

Englit 1150: Enlightenment to Revolution



Love, Power, and Enlightenment

Professor Courtney Weikle-Mills

Class Meeting: Thursday 6:00-8:30, Cathedral of Learning 242

Office Hours: Thursday 4:00-5:00 and by appointment, Cathedral of Learning 517C

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Course Description:

The Enlightenment was a period of radical change to the ways that people thought about authority, knowledge, justice, and humanity. Hallowed practices related to love, duty, and society also were thrown into upheaval, particularly as the Enlightenment gave way to various revolutions, national and social. While domination and love were considered to be compatible in the early seventeenth century, by the end of the period, they were no longer thought to be as closely connected: a change that affected and was effected by people of various ranks, including women, children, the lower classes, and slaves. This shift led to new questions related to gender, love, marriage, selfhood, and community. Some authors questioned whether love was still possible in an enlightened, revolutionary world, or whether individuals could be best free alone or in society. In this class, we will focus on how social and political views of power and love influenced literary forms, and vice versa.

Required Course Texts

The Portable Enlightenment Reader

Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*

Sarah Fielding, *The Governess*

Samuel Richardson, *Pamela*

Charlotte Turner Smith, *Desmond*

William Godwin, *Caleb Williams*
Several PDF readings on courseweb

Assignments:

Digital Commonplace Book (20%)

A commonplace book is a personal journal filled with quotes, reflections, and meaningful finds. Your commonplace book, located on courseweb, will have two parts:

- 1) For roughly half of the weeks in this class, you will collect ONE quote that you find compelling, useful, confusing, and/or powerful from our reading. For each quote, you will write a short reflection/analysis explaining why you chose the particular passage and what meanings (textual, historical, social, political, psychological, etc.) you can deduce from it. The point of this exercise is to keep a record of your reactions to the texts and to try out possible interpretations that you might further reflect upon in the class discussions and in your papers.
- 2) In addition to collecting quotes, at the beginning of the course, you will be assigned an identity (ex. landholder, slave, servant, child, etc.) associated with the period under study. Each week that you write, you will reflect briefly on how persons of your status are addressed (or not) by the literary works. To do this, you may need to briefly research expectations about persons of your status in the period. You may write in character, or not—and the quotes you choose can be ones your character would have picked (if you think your character was literate), or ones you just think are interesting.

Commonplace books have been shown to enhance student learning and improve overall grades! You will receive feedback on your commonplace book at some point early in the semester, but you will not receive a grade on it until the class is complete. There are fourteen possible weeks to write, but only seven entries are necessary to count for the commonplace book grade.

Midterm Short Paper (25%)

The midterm paper will be a 5-6-page paper on an assigned question/problem related to the material we have read. You will pick from several options of questions/problems on which to work. Your paper should make an argument in connection with your chosen question/problem and support it with textual evidence.

Final Paper (40%)

The culmination of your work for this class will be an 8-10-page page that articulates and defends a specific, controversial thesis within a sustained and effective critical analysis of a literary or cultural text that we have read. It is designed to allow you to pursue your own interests within the confines of the course and its material. The paper should explore a well-defined and sufficiently

narrow problem of your own design having to do with an assigned reading or readings in this syllabus. As with the midterm, the **argument** is the most important aspect of any paper. You can choose to do a close reading or a research paper—but you must convince your reader that your central claim about meaning in the text is correct by using evidence, which you analyze in such a way that it demonstrates that your thesis is true.

Participation (15%)

I believe that students learn best when they engage actively with the reading materials, formulate their own questions and comments, present their ideas coherently to others, and seek and incorporate feedback from peers as part of their own learning process. My expectation is that you will contribute to our explorations regularly by reading thoroughly and thoughtfully, by coming prepared with your insights and questions, by voicing your thoughts, and by responding respectfully to those of others. Please note: part of being a good student is knowing how to be engaged even by things that are not your special interest, so I want and expect full engagement from every student. If you need help with this, please let me know. Perhaps I can help come up with some way into the material that will peak your interest. I do know that some students are naturally quieter in class than others, and if this is the case with you, please feel free to communicate your interest in other ways (by emailing me, coming to office hours, etc.)

Grading Rubrics:

Writing

A: You did what the assignment asked you to do at a very high quality level. Work in this range shows all the qualities listed below for a B, but it needs very few revisions and/or demonstrates that you took extra steps to be original or creative in developing content. The writing and style are not only clear, but also engaging. Since careful editing and proofreading are essential in writing, papers in the A range must be largely free of typos and grammatical errors.

B: You did what the assignment asked of you at a mostly high quality level. Work in this range needs some revisions; however, it develops a strong argument or purpose, supports it with ample evidence and/or other supporting materials, and is organized well. The writing and style are straightforward and clear.

C: You did what the assignment asked of you. Work in this range needs major revisions, but it presents an argument or purpose, attempts to support it, and uses some degree of organization/structure. The work may contain some grammatical errors.

D: You did what the assignment asked of you, but at a poor quality level. Work in this range needs full-scale revision. The argument and purpose may be significantly flawed or difficult to discern, the evidence incomplete, or the organization unclear.

Attention to style is often nonexistent or chaotic. The work may contain multiple grammatical errors.

F: An F is usually reserved for people who don't do the work. However, if your work shows little understanding of the needs of the assignment, you will receive a failing grade.

Participation

A: Comes to class prepared, having read the material. Has clearly thought about the reading and, ideally, will have outlined some potential points or ideas to contribute prior to class. Contributes thoughtfully and often to the discussion (at least 2-3 times per class meeting) or communicates with professor frequently about ideas. Asks good questions and tries to answer those asked by others.

B: Comes to class prepared, having read the material. Has thought about how to make sense of the materials and what connections might be drawn among texts. Contributes usefully to the discussion (at least 1 time per meeting) and/or discusses material with the instructor. Asks good questions and responds respectfully to others.

C: Comes to class prepared, having read the material. May not often contribute, but appears engaged and interested in what others have to say. Occasionally voices thoughts or questions about the reading (at least 3-4 times per semester).

D: Comes to class prepared only some of the time. Shows little evidence of having thought about the material before class. May appear disinterested; only very occasionally contributes to the discussion (1-2 times per semester).

F: Sleeps, texts, surfs the internet, or is otherwise disengaged. Does not contribute anything useful to discussion.

Course Policies:

Technology Policy:

Technology, while a wonderful invention in many ways, provides many temptations for distraction. To create a good learning environment in which everyone can concentrate on our course material, you must turn off cell phones and laptop computers when class begins. Occasionally, computers can be used at the teacher's discretion—for instance, when we have read online materials. Using computers inappropriately might result in a lowered participation grade and, at the teacher's discretion, an unexcused absence. It is your responsibility to stay engaged, and to keep track of any absences you incur.

Attendance—Unexcused Absences:

People (i.e. you!) are essential for producing a vibrant and stimulating learning environment; therefore, your regular attendance is required. Because you may

sometimes have to miss class due to unforeseen circumstances, you are allowed two unexcused absences without penalty. It is expected that these two absences will cover commitments related to friends, family, and other classes; illnesses that are not serious enough to warrant going to the doctor; bus/car trouble or repair; job conflicts; and other undocumented personal commitments. You should take this into account when using your two unexcused absences and ration them accordingly. You do not need to provide an excuse for these absences, but you should find out from your classmates what you missed.

Each unexcused absence after two will lower your final grade by one-third of a letter grade (ex. B to B-). Please note: Sleeping in class can be counted as an unexcused absence at the teacher's discretion. **Five or more unexcused absences will result in a failing grade for the course.** It is your responsibility to know how many days you have missed and to adjust your expectations of a grade accordingly. Please note that leaving early or coming late (by more than 10 minutes) will count as half of an absence unless cleared with me.

Excused Absences:

Excused absences, such as those for documented illness; major family emergency or tragedy (i.e. death, hospitalization, serious illness, car accidents, etc.); religious observance; or travel for university-sponsored sports and organizations, will not affect your grade. Excused absences require permission and proper documentation—if a problem cannot be documented, it cannot be counted as excused, so be sure to keep doctor's notes, receipts, prescriptions, programs, travel schedules, etc. (anything that could possibly serve as "proof"). If you are unsure about whether the absence will be excused, I urge you to contact me as soon as possible and ask. It is your responsibility to know whether an absence will count as excused and to act accordingly.

Late Assignments:

Late assignments are discouraged and are allowed only with my permission. If you do not secure an extension beforehand, you will be penalized one letter grade per calendar day that an assignment is late, including the due date if not received on time.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism and other violations of the University's Academic Integrity Code are completely unacceptable and inexcusable in this class. As a general rule, this means that if I catch you plagiarizing or committing some other violation of the Code, you will receive a failing grade for the assignment. Due to sites such as Turnitin.com, catching plagiarism gets easier and easier. The possible benefits of violating the Code are simply not worth the risks—do not take the chance. You can avoid unintentional violations by familiarizing yourself with the Code (<http://www.as.pitt.edu/faculty/policy/integrity.html>) and by asking whether a particular practice is permissible or not.

Writing Center:

The Writing Center is staffed by knowledgeable and friendly consultants who can work with you on your writing at any stage in the process—from discussing an initial assignment to revising for a final draft. You may use this free resource for this class and throughout your college career. Please see:

<http://www.writingcenter.pitt.edu>.

Disabilities:

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and the Office of Disability Resources and Services (DRS) as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.

Schedule:

All reading must be completed before the class meeting for which it is listed. I reserve the right to make changes to the schedule if the need arises.

9/3 Introductions**9/10 What Is Enlightenment and Who Was Enlightened?**

Selections from *Portable Enlightenment Reader*

Immanuel Kant, “What is Enlightenment?”

Jean Le Rond D’Alembert, “The Human Mind Emerged from Barbarism”

Denis Diderot, “Encyclopédie”

Marquis De Condorcet, “The Future Progress of the Human Mind”

Article on Your Assigned Status—See Courseweb

9/13 Enlightenment Views of Political Authority

Sir Robert Filmer, Excerpt from *Patriarcha* (PDF)

John Locke, Excerpt from *Two Treatises on Government* (PDF)

9/24 Enlightenment Man

Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*

Defoe, “Of Solitude” (PDF)

10/1 Slavery

Thomas Bellamy, “The Benevolent Planters” (PDF)

Matthew Lewis, Excerpt from *Journal of a West India Proprietor* (PDF)

Olaudah Equiano, Excerpt from *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano* (PDF)

10/8 The New World of the Child

Andrew O’Malley, “A Coach and Six” (PDF)

In-Class: Meet in Library to see Chapbook and Newbery Books

10/15 Educating the Enlightened Child

John Locke, "Some Thoughts Concerning Education" in *Portable Enlightenment Reader*

Sarah Fielding, *The Governess*

10/16 (Friday) Midterm Paper Due to Courseweb by Midnight

10/22 Enlightenment Woman

Samuel Richardson, *Pamela* (p. 31-312)

10/29 Gentlemen, Barbarians, Rebels

Samuel Richardson, *Pamela* (p. 313-516)

Mary Rowlandson, Captivity Narrative

Jamaican revolt map at <http://revolt.axismaps.com/>

11/5 Revolution!

Samuel Johnson, "Taxation No Tyranny" at

<http://www.samueljohnson.com/tnt.html>

Edmund Burke, Excerpt from *Reflections of the Revolution in France* (PDF)

Mary Wollstonecraft, Excerpt from "A Vindication of the Rights of Women" (PDF)

Selections from *Portable Enlightenment Reader*

"The American Declaration of Independence"

Thomas Paine, "The Rights of Man"

11/12 A Revolutionary Love Story

Charlotte Turner Smith, *Desmond* (p. 45-212)

11/19 The Romantic Hero and Heroine

Smith, *Desmond* (p. 213-414)

Jen Camden, "Silence and Substitution: Romance, Revolution and Empire in *Desmond*" (PDF)

11/26 NO CLASS—Thanksgiving Holiday

12/3 The Gothic Underbelly of Enlightenment

William Godwin, "Enquiry Concerning Political Justice" in *Portable Enlightenment Reader*

William Godwin, *Caleb Williams* (p. 3-102)

12/10 Anti-Society

Godwin, *Caleb Williams* (p. 103-311)

12/17 Finals Papers Due to Courseweb by Midnight