

Thinking through Fiction: The Novel of Ideas, 1700-1820

LIT 4930: | Spring 2020

Meeting times: T8-9, R9 | Classroom: MAT 0116

Instructor: Roger Maioli

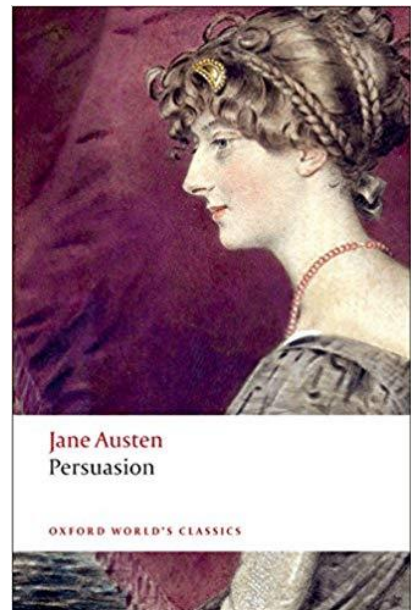
Email: rmaiolidossantos@ufl.edu

Office: Turlington Hall 4338

Office hours: Wednesday, 2-4 PM

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In eighteenth-century Britain the novel was a new literary genre. Targeted at a broad readership and offering exciting stories about daily life, they became popular in the early 1700s, displacing old English favorites such as sermon collections and travel books. With popularity, however, also came enemies. Moralists and educated critics complained that novels were frivolous and immoral, as they distracted readers from more serious readings, promoted mental laziness, and corrupted the youth of Britain. Many novels were indeed scandalous, while others were designed as light entertainment; but not all were like that. Already in the eighteenth century, novelists realized that narrative fiction could be used for more serious purposes. They discovered the potential of fiction to think through complex issues such as political corruption, ethics, the meaning of life, gender inequity, the French revolution, antisemitism, and ageing. Novels, in the hands of authors like Henry Fielding, Samuel Johnson, and Jane Austen, became forums for ideas. They brought the big issues of the day to readers uninterested in philosophical treatises, speaking as well to educated readers who realized that fiction could treat ideas in uniquely enlightening ways. This course will introduce you to the eighteenth-century novel in Britain by looking specifically at the novel of ideas. We will discuss how novelists from Fielding to Austen *thought through fiction* and invited their readers to do so as well. And we will consider the advantages and shortcomings of debating real-life issues through stories that never happened.



READINGS

We will be working with seven required books. I understand that books may be expensive and I don't want that to be an impediment for you taking the course or doing the readings. Accordingly, the course policy in this regard will be as follows:

a) *If you can afford and are interested in buying these books, please buy the editions listed below. If you already have a different edition of the same text, be welcome to use it. But if you are planning to buy it for the first time, buy the edition indicated in the list. Keep in mind that the titles by the Broadview Press are also available as cheaper ebooks on their website.*

b) *If you cannot afford or prefer not to buy these books, you are welcome to use alternative editions, including online texts. Several of our titles are available in different editions, and some are fully available online. If you have to choose, go for a cheap edition rather than an online text. The latter tend to be carelessly edited and seldom offer editorial notes, which in some cases you will need.*

c) *Whatever you do, avoid print-on-demand! A number of publishers today print and bind online texts and offer them for sale on Amazon. Do not buy those: they are oversized, riddled with errors, and unpleasant to read. If you are buying a printed book, follow these rules-of-thumb: (1) it has to have an editor, and (2) it has to come from a recognized press (Penguin, Oxford, Bedford, Norton, Hackett, Longman, Broadview, and so on).*

Text No. 1	Title: Jonathan Wild ISBN: 9780199549757 Cover: N/A	Author: Henry Fielding Publisher: Oxford Edition:	Copyright: This text is required
Text No. 2	Title: The History of Ophelia ISBN: 9781551111209 Cover: N/A	Author: Sarah Fielding Publisher: Broadview Edition:	Copyright: This text is required
Text No. 3	Title: The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abissinia ISBN: 9780199229970 Cover: N/A	Author: Samuel Johnson Publisher: Oxford Edition:	Copyright: This text is required
Text No. 4	Title: Memoirs of Modern Philosophers ISBN: 9781551111483 Cover: N/A	Author: Elizabeth Hamilton Publisher: Broadview Edition:	Copyright: This text is required
Text No. 5	Title: The Vagabond ISBN: 9781551113753 Cover: N/A	Author: George Walker Publisher: Broadview Edition:	Copyright: This text is required
Text No. 6	Title: Harrington ISBN: 97815511114071 Cover: N/A	Author: Maria Edgeworth Publisher: Broadview Edition:	Copyright: This text is required
Text No. 7	Title: Persuasion ISBN: 9780199535552 Cover: N/A	Author: Jane Austen Publisher: Oxford Edition:	Copyright: This text is required

Any additional sources will be made available to you through Canvas.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The requirements for this course fall under five heads: (a) attendance and participation, (b) quizzes, (c) weekly responses, (d) a midterm examination, and (e) a final essay. These five requirements will be weighed as follows:

Attendance and participation:	20%
Quizzes:	20%
Weekly responses:	20%
Essay project:	20%
Final essay:	20%

Final grades, in turn, will be based on the following scale:

	A	93–100	A-	90–92.9	
B+	87–89.9	B	83–86.9	B-	80–82.9
C+	77–79.9	C	73–76.9	C-	70–72.9
D+	67–69.9	D	63–66.9	D-	60–62.9
E	0–59.9				

Here are further details about each requirement:

a) Attendance and participation. You begin the semester with 85 points (the equivalent of a B). You then get extra points for participating in class discussion and you lose points for any of the following reasons: disruptive behavior in class, undue use of the internet during class, or unexcused absences. With regard to the last item, you are entitled to two unexcused absences during the semester. (Absences on the first week of class count towards that total!) Each additional unexcused absence will reduce your A&P score by a third of a letter — for instance, from 88 (B+) to 85 (B). **Important: Six or more unexcused absences will result in failure. Let me say this again: if you miss six classes without a justification, you will fail the course.**

b) Quizzes. There will be a total of seven quizzes. Check the course schedule for specific dates. When calculating your final grade for the quizzes, I'll drop your lowest two scores. In other words, only your top 5 scores will count towards your final grade.

c) Weekly responses. Over the course of the semester you will write twelve short responses to the readings (150-200 words). You will post them on Canvas starting the third week of class. I will explain them in class, but each response should do one of three things: offer a personal reading of a passage or text, identify a feature of the source that seems to call for an explanation, or pose a question for class discussion. Responses will not be graded for content, but regular submission counts for 20% of your grade. You are allowed to miss two of them without affecting your grade. Each additional response you miss will lower your response score by 10 points (from 100 to 90 and so on).

d) Essay project. You will be writing a two-page project outlining a potential topic for your final essay. You will receive detailed instructions on this assignment on Week 6. **The project will be due on March 10** at 11:59 PM. Late projects will lose a third of a letter grade per day that they are late.

e) Final essay. This will be a 1400-1600 words essay in which you will respond to one of several prompts I will provide you with. You will receive detailed instructions on this essay on Week 13. **The essay will be due on April 22 at 11:59 PM.** Late essays will lose a third of a letter grade per day that they are late.

See next page for the Course Schedule.

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK	TUESDAY	THURSDAY
1. Jan 7, 9	INTRODUCTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Johnson, <i>The History of Rasselas</i>, Chapters I to XIV (pp. 7–38)
2. Jan 14, 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Johnson, <i>The History of Rasselas</i>, Chapters XV to XXXVI (pp. 38–79) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Johnson, <i>The History of Rasselas</i>, Chapters XXXVII to XLIX (pp. 79–109)
3. Jan 21, 23	<p style="color: #00838f;">Group 1, Response 1</p> <p style="color: #00838f;">Quiz 1, on <i>Rasselas</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ H. Fielding, <i>Jonathan Wild</i>, Book I (pp. 7–45) 	<p style="color: #00838f;">Group 2, Response 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ H. Fielding, <i>Jonathan Wild</i>, Book II (pp. 46–84)
4. Jan 28, 30	<p style="color: #00838f;">Group 1, Response 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ H. Fielding, <i>Jonathan Wild</i>, Book III (pp. 85–124) 	<p style="color: #00838f;">Group 2, Response 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ H. Fielding, <i>Jonathan Wild</i>, Book IV (pp. 125–181)
5. Feb 4, 6	<p style="color: #00838f;">Group 1, Response 3</p> <p style="color: #00838f;">Quiz 2, on <i>Jonathan Wild</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ S. Fielding, <i>The History of Ophelia</i>, to Chapter XVII (pp. 35–100) 	<p style="color: #00838f;">Group 2, Response 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ S. Fielding, <i>The History of Ophelia</i>, Chapters XVIII to XXX (pp. 100–160)
6. Feb 11, 13	<p style="color: #00838f;">Group 1, Response 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ S. Fielding, <i>The History of Ophelia</i>, Chapters XXXI to XLII (pp. 161–226) 	<p style="color: #00838f;">Group 2, Response 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ S. Fielding, <i>The History of Ophelia</i>, Chapter XLIII to the end (pp. 226–277) ▪ Appendix D: A Victorian Critic of <i>Ophelia</i> (pp. 293–296)
7. Feb 18, 20	<p style="color: #00838f;">Group 1, Response 5</p> <p style="color: #00838f;">Quiz 3, on <i>The History of Ophelia</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Walker, <i>The Vagabond</i>, Vol. I, Chapters I to V (pp. 51–109) 	<p style="color: #00838f;">Group 2, Response 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Walker, <i>The Vagabond</i>, Vol. I, Chapters VI to IX (pp. 110–144)
8. Feb 25, 27	<p style="color: #00838f;">Group 1, Response 6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Walker, <i>The Vagabond</i>, Vol. II, Chapters I to VI (pp. 147–211) 	<p style="color: #00838f;">Group 2, Response 6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Walker, <i>The Vagabond</i>, Vol. II, Chapters VII to IX (pp. 211–245) ▪ Appendix C (pp. 373–382)
9. Mar 3, 5	SPRING BREAK	
10. Mar 10, 12	<p style="color: red;">Project due today, at 11:59 PM.</p> <p style="color: #00838f;">Quiz 4, on <i>The Vagabond</i></p> <p style="color: #00838f;">Group 1, Response 7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hamilton, <i>Memoirs of Modern Philosophers</i>, Vol. 1, beginning to Chapter XV (pp. 31–98) 	<p style="color: #00838f;">Group 2, Response 7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hamilton, <i>Memoirs of Modern Philosophers</i>, Vol. 1, Chapter XVI to Vol. 2, Chapter I (pp. 98–158)

<p>11. Mar 17, 19</p>	<p>Group 1, Response 8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hamilton, <i>Memoirs of Modern Philosophers</i>, Vol. 2, Chapters II to X (pp. 158–236) 	<p>NO CLASS MEETING. HOMEWORK:</p> <p>Group 2, Response 8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hamilton, <i>Memoirs of Modern Philosophers</i>, Vol. 2, Chapter XI to Vol. 3, Chapter III (pp. 236–302)
<p>12. Mar 24, 26</p>	<p>Group 1, Response 9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hamilton, <i>Memoirs of Modern Philosophers</i>, Vol. 3, Chapters IV to Conclusion (pp. 302–389) ▪ Review from <i>The British Critic</i>, p. 408 	<p>Group 2, Response 9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Edgeworth, <i>Harrington</i>, Chapters I to V (pp. 67–120) ▪ Two letters between Edgeworth and Rachel Mordecai (pp. 298–299)
<p>13. Mar 31, Apr 2</p>	<p>Group 1, Response 10</p> <p>Quiz 5, on <i>Memoirs of Modern Philosophers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Edgeworth, <i>Harrington</i>, Chapters VI to XI (pp. 120–192) 	<p>Group 2, Response 10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Edgeworth, <i>Harrington</i>, Chapters XII to XV (pp. 192–252)
<p>14. Apr 7, 9</p>	<p>Group 1, Response 11</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Edgeworth, <i>Harrington</i>, Chapters XVI to XIX (pp. 253–295) ▪ Four letters between Edgeworth and Rachel Mordecai (pp. 300–303) ▪ Appendix D, “Contemporary Reviews of <i>Harrington</i>” (pp. 318–323) 	<p>Group 2, Response 11</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Austen, <i>Persuasion</i>, Vol. 1, Chapters I to VI (pp. 6–47). You may skip the “Biographical Notice” if you want.
<p>15. Apr 14, 16</p>	<p>Group 1, Response 12</p> <p>Quiz 6, on <i>Harrington</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Austen, <i>Persuasion</i>, Vol. 1, Chapters VII to XII (pp. 47–98). 	<p>Group 2, Response 12</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Austen, <i>Persuasion</i>, Vol. 2, Chapters I to VI (pp. 99–140).
<p>16. Apr 21</p>	<p>Quiz 7, on <i>Persuasion</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Austen, <i>Persuasion</i>, Vol. 2, Chapters VI to XII (pp. 140–203). ▪ Appendix A, “The Original Ending of <i>Persuasion</i>” (pp. 204–213) <p>CONCLUSION</p>	<p>Final paper due on April 22, at 11:59 PM.</p>

ADDITIONAL COURSE POLICY

Cellphones and computers: Cellphones are strictly prohibited and should be kept turned off and out of sight during class. Computers are allowed with the wi-fi feature off. You may not access the internet in class, but you may use your computer for taking notes during lecture or for consulting electronic versions of the texts under discussion. Download all internet texts prior to use in class, so you can access them offline. All other uses are prohibited.

Punctuality: I will take attendance at the beginning of class. If you are not in class at that point, you will be counted as absent.

Plagiarism: All written assignments should be your own work. Plagiarizing the work of others (by copying printed or online sources without acknowledgement) is illegal, and you may fail the course if you plagiarize. If you have questions about how to document your sources, or if you want to make sure you are not committing plagiarism without realizing it, please ask me.

Special accommodations: Students with disabilities are encouraged to register with the Office of Student Service in order to determine appropriate accommodation. I will be pleased to provide accommodation, but students are responsible for notifying me at the beginning of the semester.

Counseling and Mental Health Resources: Students facing difficulties completing the course or who are in need of counseling or urgent help should call the on-campus Counseling and Wellness Center.

Sexual Assault and Harassment: Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are civil rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources here:

http://www.ufsa.ufl.edu/faculty_staff/fees_resources_policies/addressing_sexual_misconduct/reporting_sexual_misconduct/