

Professor Karen Mulhallen
LM 8934 The Making of Modernity: Studies in 18th Century Literature
The Inferno
Fall 2010
Professor Karen Mulhallen

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Office Hours: Thursdays: 12:30-1:30, by appointment
Fridays 11:30- 12:30, open hour

In the fifth chamber were Unnamed forms, which
cast the metals into the expanse.

There they were reciev'd by Men who occupied
the sixth chamber, and took the forms of books &
were arranged in libraries.

William Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, plate 15

Course Description

This course is a general introduction to an important vein in eighteenth century culture, which might be characterized as the marginal, or the counter revolutionary, or the other. We will engage with texts which critique the mainstream with its emphasis on rationality and control. Some theoretical readings will help us to articulate these divergences, but the emphasis of the course will be first on the direct engagement with the texts, then on the social, political, historical and material conditions under which these texts were created.

The long list of texts which follows gives some sense of the range of materials, but in class we will be confining our investigations to only a few of these works. The course is structured approximately chronologically and we will be probing the cultural conditions of creation as these conditions change.

The long eighteenth century was an era that entailed revolution and romanticism, scientific innovation and philosophical skepticism, sexual fixations and political radicalism. In “The Inferno” we are examining the emergence of modern identities — sexual, political, psychological, philosophical.

The intellectual vitality, and the internationalism, of the period is reflected in the variety of questions with which it engaged. In writings by Defoe, Swift, Diderot, Cleland, de Sade, Goethe, de Laclos, Godwin, Blake, Wollstonecraft, Percy Shelley and Mary Shelley, and others, questions were debated about the operation of the physical world, about the delusions of the individual, about the importance of inoculation, about the relationship between humans and monkeys, about the potential of and desire for men to

give birth, about the importance of comets, about the relationship between galvanic electricity and the source of life, about the possibility of farming human babies for food and fashion, about clothing as a signal of male sensitivity.

In order to enlarge our sense of the period, students are encouraged in seminar presentations to include visual sources alongside literary texts. These sources might include eighteenth century prints and paintings, and also contemporary visual art, film and video, so that we might see how our own time has reformed the issues from the earlier period.

EVALUATION

1. Oral presentation with written submission 25% (date to be scheduled)
2. Essay Proposal (3 pages double-spaced, with annotated bibliography) 20% (due October 28)
3. Essay (15-18 pages, double spaced) 40% (due November 25)
4. Participation 10% (ongoing)
5. In -Class Group "Conference" Presentation 5% (December 2)

Required Reading

All required books have been ordered into the Ryerson University Bookstore. As the city is replete with used bookstores and libraries, many other sources for course books are available. There are enormous variations in editions of the texts we are studying, and although no specific editions are required for this seminar, it is assumed that students will always bring to the seminar a copy of the text under discussion.

William Beckford, Vathek

William Blake, The Marriage of Heaven and Hell (Oxford Paper; Full Color Facsimile)

John Cleland, Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure (Oxford)

Daniel Defoe, A Journal of The Plague Year (Penquin)

Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe, The Sorrows of the Young Werther (Vintage)

Samuel Johnson, The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abissinia

Choderlos de Laclos, Les Liaisons Dangereuses (Oxford)

Matthew Lewis, The Monk

Marquis De Sade, Justine

Jonathan Swift, A Modest Proposal

PARTICIPATION:

Students are expected to attend all classes, and to contribute to discussions. Students will be given participation marks for their ongoing, insightful and enthusiastic contributions to the class. Students will not be given credit simply for attendance.

SEMINAR PRESENTATION:

From the 2nd week on, students will be responsible for leading seminars. On the first day students will sign up for one presentation that will last approximately 40-60 minutes. About half this time should be devoted to introducing the text and then summarizing and applying a critical and/ or theoretical approach to the material. The other half of the presentation should be devoted to leading and stimulating group discussion. Each student must hand to the professor at the start of the seminar presentation a hard copy of the presentation for the professor's records. The student will be marked on the oral presentation, not the written material. The grade will be based on an effective introduction of, analysis of, and delivery of material, as well as a successful discussion encouraged by the presenter.

Please note: the final essay may not be on the same topic or texts as the seminar presentation materials.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY AND ESSAY PROPOSAL:

An annotated bibliography containing 12-15 sources (both academic books and scholarly peer-reviewed articles) is due at the start of class on October 28. MLA style is preferred, although APA will be accepted. The essay proposal, due at the same time must be 2 pages, double- spaced, and it should include a thesis statement.

ESSAY:

The essay should entail a clear and relevant connection to the texts and issues arising from the course readings and discussions throughout the term. As noted above, the essay may not be on the same topic or texts as the material presented in your seminar. The essay, due on November 25 (the Thursday before the last class), should be 15-18 pages and should be presented in formal academic style: MLA is preferred, although APA will be accepted.

Late essays will have 4% deducted from the grade (out of 100%) PER DAY (including weekends). The late penalty will be waived only in the event of illness or accident and subsequent to the submission of satisfactory documentation. Late essays must be placed in the Essay Drop-Off Box located on the 10th floor of Jorgenson Hall. Essays must not be put under my office door.

Please note that any act of plagiarism will be penalized according to the academic regulations of Ryerson University. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with academic conduct policies.

IN- CLASS GROUP “CONFERENCE” PRESENTATION:

The final class will be devoted to holding our own “conference”. Based on the essay proposals, I will divide the students into panels consisting of about 3 or 4 persons. Each member of the panel will present to the rest of the class a 5-7 minute summary of the term essay, or a “mini” conference paper. Each panel will be responsible for choosing a chair to lead the panel, and each presenter must be prepared to answer questions from, and engage in discussion with the “conference” audience.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS:

Week 1

a) Introduction to the course: overview of the syllabus; time line; seminar presentation sign-up.

Week 2

Daniel Defoe, A Journal of The Plague Year, (1722)

Journalism, death, dying, the city and the apocalypse

Week 3

Jonathan Swift, A Modest Proposal for Preventing The Children of Poor People in Ireland from being a burden to their parents or country, and for making them beneficial to the public (1729)

Colonialism, satire, and justice

Week 4

John Cleland, Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure (1748-9)

Sexuality, gender, economic and marital bliss

Week 5

Samuel Johnson, The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abisinnia (1759)

The Orient, enlightenment, and the search for happiness; Edward Said, Orientalism

Week 6

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, The Sorrows of the Young Werther (1774)

The Cult of Sentiment and the Worship of Nature

Week 7

Choderlos de Laclos. Les Liaisons Dangereuses (1782)

The mask, sex and society

Compare Hogarth's Marriage à la Mode (circa 1743)

Week 8

William Beckford, Vathek (1783)

The Gothic and the Orient; Edmund Burke, A Philosophical Enquiry in the Origins of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful

We will also use this class to review the course to date and to discuss the various critical and theoretical issues raised by the texts and discussions.

Week 9

William Blake, The Marriage of Heaven and Hell (1790)

Controlling the means of production; choosing the contrary state

Week 10

Marquis de Sade, Justine, or Good Conduct Well Chastised (1791)

Sexuality and evil; man and animal; Prisons and the panopticon

Week 11:

Matthew "Monk" Lewis, The Monk (1796)

Terror, religion and sexuality; Burke and Piranesi

Week 12

In-Class "Conference"; Final Class

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Readings

William Beckford, Vathek

Aphra Ben, Oroonoko

William Blake, Europe

William Blake, America

William Blake, The Marriage of Heaven and Hell

John Cleland, Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure

Daniel Defoe, A Journal of The Plague Year,

Daniel Defoe, Robinson Crusoe

Marquis de Sade, *Justine*
William Hogarth, *Marriage à la Mode*
Samuel Johnson, *Rasselas*
J.W. Goethe, *The Sorrows of the Young Werther*
James Hogg, *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*
Choderlos de Laclos, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*
Matthew “Monk” Lewis, *The Monk*
Thomas Love Peacock, *Nightmare Abbey and Crotchet Castle*
Anne Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*
J-J. Rousseau, *Reveries of the Solitary Walker*
Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*
Percy Bysshe Shelley, “*Mont Blanc*”
Jonathan Swift, *A Modest Proposal*
Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver’s Travels*
Horace Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*
William Wordsworth, “*Tintern Abbey*”
Edward Young, *Night Thoughts*

Secondary Readings

Thomas Paine, *The Rights of Man*
Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*
Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*
Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origins of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful*
William Hogarth, *Marriage à la Mode*

Theoretical and Cultural Background Readings

Andrew Hemingway and William Vaughan, *Art In Bourgeois Society 1790-1850*
Georges Bataille, *Literature and Evil*
Andrew Ballantyne, *Architecture, Landscape and Liberty, Richard Payne Knight and the Picturesque*
Roland Barthes, *Sade, Fourier, Loyola*
Angela Carter, *The Sadeian Woman*
Robert Darnton, *The Literary Underground of the Old Regime*
Vic Gatrell, *City of Laughter, Sex and Satire in Eighteenth Century London* (New York: Walker & Company, 2006)
Kenneth Graham, ed. *William Beckford Vathek with The Episodes of Vathek* (Peterborough, Broadview Press, 2001)
Richard Holmes, *The Age of Wonder, How The Romantic generation Discovered the Beauty and Terror of Science*((London: Harper Press, 2008)
Nancy Huston, *Mosaique de la pornographie* (1982) (Paris: Petite Bibliotheque Payot, 2007)
Ian Kelly, *Beau Brummel, The Ultimate Dandy*(London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2005)

Jerome McGann, *The Textual Condition* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1991)
Becky McLaughlin and Bob Coleman, *Everyday Theory, A Contemporary Reader*
Paul Rabinow, ed. *The Foucault Reader*
Barbara Stafford, *Artful Science, Enlightenment Entertainment and the Eclipse of Visual Education*
Randolph Trumbach, *Sex and the Gender Revolution, Heterosexuality and the Third Gender in Enlightenment London*
Anthony Vidler, *The Writing of the Walls*
Andrea Wulf, *The Brother Gardeners, Botany, Empire and the Birth of an Obsession* (London: William Heinemann, 2008)
Marguerite Yourcenar, *The Dark Brain of Piranesi and other essays*