women’s increasing visibility and power in theatre and print culture and the always contentious, often vicious responses this presence inspired. Major authors to be studied include John Wilmot (Earl of Rochester), William Wycherley, George Etherege, Aphra Behn, Eliza Haywood, Daniel Defoe, Jonathan Swift, and Samuel Richardson.

Required Texts:

Backscheider, Paula and John J. Richetti—*Popular Fiction by Women* (Oxford)
Bell, Elizabeth—*Theories of Performance* (Sage)
Centlivre, Susannah—*A Bold Stroke for a Wife* (Broadview)
Defoe, Daniel—*Roxana* (Oxford)
McMillin (Ed.)—*Restoration and 18th Century Comedy* (Norton Critical)
Richardson, Samuel—*Pamela: or, Virtue Rewarded* (Oxford)
Course Packet (available at the Allegheny bookstore)

Course Requirements:

The following are assumed, bare-minimum requirements of the course.

- ✓ **Regular attendance.** Unexcused absences will inhibit your academic progress and negatively impact your ability to succeed in the course. If you're not here, you can't pass.
- ✓ **Always submit polished written work.** All written assignments must be typed, double-spaced, use Times New Roman font, and follow MLA documentation guidelines. Grammatical/mechanical/typographical errors or vague, thoughtless prose must be stripped from your work.
- ✓ **100% effort, 100% of the time.** This course is an upper-level seminar, which means I will lecture very little and expect you to arrive at every meeting prepared to discuss the texts with rigor and sincere intellectual engagement. I will expect you to read carefully and will assume you have done the kind of thinking in advance of class that will enable energetic and dynamic discussions.
- ✓ **When in doubt, CITE.** Any and all instances of plagiarism will result in automatic failure of the course. Plagiarism is defined, and described in the Allegheny Honor Code, as "using the ideas or words of another without citing the sources from which the ideas or words are taken." If you have questions about citation, please ask me or visit a writing consultant at the Learning Commons.

Coursework (see assignment descriptions below):

25%—Critical Review (Paper of 5-6 pages; Presentation of 8-10 minutes)
25%—Position Papers (5 @ 3 pages each)
25% —Final Seminar Paper (12-15 pages)
25%—Contributions to Class Discussions

Contributions to Class Discussions: The single most important component of your coursework in this class is the way that you prepare for and contribute to our seminar meetings. This class is designed to simulate for you the work of professional literary scholars. Professional literary scholars daily immerse themselves in their field of study, reading primary and secondary texts with constant critical attention, posing questions about and making connections between materials, writing both as a way to share and continue their thinking about the literature. I expect that this is the way in which you will

engage with the material of this course the entire semester. This means that the bulk of the thinking, considering, and questioning you do will happen outside of class. Class meetings are your opportunity to share the thinking you've done, engage and debate with the ideas of your classmates, and pose questions to the group. Literary scholarship such as critical articles and books articulate the ongoing discussions of the field through writing. Our seminar meetings should represent an oral version of this ongoing critical dialogue. Come to class ready to challenge your classmates with your own ideas and to respond to the ideas of your peers with equal rigor. There are no right or wrong ideas; there are, however, superior and inadequate levels of engagement and thinking. Your success in this course is only possible if you demonstrate superior engagement with the material, regularly, via your contributions to class discussions. High quality, regular participation is an assumed, bare-minimum requirement and the thinking you do, out loud, in class, is paramount.

I also require that you draft discussion questions and notes for each class period for which a position paper is not assigned. Your position papers allow you to work through one specific idea or question, and I will naturally expect you to bring those particular interests and ideas to class on those days. On all other days, though, you should type up and bring with you to class a set of questions, ideas, and notes you wish to discuss that day. Periodically, I will also ask that you post these on Sakai, in advance, for your classmates to view.

Critical Review: For one of the primary texts on the syllabus, you will conduct a *focused* review of the text's critical history. This means that, rather than read and survey every article ever written about the text, you will choose a particular question or issue and report on what critics have to say about it. For example, you might decide you want to find out "what critics think about the significance of explicit sexuality/language in Rochester's poetry." Thus, you will find and read critical sources that address this topic in some way. You will organize and present your research to the class in two ways: first as focused and purposeful paper and second as an oral presentation.

In your paper, you will both present and critique the ideas of the most interesting and significant critics you encounter in your research. You should summarize and respond to at least 6 different critics and articles in your paper, though your paper should not be organized as a "list." Instead, plan to organize your paper thematically. You might, for example, spend the first couple of pages discussing several critics who all address the same question in their work. Or, you might divide your paper into sections determined by the "approaches" taken by the critics (i.e., psychoanalytic, new historical, etc.). The organization is up to you, but it should be clear and logical. Also, it is important that you *engage* with the ideas of the critics rather than merely report on them. What is striking or surprising about particular critics' approaches? What do these approaches help to illuminate about the text? What alternate views might individual critics consider?

The purpose of the oral presentation is a bit different. In a polished, clearly organized, and engaging presentation, you will describe the key trends and dominant ideas that arise in the criticism you found. What sorts of issues and concerns dominated critics' interpretations of the writer's work? You may cite specific critics where appropriate, but

should not quote extensively from any one article. Your job is to demonstrate that you can identify trends in criticism and discuss, intelligently, those trends. You will also offer, summatively, your own response to the critical oeuvre you encountered. What have you learned, overall, from your research? How has your research prompted you to think about the text in new ways? What questions has it raised for you? What would you encourage your peers to consider in their discussion of the text based on the research you have done?

Both the written and oral components of this assignment are due at the beginning of class on the first day we discuss the text you have chosen.

Position Papers: You will write regular position papers on the readings. These papers are to be 3-page analyses that begin with a clear thesis and then develop an argument through specific, focused, and meticulous close readings of the text. The goal of these papers is to construct as nuanced and lean a paper as possible; think complexity and depth of ideas, minus all the “fluff”—each and every sentence in the paper should DO something for your argument, each and every quotation provided should act as a launch pad to advance your analysis. You will write 5 required position papers over the course of the semester. All position papers are due in class on the day assigned (no email copies accepted), and no late papers will be accepted.

Final Seminar Paper: For your final paper, you will develop a substantial, sophisticated, and **well-researched** seminar paper of 12-15 pages that explores some significant and specific question or topic. The onus is on you to develop a compelling topic of intellectual interest and value; however, I am happy to talk with you about your paper ideas at any point in the semester. Your critical review may serve as a foundation of research for the topic you ultimately choose, but you are not tied to the text for which you present a critical review. The purpose of the seminar paper is NOT, however, to regurgitate others’ ideas. Rather, you must develop a clear, specific, and compelling thesis; critical sources may serve as a *catalyst* for your thinking in the paper, but the bulk of your writing should be spent developing a clear, focused, and significant argument. The seminar paper is due on Friday, May 6th by 10pm.

Course Schedule

***Please note that I may also assign secondary critical articles for you to read in addition to the readings listed on the syllabus, at my discretion and with fair notice**

Date	Day	Readings
1-20	Th	<i>Introduction to the course: Restoration theatre and the court of King Charles II; Gender and the Restoration stage</i> John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester—"A Satyr on Charles II" (handout)
1-25	T	John Wilmot—"A Satyre Against Man and Reason"; "A Ramble in St. James's Park" (CP) 7PM—screening of <i>The Libertine</i>
1-27	Th	John Wilmot—"The Imperfect Enjoyment; Aphra Behn—"The Disappointment" (CP) Position Paper #1 Due
2-1	T	J.L. Styan—from <i>Restoration Comedy and Performance</i> (CP)
2-3	Th	William Wycherley— <i>The Country Wife: Acts I-III</i> (RC)
2-8	T	William Wycherley— <i>The Country Wife: Acts IV-V</i> (RC)
2-10	Th	<i>Theories of Performance: Chapters 1&2</i>
2-15	T	George Etherege— <i>The Man of Mode: Acts I-III</i> (RC) <i>Theories of Performance: Chapter 6</i>
2-17	Th	George Etherege— <i>The Man of Mode: Acts IV-V</i> (RC) Position Paper #2 Due
2-22	T	From Ian Watt's <i>The Rise of the Novel</i> ; from Jane Spencer's <i>The Rise of the Woman Novelist</i> (CP)
2-24	Th	From Rosalind Ballaster's <i>Seductive Forms</i> ; from John Richetti's <i>The English Novel in History 1700-1780</i> (CP)
3-1	T	Aphra Behn— <i>The History of the Nun; or, the Fair Vowbreaker</i> (PF); Excerpts from <i>Venus in the Cloister</i> (handout)
3-3	Th	Jane Barker— <i>Love's Intrigue</i> (PF) Position Paper #3 Due
3-8	T	Susannah Centlivre— <i>A Bold Stroke for a Wife: Acts I-II</i> <i>Theories of Performance: Chapter 7</i>
3-10	Th	Susannah Centlivre— <i>A Bold Stroke for a Wife: Acts III-V</i>
3-15	T	Daniel Defoe— <i>Roxana</i> pp. 1-54
3-17	Th	Daniel Defoe— <i>Roxana</i> pp. 54-111
3-22	T	NO CLASS—Spring Break
3-24	Th	NO CLASS—Spring Break
3-29	T	Daniel Defoe— <i>Roxana</i> pp. 111-188 Position Paper #4 Due
3-31	Th	Daniel Defoe— <i>Roxana</i> pp. 188-264
4-5	T	Daniel Defoe— <i>Roxana</i> pp. 264-end
4-7	Th	Eliza Haywood— <i>Fantomina</i> (PF); Jonathan Swift—The Dressing Room poems (CP)
4-12	T	Samuel Richardson— <i>Pamela</i> (to p. 75)
4-14	Th	Samuel Richardson— <i>Pamela</i> (pp. 76-150)
4-19	T	Samuel Richardson— <i>Pamela</i> (pp. 151-225) Position Paper #5 Due
4-21	Th	Samuel Richardson— <i>Pamela</i> (pp. 225-300)
4-26	T	Samuel Richardson— <i>Pamela</i> (pp. 301-375)

4-28	Th	Samuel Richardson— <i>Pamela</i> (pp. 375-450)
5-3	T	Samuel Richardson— <i>Pamela</i> (p.451 to end)
5-6	F	Final Seminar Paper Due by 10pm