After 2000: Theory, Criticism, and the Eighteenth-Century Novel

This course will investigate prose fiction before 1800 and how developments in literary theory since 2000—the new materialisms, affect theory, the global Enlightenment, among others—take us back to the philosophical and cultural contexts that shaped the novel's early articulations and reformulations of its predecessors. We will conclude by reading Coetzee’s *Disgrace* as an instance of how, in light of the novel's engagement with *Clarissa*, we read the eighteenth-century novel now.

**Book list**

Behn, *Oroonoko*
Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe* (Oxford)
Richardson, *Clarissa* (Broadview, abridged)
Austen, *Emma* (Oxford)
Coetzee, *Disgrace* (Vintage)
Baron-Cohen, *Mindblindness*
Derrida, *The Animal that Therefore I am*
Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*

Course reader: Selected readings in criticism

Sept. 14: introduction to the class: please come prepared to sign up for your seminar presentations. You'll need to have first and second choices; you're presenting on one theory/and or criticism; and one novel.


Sept. 28: from Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*, (1-48); *Robinson Crusoe*; Festa, “Crusoe’s Island of Misfit Things”


Oct. 19: Elspeth Probyn, “Writing Shame” (*Affect Theory Reader*); *Clarissa*

Oct. 26: library class: I am at a conference this week. Meet in the Electronic Instruction Room of Weldon Library.

Nov. 9: “Doing Genre,” Group Phi (New Formalisms), Emma

Nov. 16: Emma; Frances Ferguson, “Jane Austen, Emma, and the Impact of Form”; D.A. Miller, “No One is Alone”

Nov. 23: Derrida, The Animal that Therefore I Am (1-117)

Nov. 30: Disgrace: Shukin, “Tense Animals”

Dec. 7: essay synopsis presentations

**Seminars (15% each)**

Your seminar on theory/criticism consists of two parts: a written introduction to the theory we’re reading (5-6 pp.), and a fifteen-minute presentation in class on that theory; if you are presenting on a work of criticism, you are responsible for a fifteen-minute presentation that looks closely at how the work of criticism engages a theoretical paradigm and the text we are reading; you need to bring a 5-6 pp. write up to hand in on the day of your presentation.

Your novel seminar is also fifteen-minutes long, and should focus on a key passage or problem that interests you. You may draw on any theoretical paradigm that interests you. You also need to bring a 5-6 pp. write up of your seminar to class.

**Response Papers (5@5%; 25%)**

You are required to send me a response paper (2 pp; 600 words) on each of the novels we are reading; submit by email by Tuesday at 4 p.m. You should focus your discussion on a key passage or idea; do not summarize or generalize. The week you are presenting on a novel, you do not need to write a response.

**Research Paper (4500 words: 15 pp):**

For your final research paper you are responsible for writing on one of the novels we’ve read. If this course is fulfilling your pre-1900 requirement, you may not write on Coetzee. You are required to incorporate theory into your analysis. **Due: Dec. 19**
Your final grade will be arrived at as follows:

**Seminars:** 30%
**Essay:** 40%
**Response Papers:** 25%
**In-class participation:** 5%

**Course Policies**

**Laptops:** I do not permit the use of laptops in the classroom unless a student has been granted accommodation by the Student Learning Centre. Please be sure to bring print copies of the criticism we are reading, which you can download from the links provided.

**Plagiarism**
The Senate of the University of Western Ontario writes:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage of a text from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. **Plagiarism is a major academic offense.** See the Scholastic Offence Policy in Western Academic Calendar: [http://uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf](http://uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

**Mental Health:** Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western [http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/](http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Download from JSTOR:

Shukin, Loewen-Schmidt, Ferguson, Festa, Probyn, Group Phi,

Course pack:

Anderson (in *Cosmopolitics*), Aravamudan, Miller, Vermeule
After 2000 Selected Readings

1. Cosmopolitanism


2. New Materialism/OOO Theory


3. Theories of Mind


5. Affect Theory


Jensen, Katharine Ann and Miriam L. Wallace, eds. Special Topic: Emotions PMLA 130.5 (October 2015).


6. New Formalism


7. Animal Theory/ Animal Studies


