

English 035: The Rise of the Novel

- instructor: Rachel Sagner Buurma
- semester: Fall 2022
- time: MWF 10:30-11:20
- location: LPAC 301
- office: LPAC 302 and Parrish W201
- office hours: W 2-4 in LPAC 302 and by appointment
- email: rbuurma1@swarthmore.edu
- eligible for GSST and INTP credit; fulfills the 18th/19th c distribution in the English major and minor; is a W(riting) class.

Why do we read novels? Why did people in the past read novels? How has the history of novel-reading shaped the way we think about ourselves, about other people, and about the world? In order to answer these questions, this course covers the long history of the novel in English considered as an aesthetic form, a record of social life, and a scaffolding on which we build our experience of the world.

We will examine the development of the novel from its origin in a multiplicity of different literary genres in the eighteenth century to its Victorian incarnation as a “realist” and middle-class form. We will then go on to examine the appropriation of the novel as high art by Modernist writers and its subsequent return to its multi-genre roots later in the twentieth century. All along, we will watch as novels shift - and sometimes expand - what kinds of characters' identities they include and center. We will trace changes in the novel's treatment of themes such as publicity and privacy, the role of gender and sexuality in social life, the significance of monetary exchange, and the proper relation between the author and his or her text. We will pay close attention to questions of realism and fantasy, and will think about how the novel's form and content work together to create literary meaning.

We will do all this through a close attention to careful reading of landmark canonical novels and authors, a survey of the main critical and theoretical approaches to the novel, and an investigation of printing and publication history. At the same time, we will question the existing “canon” of novels and ask how we might choose the novels on our syllabus differently.

In addition to reading canonical novels and watching the core concepts of the genre unfold over the course of three centuries, we will play with early editions of old books in digital and physical form and explore text analysis techniques for the “[distant reading](#)” of [large corpuses of novels](#) in order to question all kinds of accounts of [the novel's “rise.”](#) We will also ask how the novel's production, circulation, reception, and materiality – how it was composed, printed, published, bought, sold, borrowed, and read - might offer us a counter-narrative to more conventional interpretations of the novel and its origins.

We will also spend some time asking what forms and mediums carry on the core functions of the novel today. This class seeks to test a new argument: that some of the most important functions the novel performed in the past are carried on today not by novels, but by social media practices and platforms. By asking questions about the relation between the history of novelistic form and the forms of contemporary social media, we will see if we can uncover both some major continuities and some very significant differences between the social and aesthetic functions of novels and social media platforms.

By the end of the semester you will be able to close read a novel (and explain why, given the history of close reading and novels, this is a strange thing to do); tell multiple stories about the history of prose fiction in English and construct your own; understand the place of literary criticism in literary history; construct a corpus and perform basic text analysis on it; and interpret material form as aspect of literary meaning.

This class is suggested for current and future readers, writers, critics, and reviewers of fiction, fans of experimental-genre literary criticism, aspiring librarians and information scientists, and students interested in dipping a toe into some humanities applications of computational techniques.

Week 1: *Robinson Crusoe* (1719)

August 29

- welcome and introduction
- the rise of the novel in title pages (presentation)
- "Rise"? "Novel"? Survey course? Genre course?
- canon and archive: How does what we are reading in this course [compare](#) with other similar courses taught elsewhere?

August 31

- *Robinson Crusoe*, 3 (Preface)-56
- George Lukacs, paragraph from *The Theory of the Novel* (in class)
- close reading a novel (in class handout)
- Social Media Lecture 1: The Novel and Social Media
- Writing Assignment #1 assigned

September 2

- *Robinson Crusoe*, continued
- selection from Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel*
- Text Exercise 1 assigned

Week 2: *Robinson Crusoe* (1719)

September 5 - Labor Day, NO CLASS

September 7

- *Robinson Crusoe*, 57-241
- republication history of *Robinson Crusoe*
- Social Media Lecture 2: Everyday People are Celebrities, Too
- strategies for reading criticism
- <http://www.harkavagrant.com/index.php?id=286>
- Writing Assignment #1 due; Writing Assignment #2 assigned

September 9

- *Robinson Crusoe* continued (possibly also begin reading *Pamela*)
- Catherine Gallagher, "The Rise of Fictionality," pp. 336-349, 361
- Text Exercises #1 due; Text Exercise #2 assigned

Week 3: *Pamela* (1740)

September 12

- *Pamela*, 11-238
- sentences

September 14

- *Pamela* chapter summary (pdf)
- *Pamela* 476-503
- Social Media Lecture 3: Fictional Characters Make You Real
- Writing Assignment #2 due

September 16

- Nancy Armstrong, from *Desire and Domestic Fiction*
- Text Exercise #2 due; Text Exercise #3 assigned

Week 4: *Pamela* and *Shamela* (1741)

September 19

- *Shamela*, all; bring *Pamela* text back to class as well
- paragraphs

September 21

- *Shamela*, continued
- Writing Assignment #2 revision due; Writing Assignment #3 assigned

September 23

- McKeon, "Generic Transformation and Social Change"

Week 5: *Evelina* (1778)

September 26

- *Evelina*, 1-200
- NO CLASS

September 28

- *Evelina*, 200-250
- talk about *Tristram Shandy*
- Ignatious Sancho letters, excerpt
- Ignatious Sancho biography <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/4ef3af4d2c944f8f8d5b583a8423431e>
- Social Media Lecture 4: Questions of Truth and Questions of Virtue Signaling
- Writing Assignment #3 due

September 30

- *Evelina*, 250-300
- Jurgen Habermas, from *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*
- Text Exercise #3 due

Week 6: *Evelina* (1778) continued

October 3

- *Evelina*, 300-450
- Free indirect discourse and narrative monologue handout based on Cohn, *Transparent Minds* and Ferguson, "Jane Austen, Emma, and the Impact of Form"
- essay structure

October 5

- no class
- Writing Assignment #3 revision due; Writing Assignment #4 assigned

Thursday, October 6: extra office hours tba

October 7

- Evelina, 300-450
- Social Media Lecture 5: Privacy Policies
- Dorrit Cohn handout (Dropbox)
- Text Exercise #4 Assigned

Week 7: October Holiday

Note: read *Northanger Abbey* and *A Woman of Color* (selections).

Week 8: *Northanger Abbey* (1778) and *The Woman of Colour* (1808)

October 17

- *Northanger Abbey*, 36-240 (all)
- *The Woman of Color*, pages 53-107, 188-189
- mid-semester: review of where we have been and where we are going
- background (in class): Peter Fryer, from *Staying Power: the History of Black People in Britain*; G. Carter Woodson, from "Some Attitudes in English Literature"

October 19

- *Northanger Abbey*, continued
- excerpt from *Mansfield Park*
- reminder of Dorrit Cohn handout on narrated monologue and free indirect discourse
- Writing Assignment #4 due

October 21

- *Northanger Abbey*, continued
- *The Woman of Color*, continued
- Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, from *Decolonizing the Mind*
- Benedict Anderson, from *Imagined Communities*
- Text Exercise #4 due; Text Exercise #5 assigned

Week 9: *The Moonstone*

October 24

- *The Moonstone*, first half

October 26

- *The Moonstone*, continued
- Social Media Lecture 6: Other People Hold You in Mind
- + Michel Foucault, from *Discipline and Punish*

- D.A. Miller, from *The Novel and the Police* (chapter 2, 41-45, 52-57)
- final paper/project assigned
- Writing Assignment #4 revision due; Writing Assignment #5 assigned

October 28 - NO CLASS

- Professor Buurma at a conference

Week 10: *The Moonstone*, second half

October 31

- *The Moonstone*, second half
- Social Media Lecture 7: We Are Watched From Above

November 2

- Exercise 6 assigned
- *The Moonstone*, continued
- Edward Said, from *Orientalism*
- Gretchen Gerzina, from *Black Victorians, Black Victoriana*
- Writing Assignment #5 due

Thursday, November 3: extra office hours tba

November 4

- *The Moonstone*, continued
- Roland Barthes, "The Reality Effect"

Week 11: Henry James, *Daisy Miller*

November 7

- *Daisy Miller*, all

November 9

- *Daisy Miller*, continued
- Social Media Lecture 8: Novel Platforms
- Writing Assignment #5 revision due; Writing Assignment #6 assigned

November 11

- *Daisy Miller*, continued
- Jameson, "The Realist Floor-plan"
- Text Exercise #5 due; Text Exercise #6 assigned

Week 12: Virginia Woolf, *To The Lighthouse* (1927)

November 14

- *To The Lighthouse* first half

November 16

- *To The Lighthouse*
- Writing Assignment #6 PLAN due

November 18

- *To the Lighthouse*

Week 13: *To The Lighthouse*, finish

November 21

- *To The Lighthouse*, continued
- Erich Auerbach, "The Brown Stocking" from *Mimesis*
- Discuss criticism exam

November 23

- *To The Lighthouse*, continued
- **Social Media Lecture 8: The Realist Detail**
- Text Exercise #6 due

November 25

- Thanksgiving Break; read *Winter in the Blood*, including Louise Erdrich's introduction.

Week 14: James Welch, *Winter in the Blood* (1974)

November 28

- *Winter in the Blood*

November 30

- exercise 8 due
- N. Scott Momaday and Tom King, "Literature and the Native Writer"
- Writing Assignment #6 DRAFT due

December 2

- In-class criticism exam

Week 15: *Winter in the Blood*

December 5

- *Winter in the Blood*
- Sterling HolyWhiteMountain, "On Culture Shock," *New Yorker* interview (2021)

December 7

- The end of the novel

- Conclusions

Final papers/projects due by midnight, Dec 17

Texts and Assignments

Course texts: novels and short stories

- Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. ISBN: 9780199553976
- Samuel Richardson, *Pamela*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. ISBN: 978-0199536498
- Eliza Haywood and Henry Fielding, *Anti-Pamela and Shamela*. Toronto: Broadview Press, 2004. ISBN: 155111383X
- Frances Burney, *Evelina*. London: Penguin. ISBN: 978-0140433470
- Anonymous, *The Woman of Colour*. Edited by Lyndon J. Dominique. Broadview. ISBN: 978-1551111766
- Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey*. Penguin. ISBN: 978-0141439792
- Wilkie Collins, *The Moonstone*. Penguin. ISBN: 0140434089.
- Henry James, *Daisy Miller and Other Tales*. Penguin. ISBN: 978-0141389776
- Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse* Harvest Books ISBN: 0156907399
- James Welch, *Winter in the Blood* Penguin. ISBN: 978-0143105220

These books, unless otherwise noted, are available at the Swarthmore bookstore. You are also welcome to buy these books online or at a different store. Be aware that you need to have your own copy of the specific edition of each of the books listed above. Sadly, ebook readers are not yet robust enough for the lightening-fast page-turning and passage-navigating we will be doing in the class, so they are not an alternative to printing pdfs or buying books, unless of course you are using an e-reader or other technology because of a documented accessibility requirement.

Course texts: criticism

- Georg Lukacs, from *The Theory of the Novel* (1916)
- Ian Watt, from *The Rise of the Novel* (1957)
- Catherine Gallagher, "The Rise of Fictionality" (2006)
- Jürgen Habermas, from *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1962; English translation 1989)
- Roland Barthes, "The Reality Effect" (1968)
- Benedict Anderson, from *Imagined Communities* (1983)
- Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, from *Decolonizing the Mind*
- N. Scott Momaday, "The Morality of Indian Hating" (1964)
- Michel Foucault, "Panopticism" from *Discipline and Punish* (1975; English translation 1977)
- Dorrit Cohn, from *Transparent Minds* (1978)
- Michael McKeon, "Generic Transformation and Social Change: Rethinking the Rise of the Novel" (1985)
- Fredric Jameson, "The Realist Floor-plan" (1985)
- Frances Ferguson, from "Rape and the Rise of the Novel" (1987)
- Nancy Armstrong, from *Desire and Domestic Fiction* (1987)
- D.A. Miller, from *The Novel and the Police* (1988)
- Erich Auerbach, from *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature* (1946; English translation ?)
- Edward Said, from *Orientalism* (1978)
- Sterling HolyWhiteMountain, "On Culture Shock," *New Yorker* interview (2021)

All of the critical readings will be available in our Dropbox. I will be inviting you to the Dropbox shortly; if you prefer to use an email addresses other than your Swarthmore one, make sure you let me know.

Please be sure to print out the critical texts and bring them to class with you on the relevant days.

Additional reading

While it is in no way necessary for you to read ANY of these additional texts (except potentially during preparation for your final paper), in the "extra reading" course documents folder you will find some lists of texts should you wish to do more reading on a particular novel, or on the history of theory of the novel more generally. You should also feel free to consult me about what additional reading might best fit your interests.

Reading assignments

Because novels are, almost by definition, long, some of our reading assignments will necessarily be lengthy. Weekly reading assignments will generally be between 150 and (much less often) 250 pages of novel (between about 25,000 and 100,000 words) and between 5 and 20 pages of secondary reading. We all read different texts in different ways at different rates; on average, a college student will probably read 30-40 pages of novel an hour and 10-20 pages of criticism an hour; this estimated average reading pace includes note-taking and some time for pausing, reflection, and rereading. So for example our first week you will read 50 pages of novel and five pages of criticism, and should therefore plan on 2-3 hours of reading. In our second week - an example of a longer assignment than usual - you will read 200 pages of novel and 15 pages of criticism, and so you should plan on setting aside 6-7 hours of reading. (All assignments for this class should more or less fit within the guideline of three hours of out of class work for every fifty minutes of in-class work; on average, a class that meets for three hours a week will require 9-10 hours of work outside the classroom on average.)

I recommend that you look at the syllabus and plan to start reading longer assignments ahead of time. There may be reading quizzes - covering both novels and critical/theoretical readings - as necessary. There will also be optional reading labs. Readings that are not in the bookstore are available on Dropbox.

Shorter writing assignments

This series of five short (between 1-2 page and 4-5 page) writing assignments will build on writing skills introduced in class to give you experience writing in a variety of genres with connections to our novels (tutorial, close reading, report, review). Details in class.

Final paper or project

Assignment #6 will incorporate secondary sources and some independent research (specifics of the assignment to be discussed further in class). It can take many different forms. You may choose to write a more traditional research paper; you may write a paper in the form of a longer book review; you may draft your own theory of the novel; you may create your own annotated syllabus for a "Rise of the Novel" course; you may build on our text analysis exercises to complete a project based in part or in whole on text analysis of a corpus; you may do something else. You will write a paper/project plan and have the chance to discuss it with me.

Writing Associates

Each of you will be assigned to a small WA group that will meet at least three times during the semester. The writing you will do in the small groups will help reinforce the writing practices and skills I will introduce in class.

Text Exercises

You will complete 6 short exercises designed to introduce you to some aspects of text analysis and text generation using computational methods. No previous experience is required. They are graded as complete/incomplete, but cumulative excellent and creative work on them will be noticed and rewarded in your overall participation grade. They are all available on <https://github.com/rbuurma/rise-2021> in the "Assignments" folder; responses should be posted on our Wordpress site.

Criticism exam

This short exam tests your knowledge of the critical and theoretical readings. It will take place during exam period, but it is worth only 10% of your final grade. We will devote a day to reviewing for it at the end of the semester. I will be very clear about the exam's

format and content; there will be no tricks. (Note: The average grade on this exam in years past has been an A-, an average usually composed of a number of perfect or near-perfect grades and a few low grades. The message is that, though many students find the idea being tested on literary criticism intimidating, if you do the work for this aspect of the class you are very likely to get a high grade.)

Informal writing and platforms: Wordpress, Google Docs, Dropbox

<https://www.rise2022.rachelsagnerbuurma.org/>

We will use this Wordpress site as the place we post our responses to the computational assignments; it is also our informal response-writing/link-and-image-sharing platform. I will invite you to create an account shortly. We will post our responses to exercises and other occasional short response assignments. You are also welcome - invited! encouraged! - to post links with comments, images, quick thoughts, etc as they occur to you. The site is protected by a password which I will give you in class (temporary note: that pword is IanWatt), so it is accessible only to us and to anyone else you share the password with.

To log in with your username and password, go here: <https://www.rise2022.rachelsagnerbuurma.org/wp-login.php>

We will use **Google Docs** will use for short writing assignments and drafts, and **Dropbox** for sharing pdfs of readings and for turning in final drafts of papers and projects. Instructions for setting up your Google Doc will come via email.

Weekly class format

Though this will certainly vary as needed, in general our Mondays will be dedicated to some overview of major questions and issues related to the week's novel along with contextualization and background, sometimes partially in the form of lecture but including discussion. Wednesdays we will tend to delve into particular passages in more depth and introduce a writing skill. Fridays we will discuss critical readings together (sometimes in smaller groups at first) before coming to a modicum of closure via those critical readings and briefly setting up for the following week. Fridays we will also sometimes discuss our computationally-assisted exercises. At the end of each class we will aim to briefly remind ourselves what we've learned, connect it back to previous concepts and texts, and record the results in some form.

Policies and Advice

Grading

- 20% in-class participation
- 15% exercises, posts, and quizzes
- 5% tutorial
- 10% close reading paper
- 10% review
- 10% report
- 10% criticism exam
- 20% final paper or project

Laptops and phones

This policy is constantly in flux for me across courses and semesters, but this year in this class I am going to ask that you do not use a laptop, tablet, or phone for note-taking during class time unless we specifically need one for our class activities. We may change this policy over the course of the semester. If you are a hardcore computer note-taker come discuss your strategy for preventing your computer from distracting you and I may make an exception. I'll also ask that you silence and put away your mobile phone for the duration of class. Disability accommodations requiring the use of a computer or other device are of course an exception.

Attendance and due dates

Because this is a discussion-oriented class, attendance is essential. Missing more than three class sessions will result in a lowered grade (1/3 of a grade per additional unexcused absence) unless you have a valid excuse confirmed by your advisor or class dean. HOWEVER, if you have symptoms of COVID or any other contagious illness, please DO NOT come to class and follow the College's COVID protocols! Late papers work the same way. Each of you has a single-use three-day-late pass; note that you have used it on the paper or assignment when you turn it in. After that and on other assignments, you will incur a penalty (1/3 of a grade per three days late) unless you have a similarly valid excuse. So if a paper is due on Friday midnight and you don't turn it in until the following Thursday evening, that's 2/3 of a grade late, making an actual B+ paper, for example, into a recorded B-.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a very serious offense. It includes both the direct copying of the words of another person without crediting him or her and paraphrasing the ideas of another person without giving credit. See the English department's guidelines on how to properly cite sources here:

<https://www.swarthmore.edu/english-literature/citing-your-work>

If you have any questions about how to properly cite another person's work, please do not hesitate to ask me. This is a topic we will also, of course, discuss in class.

Distribution requirement

This course fulfills the 18th/19th c distribution in the English major and minor. It is eligible for GSST and INPT credit. It also fulfills the College-wide Writing requirement.

Accommodations

I want to work to make sure that everyone in this class has the access to the materials, resources, and support they need in order to learn most effectively. You are always free to talk to me about your own situation. A key Swarthmore resource in this area is the Office of Student Disability Services. Their accommodations policy is here:

If you believe you need accommodations for a disability or a chronic medical condition, please contact Student Disability Services via email at studentdisabilityservices@swarthmore.edu to arrange an appointment to discuss your needs. As appropriate, the office will issue students with documented disabilities or medical conditions a formal Accommodations Letter. Since accommodations require early planning and are not retroactive, please contact Student Disability Services as soon as possible. For details about the accommodations process, visit the Student Disability Services website. You are also welcome to contact me privately to discuss your academic needs. However, all disability-related accommodations must be arranged, in advance, through Student Disability Services.

Dean's Discretionary Fund and Dean's Office resources for basic needs

If, after exhausting the TAP resources, purchasing your textbooks or other materials for this or any other class present a serious financial difficulty for you, you should be aware of the [Dean's Discretionary Fund](#) and other resources such as the Course Book Collection in Underhill Library in Lang Music.

The Dean's Office describes the fund this way:

The spirit of this funding is primarily to support emergency circumstances and priority is given to students in the highest financial need tiers. Funding is usually limited to under \$500 and most grants are under \$300. Please note the Dean's Office may not be able to fulfill all requests.

Examples of eligible non-academic requests include, but are not limited to, expenses associated with emergency medical, dental, vision procedures, unanticipated trips home due to a family emergency, and various fees related to postgraduate opportunities.

The Student Life office at Swarthmore is very committed to making sure that all students having living situations that support their ability to work and live here successfully. If you find that you are having sustained difficulties with your food or housing situation and believe that this may affect your course performance, you should contact your class dean; you are also free to contact me if you wish so that I can help you find the support you need.

If you have trouble accessing the Discretionary Fund or other resources in the Dean's Office, please feel free to come speak with me so that I can help.

Syllabus acknowledgements

The first version of this course was inspired by [Sanjay Krishnan's](#) syllabus for his Rise of the Novel class. Some of the other syllabi I have read while constructing this one are listed [on my Pinboard](#).

The archival version of our syllabus will be deposited in our Dropbox folder. The most up-to-date copy of our syllabus and exercises will be available on github: <https://github.com/rbuurma/rise-2021>

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