

Eighteenth-Century Masculinities



(Hogarth, “The Young Heir Taking Possession,” from “A Rake’s Progress”)

For the paradigmatic “Englishman,” the eighteenth century was a time of gender trouble. Momentous social and economic changes such as the emergence of capitalism and the new middle class, the appearance of women as consumers in the new marketplace, changing attitudes towards marital roles and sexuality, and the popularization of “enlightened” scientific modes of inquiry, all challenged previous notions of English masculinity. This course will examine the ways in which the literature of the time reflected masculinity crises unique to its cultural moment. Exploring both canonical and little-known texts of diverse genres (poetry, drama, the novel, pornography, and nonfiction prose), we will investigate certain standard literary male “types” of the period—the rake, the libertine, the self-interested man, the enlightened man, the man of virtue, and the man of feeling—discussing them not as stable categories, but as means by which male and female writers of the time articulated or displaced anxieties over the uncertain status of maleness in the emergent modern era.

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Required Texts:

Daniel Defoe, Robinson Crusoe
Jonathan Swift, Gulliver’s Travels (selections)
Henry Fielding, The Female Husband
-----, Joseph Andrews
William Godwin, Caleb Williams
Henry Mackenzie, The Man of Feeling

Tobias Smollett, The Adventures of Ferdinand and Count Fathom

Laurence Sterne, A Sentimental Journey (selections)
William Wycherley, The Country Wife
(These texts will occasionally be supplemented by handouts of poetry and short prose, as well as readings in contemporary criticism and gender theory.)

Course Requirements:

*Six out of 11 possible 1-2 page response papers, due on the first day we discuss a new reading assignment

*One 5-7 page midterm paper and one 8-10 page final paper (plus pre-writing conferences and short abstracts)

SYLLABUS

Section I. The Restoration Rake / The Eighteenth-Century Libertine

- Week 1: Introduction and slides from Hogarth's "A Rake's Progress;" read and choose passage from Pope's "Rape of the Lock"
 Week 2: The Country Wife; selections from Boswell's London Journal (selections)

Section II. The Self-Interested Man

- Week 3: Robinson Crusoe;
 Week 4: The Adventures of Ferdinand Count Fathom
 Week 5: The Adventures of Ferdinand Count Fathom (in class: schedule pre-writing conferences for midterm papers)

Section III. The Man of Virtue

- Week 6: Joseph Andrews; **abstracts for midterm papers due**
 Week 7: Joseph Andrews; **midterm paper due by 5:00 p.m.**

Section IV. The Man of Feeling

- Week 8: The Man of Feeling, Sentimental Journey (selections)

Section V. The English Husband

- Week 9: The Family, Sex, and Marriage in England 1500-1800 (selections), The Female Husband, Defoe's "Conjugal Lewdness, or Matrimonial Whoredom"

Section VI. The Working Man

- Week 10: Caleb Williams
 Week 11: Caleb Williams
 Week 12: Stephen Duck's "The Thresher's Labor," Mary Collier's "A Woman's Labor;" Anon., "Monsieur Thing's Origin" (in class: schedule pre-writing conferences for final papers)

Section VII. The Enlightened Man

- Week 13: Gulliver's Travels (selections), Addison's "Will of a Virtuoso;" **abstracts for final papers due, discuss abstracts in class**
 Exam Week: **Final paper due, date T.B.A.**