

English 766

Marilyn Francus, ENGL 766, Spring 2002, Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Studies Seminar

Professor Francus

English 766: Maternity and Monstrosity in Eighteenth-Century Literature

Spring 2002

Office: 443 Stansbury Hall

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 2:00-4:00 and by appointment

Office Phone: (304) 293-3107 X442

E-Mail: yfrancus@bellatlantic.net

January 15 Introduction

Excerpt from Ambroise Pare's *On Monsters and Marvels* (1573)

January 22 Fertility and Infertility in Restoration and 18th-Century Culture

Excerpts from *Aristotle's Masterpiece* (1694)

Paul Gabriel Bouce, "Imagination, pregnant women, and monsters in eighteenth-century England and France"

Roy Porter, "The Secrets of Generation Display'd:

Aristotle's Masterpiece in Eighteenth-Century England"

January 29 Midwifery and the Rise of the Male Gynecologist

Laurence Sterne, *Tristram Shandy* (1759-1767)g

Roy Porter, "A touch of danger; the man-midwife as sexual predator"

Adrian Wilson, "The Ceremony of Childbirth and its Interpretation"

February 5 Deformed Children and the Myths of Monstrosity

Alexander Pope, *The Dunciad* (1742)

Selection from *Martinus Scriblerus* (ca. 1714-1727)

Dennis Todd, *Imagining Monsters*, Ch. 1 (on the Mary Tofts case)

Marie Helene Huet, *Monstrous Imagination*, Ch. 3

February 12 Conduct Manuals and the Proper Mother, Part I

Marquis of Halifax, *Advice to a Daughter* (1688)

Selection from [Richard Allestree] *The Ladies Calling* (1673)

Selection from William Fleetwood's *Relative Duties of*

Parents and Children (2nd ed., 1716)

Selection from James Fordyce's *Sermons to Young Women* (5th edition, 1768)

First Short Essay Due

February 19 Conduct Manuals and the Proper Mother, Part II

Selection from Thomas Gisbourne's *Enquiry into the*

Duties of the Female Sex (4th ed. 1799)

Selection from Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792)

Christopher Flint, "Toward an Eighteenth-Century Anthropology"

Nancy Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction*, Chapters 1 and 2

February 26 Mothers, Nursing, and Wet Nurses

Excerpt from Samuel Richardson, *Pamela Part II* (1741)

William Cadogan, *Essay Upon Nursing* (1749)

Toni Bowers, "Female virtue and maternal authority in *Pamela, Part 2*"

Ruth Perry, "Colonizing the Breast: Sexuality and Maternity in Eighteenth-Century England"

March 5 Mother at Home

Oliver Goldsmith, *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1766)

March 12 Infanticidal Mothers

Trial reports from the Old Bailey (1660-1750)

Papers of the Mary Cook case: *The Cruel Mother* (1670); *Blood for Blood* (1670); *Inquest for Blood* (1670)

Jonathan Swift, *A Modest Proposal* (1728)

March 19 Abandoning Mothers, Part I

Daniel Defoe, *Moll Flanders* (1722)

Valerie Fildes, "Maternal Feelings Re-Assessed: Child

Abandonment and Neglect in London and Westminster"

Second Short Essay Due

March 26 Spring Break

April 2 Class Cancelled

April 9 Abandoning Mothers, Part II

Daniel Defoe's *Roxana* (1724)

Samuel Johnson's *Life of Savage* (1744)

Excerpt from Felicity Nussbaum, "'Savage' Mothers: Johnson's *Life of Savage*"

April 16 Spectral Maternity and Maternal Surrogacy, Part I

Frances Burney's *Evelina* (1778)

April 23 Spectral Maternity and Maternal Surrogacy, Part II

Sarah Fielding's *The Governess* (1749)

April 30 Session to workshop final essays

May 6 Final Essay Due

Course Texts: The novels required for the course (with the exception of Fielding's *The Governess*) are available at the WVU Bookstore. All other texts will be provided by the instructor.

Course Objectives:

1. To analyze representations of motherhood and monstrosity in eighteenth-century British literature.
2. To analyze representations of motherhood and monstrosity in conduct manuals, legal tracts, and gynecological texts so as to develop an understanding of the cultural framework in eighteenth-century British society.
3. To learn how to work with primary, archival texts.
4. To provide opportunities to exercise advanced critical thinking and writing skills.
5. To provide opportunities to pursue original research.

Course Requirements: 1 short (3-4 page) analysis of a critical, scholarly article

1 short (3-4 page) analysis of a primary text

1 research essay (15 pages).

Course Grade: Each short essay will count for 20% of your final grade. The research essay will count for 60% of your final grade.

Submission of Assignments

1. You may submit either the analysis of the critical article or the primary text on February 12th. I will expect the respondent assignment on March 19th. The order in which you choose to submit these two assignments is up to you.
2. It will be up to you to choose the critical article that you wish to write about. The article must focus on some aspect of maternity, monstrosity, biology, conduct in the Restoration or eighteenth century — or on a literary text that grapples with these issues in the period. Your essay should center on an analysis of the argument, and whether or not it is compelling (and why). Please do not summarize the author's argument in your essay. Please submit a copy of the article when you hand in the essay. (Note: the essay length is a suggestion. If you write a 5 or 6 page response to a critical article, that's fine; but I would not recommend a 15 page essay). If you are not certain if a particular article will fit the parameters of the assignment, please do not hesitate to ask.
3. It will also be up to you to choose a primary text from the Restoration or eighteenth-century to write about. I would suggest that the primary text should be no more than 10-20 pages long. The text must focus on some aspect of maternity, monstrosity, biology, or conduct — or it can be a literary text that grapples with these issues. You may choose a chapter of a conduct manual; a pamphlet on a monstrous birth; journal or diary entries from a Restoration or eighteenth-century parent, governess, wet nurse, or step-parent; ballads on wicked stepmothers; and so on. Your essay should focus on how the primary text illuminates your understanding of monstrosity and/or maternity in the period. Please

do not summarize the text in your essay. Please submit a copy of the text when you hand in the essay. (Note: the essay length is a suggestion. If you write a 5 or 6 page response to a text that's fine; but I would not recommend a 15 page essay). If you are not certain if a particular text will fit the parameters of the assignment, please do not hesitate to ask.

4. Please note that your final essay is an extended research paper. If you require help locating copies of primary or secondary texts, please do not hesitate to ask.
5. Please note that the last class session on April 30th is a workshop devoted to your final research essays. In order to make the most of this opportunity, I expect each member of the seminar to have a draft of their essay ready for distribution on April 23rd. Every member of the seminar should read all the essays, and be prepared to comment on them (*kindly* and *constructively*) for the last class. Your final research essay will be due the following Monday, May 6th.

Grading Criteria:

A — Excellent work; the assignments for this course have been completed in a professional and timely manner. The written assignments are clearly organized, choose compelling evidence to substantiate the analysis, and engage with the subject at hand in a thoughtful and thought-provoking manner. Written work requires no substantive or stylistic revisions.

B — Good work; the assignments for the course have been completed in a professional and timely manner. The written assignments show substantial engagement with the subject at hand, but the analysis is either partially incomplete, involving weak evidence, or manifests some difficulty with organization. Written work requires some substantive revisions, but few or no stylistic ones.

C — Average work; the assignments for the course have been completed, but not necessarily in a professional or timely manner. The written assignments show effort by the student, but the analysis is incomplete, includes inappropriate evidence (or a lack of evidence), or shows significant difficulties with organization. Written work requires significant substantive or stylistic revisions.

D - Less than average work; the assignments for the course have not been completed in a

professional or timely manner. The written assignments show a lack of effort on the part of the student, and a lack of engagement with the assignment (exam, quiz, or essay). Written assignments lack analysis, evidence, and organization; extensive substantive and stylistic revisions are necessary.

F — Inadequate work; the assignments for the course have not been completed. Written assignments, when submitted, show a significant lack of effort on the part of the student, and a lack of engagement with the assignment and the subject matter of the course. Such work is marked by the absence of analysis, evidence, and organization; engagement with the course materials is necessary before extensive revisions are even possible.

Please Note:

West Virginia University is committed to social justice. I concur with that commitment and expect to foster a nurturing environment based upon open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. Our University does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, color or national origin. Any suggestions as to how to further such a positive and open environment in this class will be appreciated and given serious consideration.

If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me and make appropriate arrangements with Disability Services (293-6700).