

ENGL W4302
English Literature II: Satire
517 Hamilton (MW2:40-3:55)

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The eighteenth century is perhaps the last time when most of Britain's major writers chose to work in the genre of satire. In this course, we will read both verse and prose satires, paying special attention to the relationship between politics and language and to the role of gender. Is satire more conducive to conservative or progressive political impulses? How does satire as a genre allow poets to challenge the authority of their precursors? Readings include Rochester, Swift, Pope, Gay, Fielding, Johnson, satires on women and responses by women writers ("lady's dressing room" poems), eighteenth-century adaptations of Horace and Juvenal, romantic-period satire (Byron, Shelley, Austen); we will also read George Orwell's "Politics and the English Language" and *1984*.

I will be available in regular office hours on Tuesdays from 4:15-4:45, on Thursdays from 3-4:45 and by appointment. Our TA for this class is Ivan Lupić (il2177@columbia.edu).

BOOKS (at the CU Bookstore):

Byron, *Don Juan* (Penguin)
Fielding, *Jonathan Wild* (Oxford World's Classics)
Orwell, *1984* (Penguin)
The Poems of Alexander Pope (Yale)
The Writings of Jonathan Swift (Norton)

There will be a xeroxed course pack for purchase at Village Copier (Amsterdam branch), but it is not yet available; you'll receive an e-mail via Courseworks when it's ready to be picked up (probably sometime next week). Readings marked with an asterisk (*) below will either be in the course pack or else available through ECCO, Eighteenth-Century Collections Online, in which case you'll receive a link by e-mail the week before. In those cases, please print out a copy of the text so that you can bring it to class for discussion.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

(1) Four short written assignments (2-3pp.), for which I will hand round questions the class before the assignment is due (questions will also be posted on Courseworks); (2) an in-class midterm exam; (3) a take-home final exam. You will not receive letter grades on the short assignments, and I will ask you to hand them all back in (with our comments) when you submit your final exam; your final grade for the course will be based in a 2/3 – 1/3 proportion on the four written assignments and the two exams, with a small boost for good class participation. Attendance is not required, but it is strongly recommended, and we will take attendance for the sake of having some sort of record. I have a no-tolerance policy on academic dishonesty, and if I detect plagiarism of any kind you will receive a failing grade for the class and I will report it to the dean's office.

- 1/21 Introduction
- Swift, “The Lady’s Dressing Room”; Montagu, “The Reasons that Induced Dr. Swift to Write a Poem Called the Lady’s Dressing Room”
- 1/26 Swift, *Gulliver’s Travels*, books 1-2
- 1/28 Swift, *Gulliver’s Travels*, book 4
- Assignment #1 (2-3pp.) due in class**
- 2/2 Swift, “An Argument Against Abolishing Christianity”; *Mandeville, “A Modest Defence of Public Stews”
- 2/4 *Defoe, *The Shortest-Way with the Dissenters*; Swift, “A Modest Proposal”; *Orwell, “Politics and the English Language”
- 2/9 Orwell, *1984*
- 2/11 Orwell, cont.
- 2/16 *Rochester, “The Imperfect Enjoyment,” “On King Charles,” “A Ramble in St. James’s Park,” “A Satyr against Reason and Mankind,” “The Maimed Debauchee”; *Behn, “The Disappointment”
- Assignment #2 (2-3pp.) due in class**
- 2/18 *Dryden, “Absalom and Achitophel”; *Dryden, “MacFlecknoe”; Swift, “The Battel of the Books”
- 2/23 Swift, *A Tale of a Tub*
- 2/25 *Selections from *Memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus*; begin reading selections from Pope’s *Dunciad Variorum*
- 3/2 Pope, *Dunciad Variorum* (selections)
- 3/4 Midterm exam
- 3/9-3/11 CLASSES CANCELED
- 3/16-3/18 NO CLASSES – SPRING BREAK
- 3/23 *Buckingham, *The Rehearsal*

3/25 *Fielding, *The Author's Farce*

Assignment #3 (2-3pp.) due in class

3/30 *Gay, *The Beggar's Opera*

4/1 *Fielding, *Pasquin*

4/6 Fielding, *Jonathan Wild*

4/8 Fielding, *Jonathan Wild*, cont.

4/13 Pope, "The Rape of the Lock," "Moral Essay: To a Lady"

Assignment #4 (2-3pp.) due in class

4/15 Swift, "The Progress of Beauty," "The Furniture of a Woman's Mind," "The Lady's Dressing Room," "Strephon and Chloe," "Cassinus and Peter," poems on Stella's birthdays

4/20 Swift, "Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift," *"Cadenus and Vanessa"

4/22 *Johnson, "London," "The Vanity of Human Wishes," *Life of Pope*

4/27 *Wordsworth, Preface to *Lyrical Ballads* (sel.), *"Peter Bell," *"The Thorn"; *Shelley, "Peter Bell III"

4/29 Byron, *Don Juan* (selections)

5/4 *Austen, early satires

Take-home final will be distributed on Friday, May 8 and due on Monday, May 11.