

**Economies of Identity:  
Public/Private Constructs in the Eighteenth Century  
A Seminar in Restoration and Eighteenth-Century British Literature  
English 222W Section 1  
T/R 12:30-1:45**

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**Class Description**

The goal of the *Seminar in Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Literature* course is to teach students to read, engage with, and write about restoration and eighteenth-century literature. This class fulfills the W requirement for writing intensive courses, and therefore our attention throughout the semester will be focused on going beyond mere exposure to texts, through reading, to being able to discuss, think, and write about literature in analytical and interpretive essays. This course presumes a substantial amount of preparation in composition.

The class this semester looks at the literature of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, especially works which center on questions of identity, representation, and self-hood. Our theme this semester, economies of identity, enables us to think about the link between eighteenth-century ideas of economy—political, monetary, and sexual—and the notion of the self. Important themes include the following sorts of questions: Is there a relationship between one's representation of oneself and one's own identity? To what extent do material conditions define the self? In what ways is the self gendered naturally? What are the relationships between sexuality and gender? Is identity a unifying concept or can we function under a more diffuse notion of identity? Throughout the semester our focus will be toward using what we read to inform what we write.

**The Readings**

We'll read a wide variety of material this semester: short and long, challenging and entertaining, literary, critical, and philosophical. There are 5 required texts in the bookstore. Additionally, you should acquire a notebook to organize the 100+ pages of printed material from the website.

Wycherly's *The Country Wife*, 0803253710

Quintana's *Eighteenth-Century Plays*, 0075536595

Mackenzie's *The Man of Feeling*, 0192840320

Swift's *A Modest Proposal . . .*, 0879759194

Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, 0375761195

**In-Class Discussions**

We will spend class time each week thinking through the major issues of the readings. The classes will be centered around participatory lectures— that is, I'll prepare lectures to address what I consider to be the important features of that week's reading, and I'll expect you to participate in order to fill in the features you consider to be important to the week's reading. I'll expect you to be prepared to think alongside your peers in our discussions of the texts of the class.

**The Writing**

As we discuss the readings, we'll spend time writing on some of the important issues in the texts. This writing will help solidify our understandings of the texts, and provoke you to develop your ideas more fully. This writing will take the form of interpretive analyses— short essay questions that will ask you to explain and defend a position on the reading. You'll write four interpretive analyses over the course of the semester—two each half. You'll also write two longer essays, one due after Spring Break and the other at Final.

**Attendance**

Regular attendance is expected of all students. To be successful you must attend regularly. If you find that you have missed a class, seek out a classmate for information on what you have missed; do not expect me to tutor you in your absence. Interpretive Analyses can't be submitted late, Essays will lose a letter grade each calendar day.

**Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the submission of someone else's work as though it were your own. Plagiarism is dishonest. Plagiarism is especially troublesome in a course that encourages collaborative thought. The distinction between plagiarism and collaboration is quite clear: whereas collaboration engages, responds to and incorporates others' ideas, plagiarism dishonestly hides its use of others' work. Before the essays are due, we will speak at length about the ways in which you can engage in collaboration and avoid the danger of plagiarism. Plagiarism results in an F for this class.

**Essays 55%**

You will write two 6 to 10 page essays for this class. These essays will be formal, polished out of class writings that represent a serious attempt to think alongside the issues of the class. You will be graded on the sophistication and development of ideas, on the fluency and cohesion of language, and on the structure and success of the argument. Part of each essay assignment will involve a period of drafting, revising, and rewriting. Let me be clear, however: each essay will receive an unalterable grade— I do not allow revisions after the due date. I'll give much more information on the essays as I assign them.

**Interpretive Analyses 25%**

Each major text will carry along with it a writing assignment. These assignments will ask you to critically analyze some specific textual question— either to interpret some passage, or to explain some concept, or to make some connections between ideas. Over the semester, there will be approximately 8 opportunities to complete the four required analyses; you must write two each half. These minor writings serve as tools for you to prepare for the essays, as they spur your thinking about the issues of the class.

**Participation on the Discussion Forum 19.999%**

This class uses an online discussion forum as a significant pedagogical element. The discussion forum allows the class to collaborate in forming a shared understanding in response to the issues and concepts in the reading and writing assignments. It allows the learning and engagement to extend beyond the confines of schedule of the class. It also allows and compels you to develop yourself– as a thinker and as a writer, in collaboration with your peers. You should view your forum activity as collaborative writing– that is, as writing that engages with and responds to the words and ideas of others. I will grade the quality and the quantity of your posts. In order to excel in this area, you should read and think about the texts and issues of this class and post contributions to the forums which present your understandings while engaging the understandings of others. Frequent disruptive posting is not to be desired; the best participation engages with the issues of the class, the texts, and your peers. Your grade will be computed as follows: You must make 30 quality posts by the end of the semester (an average of about 2 posts per week), and you must make a minimum of 1 quality post per week. See forum description for details on my expectations for forum participation. Here is the grading scale:

30+ quality posts = 80 min; 100 max

25–29 quality posts = 70 min; 90 max

20–24 quality posts = 60 min, 80 max

15–19 quality posts = 50 min; 70 max

Additionally, for each week you fail to make at least one quality post, I will deduct 5% from your participation grade. So, for instance, if you have 30 quality posts by the end of the semester, but you failed to make a post during Week Two, you will score somewhere between 75 and 95, rather than between 80 and 100.

**Final Exam 0.001%**

As mandated by the university, this class requires you to complete a final exam. Your final exam will be worth virtually nothing to your grade, but students who fail to complete the exam can't receive credit for the class.

**Tentative Schedule****Week One: January 17/19**

Introduction to the Course  
Aphra Behn's "The Golden Age"

**Week Two: January 24/26**

Wycherly's *The Country Wife*

**Week Three (Mon 30=Last Add/Drop) January 31/2**

Critical Essays and "Oroonoko"

**Week Four February 7/9**

"Oroonoko"  
"Wife's Resentment"  
"Fantomina"

**Week Five February 14/16**

*Man of Feeling*

**Week Six: February 21/23**

*Conscious Lovers*  
Criticism

**Week Seven February 28/2**

Paper Topics & Writing Instruction

**SPRING BREAK March 5-11****Week Eight March 14/16**

Rochester's Poetry **Essay I Due**

**Week Nine March 21/23**

Swift's Poetry  
*Tale of a Tub*

**Week Ten (Mon 27=Last W) March 28/30**

*Tale of a Tub*

**Week Eleven April 4/6**

*Tristram Shandy*

**Week Twelve April 11/13**

*Tristram Shandy*

**Week Thirteen April 18/20**

Poetry Packet

**Week Fourteen April 25/27**

*She Stoops to Conquer*

**Final Week May 1-6**

**Essay II Due**