

Shaping Identity in the Long Eighteenth Century

ENG 4936 | Spring 2022 | SECTION M168

Meeting times: T7, R7-8 | Classroom: CBD 0212

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Office hours: TBD

Course description

Note: This is an advanced seminar involving a substantive reading load. You will be expected to read an average of 200 pages a week, including texts with a considerable level of theoretical complexity. Frequent participation will be a requirement.

Combining literature and social and intellectual history, this course will consider how a range of eighteenth-century authors reflected on the problem of individual identity. Our governing question will be: how are identities defined and challenged by the cultures and social norms in which they take shape? What was it like to be Black or Jewish in predominantly white Christian cultures? What did it mean to be a woman in societies that closely policed the range of acceptable female behaviors? How were identities differently imagined by insiders and outsiders? And what did it mean to be American from an eighteenth-century European perspective? In order to examine these questions, we will be pairing historical and theoretical works with a wide variety of eighteenth-century literary sources. These will include fictional narratives by Henry Fielding, the Abbé Prévost, and Maria Edgeworth, as well as semifictional and nonfictional narratives by James Boswell, Frances Burney, Olaudah Equiano, and St. John de Crèvecoeur.

Readings

Abbé Prévost, *Manon Lescaut*, trans. Angela Scholar. Oxford: OUP, 2009. **ISBN:** 978-0199554928.

James Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson*, ed. Christopher Hibbert. London: Penguin, 1986.
9780140431162.

Maria Edgeworth, *Belinda*, ed. Linda Bree. Oxford: OUP, 2020. **ISBN:** 978-0-19-968213-3.

Maria Edgeworth, *Harrington*, ed. Susan Manly. Peterborough: Broadview, 2004. ISBN:
9781551114071.

Bundock, Michael, *The Fortunes of Francis Barber*. New Haven: Yale, 2021. **ISBN:** 9780300260960.

Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*, ed. Werner Sollors. New York: Norton, 2001. **ISBN:** 9780393974942.

Mary Prince, *The History of Mary Prince. A West Indian Slave. Related by Herself*, ed. Moira Ferguson. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011. **ISBN:** 978-0472084104.

J. Hector St John de Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer*, ed. Susan Manning. Oxford: OUP, 2009. ISBN: 978-0199554744.

Optional:

Frances Burney, *Journals and Letters*, ed. Peter Sabor. London: Penguin, 2001. **ISBN:** 978-0140436242.

Course Schedule

WEEK	TUESDAY	THURSDAY
1		Jan 6
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dror Wahrman, excerpts from <i>The Making of the Modern Self</i>
2	Jan 11	Jan 13
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Abbé Prévost, <i>Manon Lescaut</i>, 1–82 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Abbé Prévost, <i>Manon Lescaut</i>, 83–146
3	Jan 18	Jan 20
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ James Boswell, <i>The Life of Samuel Johnson</i>, 35–122, plus the “Introduction” by Christopher Hibbert (7–28) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ James Boswell, <i>The Life of Samuel Johnson</i>, 125–192
4	Jan 25	Jan 27
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ James Boswell, <i>The Life of Samuel Johnson</i>, 195–280 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ James Boswell, <i>The Life of Samuel Johnson</i>, 283–342
5	Feb 1	Feb 3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Henry Fielding, <i>The Female Husband</i> (available on Canvas) ▪ Jen Manion, selections from <i>Female Husbands: A Trans History</i> (42 pages) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maria Edgeworth, <i>Belinda</i>, 1–62 ▪ Susan Lanser, “Bodies and Sexuality: Sex, Gender, and the Limits of Enlightenment” (25 pages)
6	Feb 8	Feb 10
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maria Edgeworth, <i>Belinda</i>, 63–192 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maria Edgeworth, <i>Belinda</i>, 193–260
7	Feb 15	Feb 17
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maria Edgeworth, <i>Belinda</i>, 261–380 ▪ Frances Burney, “Journal Letter to Esther Burney” (14 pages) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maria Edgeworth, <i>Belinda</i>, 381–437 ▪ Appendix 2: pp. 444–450

8	Feb 22	Feb 24
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maria Edgeworth, <i>Harrington</i>, 67–141, plus letters 1–3 from Appendix A (297–300) ▪ William Shakespeare, excerpts from <i>The Merchant of Venice</i> (Act 3, Scene 1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maria Edgeworth, <i>Harrington</i>, 142–192 ▪ Todd M. Endelman, “The Jews of Great Britain (1650–1815)”
9	Mar 1	Mar 3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maria Edgeworth, <i>Harrington</i>, 192–295, plus Appendix A, letters 4–5 (300–303) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Homework. No class meeting.
10	Mar 8	Mar 10
	Spring Break	
11	Mar 15	Mar 17
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Michael Bundock, <i>The Fortunes of Francis Barber</i>, 1–68 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Michael Bundock, <i>The Fortunes of Francis Barber</i>, 69–163
12	Mar 22	Mar 24
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Michael Bundock, <i>The Fortunes of Francis Barber</i>, 164–218 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Olaudah Equiano, <i>The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano</i>, 5–70
13	Mar 29	Mar 31
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Olaudah Equiano, <i>The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano</i>, 70–134 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Olaudah Equiano, <i>The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano</i>, 134–178
14	Apr 5	Apr 7
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mary Prince, <i>The History of Mary Prince</i>, 55–125, plus “Introduction” by Moira Ferguson 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mary Prince, <i>The History of Mary Prince</i>, Appendixes (127–166)
15	Apr 12	Apr 14
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, <i>Letters from an American Farmer</i>, 1–83, plus the “Introduction” by Susan Manning (vii–xxxvii) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, <i>Letters from an American Farmer</i>, 83–150

Apr 19

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■ J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer*, 151–217