**English 180C: Technologies of Enlightenment**

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**Description:**  
In 1783, the *Berlin Monthly* sponsored an essay contest to answer the question: “What is Enlightenment?” Today, as we move through a world shaped by the ideas, discoveries and revolutions of the eighteenth century, the question is still just as important, although the answer is still no more apparent. In this class, we will re-examine the Enlightenment through the cultural, literary and, perhaps most importantly, technological revolutions that took place during the eighteenth century. While we will explore works by many of the major thinkers of this period, including David Hume, Jonathan Swift, Mary Wollstonecraft and Laurence Sterne, we will also look broadly at the incredible wealth of writing that came out of this period. The social, philosophical and scientific revolutions of the Enlightenment were accompanied by a dramatic and unprecedented increase in the number of books printed in England. The eighteenth century, therefore, saw a number of large and fundamental changes in how people thought and wrote. To attempt to recover a sense of these transformations, we will turn to our own new technologies of reading and writing. With the help of the Eighteenth Century Collections Online (ECCO) database, we will sample a wide variety of lesser known or forgotten texts. Whether these works became unpopular or outdated, whether they were censored or redacted or whether they were just too weird, they will help us recover a sense of what the Enlightenment was like to those who lived through it. By reading both famous and unknown texts from the eighteenth century, we will study and perhaps make more sense of the phenomenon of Enlightenment and its place in our own world.

**Texts:**  
Edmund Burke - A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful  
Margaret Cavendish - The Blazing World and other Writings  
Mary Wollstonecraft - A Vindication of the Rights of Woman  
David Hume - An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding  
Lawrence Sterne - The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman

* This course will divide its time between print texts and electronic texts in the ECCO database. Works listed on the syllabus and not included in the above list or in the anthologies will be made available on the course website or on E-reserve. Those under the heading of “ECCO” in each section are available online and will be linked from the class website. Selections from individual works will be given out the previous week and will be posted to the website and announced in class.
Work and Assignments:

1. Participation (online and in class)  20%
2. Presentation  20%
3. Short projects  25%
4. Term Paper  35%

Participation:

Participation in this class not only consists of in-class comments and questions (although these certainly are important and will count towards your grade), but also is dependent upon your participation in the online component of this course. On the class website, I will establish a separate description for each day’s texts, as well as separate message boards to which you will be able to post comments and start new threads of discussion. Your online entries, including forum comments and/or blogs, and any discussion that ensues, will contribute to your class participation. There is also an anonymous message board available for the class as a whole on which you can freely comment; however, comments here, positive or negative will (obviously) not be considered part of your participation. Additionally, the website entries for each text will be edited throughout the term to reflect our changing understanding of the writers and their works (and, since the final exam is cumulative, this process will help you to remember September’s texts in December!). You are all strongly encouraged to update these entries and anyone who adds or changes information will be given additional points towards their participation mark.

Presentation:

While each section of this course already lists a set of texts from ECCO that we will be reading, these texts barely scratch the surface of the possible resources available in the database. You are responsible, therefore, for locating and presenting one additional text from ECCO to the class that relates to a section of the course of your choice. These presentations of 5-7 minutes should introduce the rest of us to the text that you have chosen and briefly locate it within its cultural or critical milieu. All presentations will be given at the beginning of each class.

Short Projects:

Throughout the term, various class times will be devoted to a series of short projects designed to engage you with the ideas of the class, with the technology we will be using, or with the Enlightenment in general. These projects will take various forms (some will be individual and some will be group-based), but none should take you more than the class period to complete. More information will be given about these as the term progresses.

Final Paper:

You will be responsible for an 8-10 page final paper, due at the end of the term. More details will be given out in class.

Attendance:

Any excuse given in advance of a class will suffice, but extended absences will result in the reduction of your grade for the course on a per absence basis.
**Students with Documented Disabilities**

Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). Professional staff will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty dated in the current quarter in which the request is being made. Students should contact the OAE as soon as possible since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk (phone: 723-1066, URL: [http://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/oae](http://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/oae)).

**Honor Code**

The Honor Code is the University’s statement on academic integrity written by students in 1921. It articulates University expectations of students and faculty in establishing and maintaining the highest standards in academic work:

The Honor Code is an undertaking of the students, individually and collectively:

1. that they will not give or receive aid in examinations; that they will not give or receive unpermitted aid in class work, in the preparation of reports, or in any other work that is to be used by the instructor as the basis of grading;
2. that they will do their share and take an active part in seeing to it that others as well as themselves uphold the spirit and letter of the Honor Code.
3. The faculty on its part manifests its confidence in the honor of its students by refraining from proctoring examinations and from taking unusual and unreasonable precautions to prevent the forms of dishonesty mentioned above. The faculty will also avoid, as far as practicable, academic procedures that create temptations to violate the Honor Code.
4. While the faculty alone has the right and obligation to set academic requirements, the students and faculty will work together to establish optimal conditions for honorable academic work.

**Class Schedule:**

Class 1: Introduction

Class 2: What is Enlightenment?
   Immanuel Kant, “An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?”

Class 3: Enlightenment and the Public: The Periodical Press
   Selections from the Spectator and the Tattler; Selections from Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*; Selections from *the Female Spectator* and the *Rambler*
   ECCO: Will Honeycomb – *A letter from Will Honeycomb to The Examiner, occasion’d by the revival of The spectator* (1714)
Preface to *The Spectator* The ninth edition: to which is added, a large preface to *The Spectators and Guardians* (1728)

Advertisement to and Selections from *The beauties of the magazines, and other periodical works, selected for a series of years* (1772)

Class 4: Enlightenment and the Public continued

Class 5: Forms of Knowledge: Dictionaries and Encyclopedias

- Samuel Johnson – Selections From *A Dictionary of the English Language* and *The Vanity of Human Wishes*
- Diderot – Selections from the *Encyclopédie* – *the Stocking Machine*
- ECCO: V. J. Peyton – *The history of the English language; deduced from its origin, and traced through its different stages and revolutions* (1771)
- James Barclay – Selections from (and paratext of) *A complete and universal English dictionary on a new plan* (1782)
- Selections from *Encyclopædia Britannica; or, a dictionary of arts, sciences, &c.* (1778-83)
- James Boswell – *Ode by Dr. Samuel Johnson to Mrs. Thrale, upon their supposed approaching nuptials* London (1784)

Class 5: Forms of Knowledge continued

Class 6: Science and the Enlightenment

- Francis Bacon – Selections from *The New Organon*
- Isaac Newton – Selections from *Principia Mathematica*
- ECCO: John Ryland – Fellow of the Royal Society. *An easy and pleasant introduction to Sir Isaac Newton’s philosophy* (1772)
- Isaac Newton. *Proposals for publishing by subscription, dedicated by permission to the King* (1776)
- William Herschel – *On the construction of the heavens. Read at the Royal Society, February 3, 1785* (1785)
- Royal Society (Great Britain) – *The charters and statutes of the Royal Society of London, for improving natural knowledge.* (1728)

Class 7: Science and the Enlightenment continued

Class 8: The Science of Skepticism and the Scottish Enlightenment

- David Hume – *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*
- ECCO: Joseph Addison – *The evidences of the Christian religion. To which are added, several discourses against atheism* (1730)
- William Agutter – *On the difference between the deaths of the righteous and the wicked, illustrated in the instance of Dr. Samuel Johnson, and David Hume, Esq.* (1786)
- Anonymous – *A dissertation on Deistical and Arian corruption* (1742)
- John Constable – *Deism and Christianity fairly consider’d, in four dialogues. To which is added a fifth upon latitudinarian Christianity* (1739)
Eliza Fowler Haywood – A present for a servant-maid. Or, the sure means of gaining love and esteem (1744)
Hugh Blair – The importance of religious knowledge to the happiness of mankind. A sermon preached before the Society for propagating Christian Knowledge (1750)
Daniel Tnangam Alexander - A call to the Jews, by Daniel Tnangam Alexander, an eminent Jew, setting forth, in what surprising manner he was converted to Christianity (1770)
Thomas Paine – Atheism refuted; in a discourse to prove the existence of a God (1798)

Class 9: The Science of Skepticism continued

Class 10: Social Change: The Female Reader/Writer
Margaret Cavendish – The Blazing World
Jane Barker – A Patchwork Screen for the Ladies
Mary Wollstonecraft – A Vindication of the Rights of Woman
ECCO: Anonymous. An essay on the force of imagination in pregnant women. Addressed to the ladies (1772)
Thomas Gibbons – Selections from Memoirs of eminently pious women, who were ornaments to their sex, blessings to their families, and edifying examples to the Church and the world (1777).
Mary Ann Radcliffe – The female advocate; or an attempt to recover the rights of women from male usurpation (1799)
John Seally – Selections From The lady's encyclopedia: or, a concise analysis of the belles lettres, the fine arts, and the sciences (1788)
Eliza Fowler Haywood – The life of Madam De Villesache. Written by a lady, who was an Eye-witness of the greatest part of her adventures (1727)

Class 11: Social Change continued

Class 12: Satire and Social Change
John Dryden – MacFlecknoe
John Wilmot – “A Satire on Charles II,” “The Disabled Debauchee”
Jonathan Swift – “A Description of a City Shower,” “The Lady’s Dressing Room”
Alexander Pope – “The Rape of the Lock”
ECCO: Charles Abbott, Baron Tenterden – An Essay on the Use and Abuse of Satire (1786)
A Barrister of the Middle Temple – Female Taste: a satire. (1755)
Anonymous – Folly, a satire on the times. Written by a fool, and younger brother to Tristram Shandy. (1763)

Class 13: Satire and Social Change continued

Class 14: The Enlightenment on Stage
Henry Fielding – The Author’s Farce
ECCO: Anonymous – A representation of the impiety and immorality of the English stage. With reasons for putting a stop thereto: and some questions addressed to those who frequent the play-house (1704)
Jeremy Collier – A Short View of the Immorality and Prophaneness of the English Stage (1705)
Anonymous – A compendious history of the English stage, from the earliest period to the present time. Containing a candid analysis of all dramatic writings. (1800)
Anonymous – The advantages of theatrical entertainments briefly considered (1772)

Class 15: The Enlightenment on Stage continued

Class 16: The Novel Experiment
Laurence Sterne – The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman
ECCO: Clara Reeve – The progress of romance, through times, countries, and manners; ... in a course of evening conversations. (1785)
Anonymous – The annual register, or a view of the history, politics, and literature, for the year 1760. (1781)

Class 17: The Novel Experiment continued

Class 18: The Novel Experiment continued

Class 19: Aesthetics and the Sublime
Edmund Burke – Selections from A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful
James Thomson – “Winter” and “Hymn” from the Seasons
Thomas Gray – “Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard,” “Ode on the Death of a Favorite Cat”
ECCO: John Baillie – An essay on the sublime (1747)
Edward Young - Conjectures on original composition. In a letter to the author of Sir Charles Grandison (1759)
Hugh Blair – A critical dissertation on the poems of Ossian, the son of Fingal (1763)
Joseph Addison – Selections from The Spectator on Milton’s Paradise Lost
John Dennis – The grounds of criticism in poetry (1704)

Class 20: Aesthetics and the Sublime continued