UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Summer Examinations 2014

Eighteenth-Century Literature – Finalists

Time allowed: 3 hours

There are THREE sections. You must answer ONE question from each section. You should spend an equal amount of time one each section as they carry equal marks.

Read carefully the instructions on the answer book and make sure that the particulars required are entered on each answer book used.

Do not repeat material from the assessed essay or between sections of the exam.

**SECTION A:** Answer ONE of the following questions.

1. John Cleland, author of *Fanny Hill*, publically accused Sterne of having written too bawdy a book. In what sense might he have defended his own novel as superior in this regard to *Tristram Shandy*? How might others have connected the two novels?
2. How does *Fanny Hill* contribute to eighteenth-century perceptions of love?
3. What does Boswell’s diary tell us about masculinity in the eighteenth century more generally?
4. What are Hugh Trevor’s main complaints about society and how are they presented in Holcroft’s novel?
5. To what extent can *Tristram Shandy* be read as a novel about the life of books?
6. Thinking historically in terms of the eighteenth-century reader and the context in which the poem was published, offer an account of why “Elegy in a Country Churchyard” was such an important poem.

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**Section B:** Answer ONE of the following Questions.

1. Focusing on one or more of the authors who report on international travel (Wollstonecraft, Montagu, Defoe), describe how distance from England might be seen to contribute to the construction of English identity.
2. In what ways does it make sense to think of *Emma* as a novel in which the achievements or problems of eighteenth-century literature are reflected?
3. Below you will find Swift’s 1732 poem “The Lady’s Dressing Room.” What does it tell us about the perceptions of objects at the time?
4. What are the advantages of telling a tale from the perspective of a speaking object?
5. Describe in detail, and with justification relating to your reading of the play, the sets you’d use if you were producing *She Stoops to Conquer*?

**Section C:** Answer ONE of the following questions.

1. In an important article, the historian Henry Abelove argues that eighteenth-century sexuality had much less to do with sexual intercourse than we now imagine. Using 2 or 3 texts from the course, agree or disagree with this argument.
2. The Enlightenment has long been cast as the age of rationality. Write an essay in which you use at least 3 texts to dispute this.
3. Are objects or subjects the real heroes of eighteenth-century literature?

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1. With Turner we see one reader reporting on his own experience of reading. What do you think eighteenth-century readers were looking for in texts and why?
2. Is representing the self always a matter of performance? What evidence is given for this in 2 or 3 of the texts you’ve read? (You may also discuss this in particular relation to gender.)
3. What is the relationship between life writing (Boswell, Montagu, Wollstonecraft, Turner) and the development of the novel?
4. There is a shop at the heart of Emma. In what sense does consumerism alter the place of literature in eighteenth-century life?

**END**

The Lady's Dressing Room

Jonathan Swift 1732

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| Five Hours, (and who can do it less in?)  By haughty *Celia* spent in Dressing;  The Goddess from her Chamber issues,  Array'd in Lace, Brocades and Tissues.  *Strephon*, who found the Room was void,  And *Betty* otherwise employ'd;  Stole in, and took a strict Survey,  Of all the Litter as it lay;  Whereof, to make the Matter clear,  An Inventory follows here.     And first a dirty Smock appear'd,  Beneath the Arm-pits well besmear'd.  *Strephon*, the Rogue, display'd it wide,  And turn'd it round on every Side.  On such a Point few Words are best,  And *Strephon* bids us guess the rest;  But swears how damnably the Men lie,  In calling *Celia* sweet and cleanly.  Now listen while he next produces,  The various Combs for various Uses,  Fill'd up with Dirt so closely fixt,  No Brush could force a way betwixt.  A Paste of Composition rare,  Sweat, Dandriff, Powder, Lead and Hair;  A Forehead Cloth with Oyl upon't  To smooth the Wrinkles on her Front  Here Allum Flower to stop the Steams,  Exhal'd from sour unsavoury Streams,  There Night-gloves made of *Tripsy*'s Hide,  Bequeath'd by *Tripsy* when she dy'd,  With Puppy Water, Beauty's Help  Distill'd from *Tripsy*'s darling Whelp;  Here Gallypots and Vials plac'd,  Some fill'd with washes, some with Paste,  Some with Pomatum, Paints and Slops,  And Ointments good for scabby Chops.  Hard by a filthy Bason stands,  Fowl'd with the Scouring of her Hands;  The Bason takes whatever comes  The Scrapings of her Teeth and Gums,  A nasty Compound of all Hues,  For here she spits, and here she spues.  But oh! it turn'd poor *Strephon*'s Bowels,  When he beheld and smelt the Towels,  Begumm'd, bematter'd, and beslim'd  With Dirt, and Sweat, and Ear-Wax grim'd.  No Object *Strephon*'s Eye escapes,  Here Pettycoats in frowzy Heaps;  Nor be the Handkerchiefs forgot  All varnish'd o'er with Snuff and Snot.  The Stockings, why shou'd I expose,  Stain'd with the Marks of stinking Toes;  Or greasy Coifs and Pinners reeking,  Which *Celia* slept at least a Week in?  A Pair of Tweezers next he found  To pluck her Brows in Arches round,  Or Hairs that sink the Forehead low,  Or on her Chin like Bristles grow.     The Virtues we must not let pass,  Of *Celia*'s magnifying Glass.  When frighted *Strephon* cast his Eye on't  It shew'd the Visage of a Gyant.  A Glass that can to Sight disclose,  The smallest Worm in *Celia*'s Nose,  And faithfully direct her Nail  To squeeze it out from Head to Tail;  For catch it nicely by the Head,  It must come out alive or dead.     Why *Strephon* will you tell the rest?  And must you needs describe the Chest?  That careless Wench! no Creature warn her  To move it out from yonder Corner;  But leave it standing full in Sight  For you to exercise your Spight.  In vain, the Workman shew'd his Wit  With Rings and Hinges counterfeit  To make it seem in this Disguise,  A Cabinet to vulgar Eyes;  For *Strephon* ventur'd to look in,  Resolv'd to go thro' thick and thin;  He lifts the Lid, there needs no more,  He smelt it all the Time before.  As from within *Pandora*'s Box,  When *Epimetheus* op'd the Locks,  A sudden universal Crew  Of humane Evils upwards flew;  He still was comforted to find  That *Hope* at last remain'd behind;  So *Strephon* lifting up the Lid,  To view what in the Chest was hid.  The Vapours flew from out the Vent,  But *Strephon* cautious never meant  The Bottom of the Pan to grope,  And fowl his Hands in Search of *Hope*.  O never may such vile Machine  Be once in *Celia*'s Chamber seen!  O may she better learn to keep  "Those Secrets of the hoary deep!"     As Mutton Cutlets, Prime of Meat,  Which tho' with Art you salt and beat,  As Laws of Cookery require,  And toast them at the clearest Fire;  If from adown the hopeful Chops  The Fat upon a Cinder drops,  To stinking Smoak it turns the Flame  Pois'ning the Flesh from whence it came;  And up exhales a greasy Stench,  For which you curse the careless Wench;  So Things, which must not be exprest,  When plumpt into the reeking Chest;  Send up an excremental Smell  To taint the Parts from whence they fell.  The Pettycoats and Gown perfume,  Which waft a Stink round every Room.     Thus finishing his grand Survey,  Disgusted *Strephon* stole away  Repeating in his amorous Fits,  Oh! *Celia, Celia, Celia* shits!     But Vengeance, Goddess never sleeping  Soon punish'd *Strephon* for his Peeping;  His foul Imagination links  Each Dame he sees with all her Stinks:  And, if unsav'ry Odours fly,  Conceives a Lady standing by:  All Women his Description fits,  And both Idea's jump like Wits:  By vicious Fancy coupled fast,  And still appearing in Contrast.  I pity wretched *Strephon* blind  To all the Charms of Female Kind;  Should I the Queen of Love refuse,  Because she rose from stinking Ooze?  To him that looks behind the Scene,  *Satira*'s but some pocky Quean.  When *Celia* in her Glory shows,  If *Strephon* would but stop his Nose;  (Who now so impiously blasphemes Her Ointments, Daubs, and Paints and Creams, Her Washes, Slops, and every Clout, With which he makes so foul a Rout;)  He soon would learn to think like me,  And bless his ravisht Sight to see  Such Order from Confusion sprung,  Such gaudy Tulips rais'd from Dung. |