

ENG 329: Eighteenth Century Fiction

Dr. John Wiehl
Office: 209 South Hall
johnwiehl@gmail.com
(No phone calls please).

Block 5: January 12-February 4
24 Armstrong Hall
We will meet daily, 12:15-3pm.

Course description:

This course covers the early British novel, individualism, and the novels' early interaction with other generic forms such as letters, diaries, and poetry. We will problematize the classic "rise of the novel" narrative through recent scholarship that suggests the novel came to preeminence through engagement with other genres rather than at their expense. Our focus will be on both literary history and wider cultural studies. We will consider religious debates, the question of class, education for men and women, the role of gender in the development of the individual, and the readership for novels. This course is reading intensive—be prepared to spend many whole days snuggled up with a book.

Primary Texts:

Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*
Fielding, *Tom Jones*
Selections from Richardson's *Pamela*
Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*
Austen, *Sense and Sensibility*

Your **grades** will be based on your performance on both in class work and longer assignments. The breakdown for the worth of these assignments is as follows:

Participation 10%
Quizzes 15%
8 reading responses 30%
Leading class 15%
Midterm 15%
Final 15%

The **quizzes** are simple and will involve a few questions. This is my way of ensuring that students complete all the reading on time and have a good understanding of it. If you are not on time for class you will not be allowed to take the quiz.

The **reading responses** are short papers due periodically throughout the semester. Developing any idea from class discussion (and not just summarizing it) is a good way to start thinking about

these papers. They should be one and a half to two pages each, contain evidence (in the form of quotations), and have a single, central idea. You can be a bit outlandish with these topics, but the quality of the idea and the writing will be graded. You do not have to “prove” your point, but you should be able to suggest it vividly. These will be graded on a 10 point scale.

The **participation** grade is simple. You will receive credit for participating if you contribute anything at all to the discussion on any given day: a complex thought, clarification, any kind of question related to the assignment, etc. If you do not participate in the discussion you will receive no credit.

Twice in the block you will **lead class discussion**. You can use this as a chance to present some point from a reading response or take the class through a detailed reading of a poem or novel. You should be prepared with three discussion questions, which shall be turned in, and you should be prepared to lead discussion for between thirty minutes and an hour.

The midterm and final **exams** will be in class essay exams. They will ask you to use evidence from the texts to answer a couple longer questions relating to the theme of the course. They will draw on our discussions and readings. Please bring a blue book to class on the day of the exam.

Missing more than two classes will constitute reason for failure. Religious holidays and college events are the only things that count as excused absences (nota bene: **illness is NOT an excused absence**). Please notify me in advance if you will miss a class for either of the excused reasons. And, of course, missed quizzes and participation reflect negatively on those components of the final grade.

Cornell College expects all members of the Cornell community to act with **academic integrity**. An important aspect of academic integrity is respecting the work of others. A student is expected to explicitly acknowledge ideas, claims, observations, or data of others, unless generally known. When a piece of work is submitted for credit, a student is asserting that the submission is her or his work unless there is a citation of a specific source. If there is no appropriate acknowledgement of sources, whether intended or not, this may constitute a violation of the College’s requirement for honesty in academic work and may be treated as a case of academic dishonesty. The procedures regarding how the College deals with cases of academic dishonesty appear in *The Catalogue*, under the heading “Academic Honesty.”

Students who need **accommodations for learning disabilities** must provide documentation from a professional qualified to diagnose learning disabilities. For more information see cornellcollege.edu/disabilities/documentation/index.shtml

Students requesting services may schedule a meeting with the disabilities services coordinator as early as possible to discuss their needs and develop an individualized accommodation plan. Ideally, this meeting would take place well before the start of classes.

At the beginning of each course, the student must notify the instructor within the first three days of the term of any accommodations needed for the duration of the course.

Tentative reading schedule:

Please have each selection read *before* the class period it is due. Always read the notes to each work.

January

M/12 Course Introduction

T/13 Nancy Armstrong, *How Novels Think*, Introduction; Defoe to 97, stop at “From the 4th of July to the 14th”... this should conclude one of his religious experiences and he will start to survey the island further at the beginning of the next section.

W/14 Defoe to 200, stop at the paragraph beginning “About a Year and half after ...” He’s thinking about capturing a “savage;” at the start of the next reading he’ll capture Friday.

Reading response due

R/15 Defoe—to the end! Nancy Armstrong, *How Novels Think*, Chapter 1

F/16 Armstrong, ch 2; Richardson’s *Pamela* ALL PREFACES, Introductions, and letters Then the novel through “I am now come to SUNDAY” stop before “I am now come to MONDAY, the 5th Day of my Bondage and Misery;” Have a reading response drafted

M/19 Fielding’s *Tom Jones* through Book VI, Chapter 8 “The meeting between Jones and Sophia” **Reading response due**

T/20 Fielding through Book VIII, Chapter 9 “Containing several dialogues [...]” Spacks from *Novel Beginnings: Experiments in Eighteenth-Century English Fiction*

W/21 Through Book X **Reading response due**

R/22 Through Book XII; Ian Watt, from *The Rise of the Novel*

F/23 Through Book XV **Reading response due**

M/26 Fielding—to the end! Midterm exam

T/27 Radcliffe’s *The Romance of the Forest* Volume I

W/28 Volume II; **Reading response due**

R/29 Volume III; Claudia Johnson, from *Equivocal Beings*

F/30 Austen’s *Sense and Sensibility*, Volume I; **Reading response due**

February

M/2 Volume II Claudia Johnson, from *Jane Austen: Women, Politics, and the Novel* **Reading response due**

T/3 Austen—to the end!

W/4 **Reading response due** Final exam in COLE LIBRARY Room 108; 10 am meeting time.