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ENG 3805-001: Alien Encounters: Study of British Literature and Culture from 1660-1790

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**Alien Encounters:
Study of British Literature and Culture from 1660-1790**

**English 3805 (90808) / 3 credit hours
Fall 2014 / MWF 11:00am – 12:00pm / Coleman 3150**

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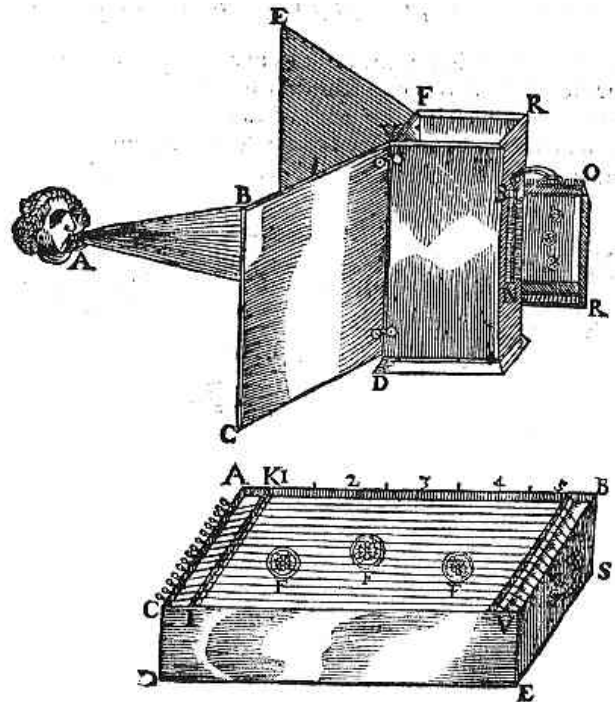
From the EIU Course Catalog: ENG 3805 - Study of British literature and culture from 1660-1790, from the end of the English Civil War to the start of the French Revolution. Writers may include Wycherley, Behn, Dryden, Swift, Pope, Manley, Fielding, Johnson, Gray, Equiano, Sheridan. (Group 3A) WI

ENG 3805 (F14)—Alien Encounters, 1660-1800

To simplify matters a bit, it would seem that aliens (by which I mean, for now, outer-space creatures) enter into popular culture in two distinct forms. There are the terrifying and destructive ones that want to take over our planet, or possibly our brains, and make us into slaves, food, or maybe even food for slaves. And then there are those aliens who have a quirky sense of humor, the ones who observe the oddities of human life on planet Earth through the curious eyes of impartial spectators—“Look at those Earthlings! So *weird!*”

In this course, we will investigate historical reasons for our tendency to see aliens according to these two categories. The period between the Restoration of the British monarchy in 1660 and the end of the eighteenth century was profoundly marked by moments of “alien encounter,” with strangers greeted by some as welcome guests and others as threatening intruders. These strangers took many forms: the foreigner from abroad (the tourist, the merchant, the slave), but also the stranger from within (the rural poor, the Celtic populations, and even sometimes women). Even nonhuman animals and things could be deemed alien or domestic, depending on one’s point of view.

In keeping with the theme of this course, the class will be taught by a resident alien.



What is Enlightenment?

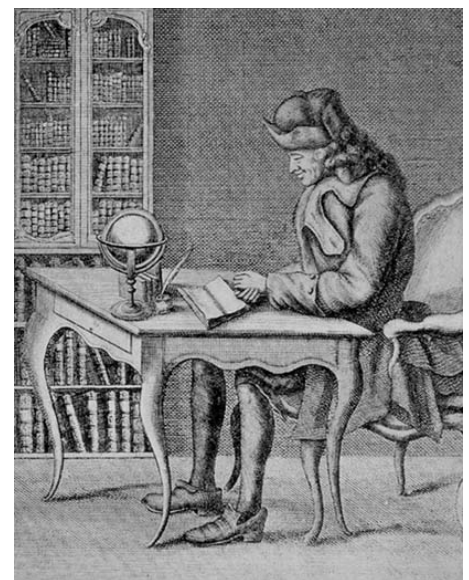
At its central core, thinkers of the 17th- and 18th-centuries showed a profound trust in the capacity of human beings to be rational. If humanity followed the basic principles of reason, a better world could and would be created on earth. There were of course differing ideas as to how best to come to grips with reason: some thinkers saw the abstract rules of mathematics as the governing principle, while others thought that sustained observation of the world should guide all scientific development.



William Congreve (d. 1729) points with derision at a frontispiece of Thomas Gray's Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard (1753)

As a simplified way of understanding these two competing theories, historians often call those who stressed the power of reasoning through abstract principles Rationalists (e.g., Descartes, Spinoza, and Leibniz), while those who stressed the gradual accumulation of data through the senses (scientific observation) Empiricists (i.e., Locke, Berkeley, Hume).

While these developments in the fields of philosophy and science (which at the time were considered basically the same thing) were progressing, there were parallel developments in literature. One of the most profound ways that the written word paralleled philosophical ideas was in the way in which many writers deemed it to be their duty to help shape the growing numbers of the literate public. By "shape," I mean that writers wanted to help instruct their readers on how to become productive and thoughtful members of a wider community working towards a better world.



Voltaire (d. 1774)

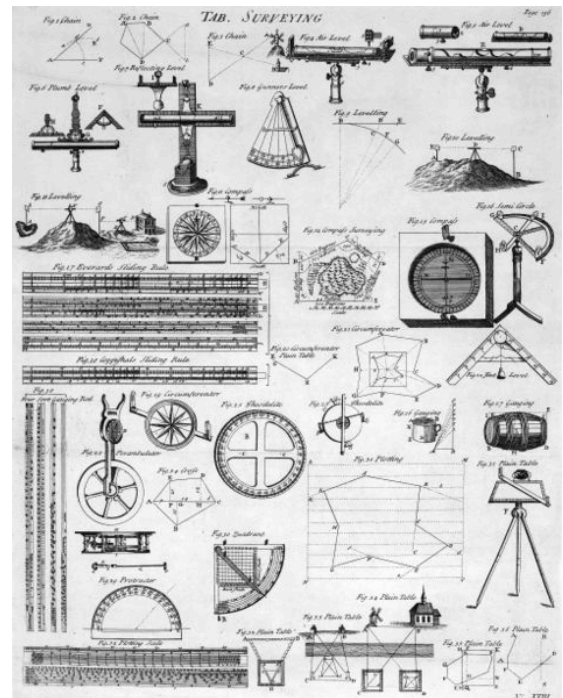
Sometimes these works took the form of didacticism, spelling out for readers how they should understand their place in the world, how the universe is governed, and how they should act in order to be “good” subjects (of the nation and/or of God). Sometimes these works, through satire, demonstrated how *not* to think and act, by demonstrating the irrational, the unproductive, and the overly selfish. Nevertheless—and once again, as a gross generalization—writers of the 17th- and 18th-centuries were focused on the principle of *improvement*, that through reason and/or observation, human beings could discover more and more about the universe, and find better and better means to build societies that improved upon the work of previous generations.

The Enlightenment was a period of profound trust in progress, and that, through rational means, the world would become improved through human endeavor. And the basic unit through which progress would manifest itself was through **the improvement of the individual**.

Is this course a Survey of Enlightenment Writing?

Yes. And no.

The image to the right, a “Table of Surveying” from Ephriam Chambers’s 1728 *Cyclopædia*, one of the first encyclopedias written in English, depicts various tools to use in measuring, mapping, designing, and observing. This entry from Chambers’s encyclopedia offers a pictorial overview—a “survey,” if you will—of instruments available to the surveyor of the 1720s. Chambers’s work is symptomatic of a new drive for collection and classification —of images, of words, of information—that began to appear with great regularity in eighteenth-century publications. Such a “drive to classify” eventually lead to what we would today call “anthologies,” or collections of literary works according to varying criteria—e.g., purpose, theme, genre, point of origin. In turn, these types of publications, in their sampling literary works, seem to function as the progenitors of institutional literary studies, the models for textbooks of “English Literature.”



This course offers, in a way analogous to the image from Chambers’s *Cyclopædia*, a “survey of instruments of surveying.” What I hope we can accomplish in this course is to create a survey of literary survey of the Restoration and Eighteenth-Century period. That is, I hope we can do a “survey” of some literature that contemplates acts of surveying, in the widest sense of the term “survey.” The term *survey* is not, however, restricted to acts of measuring geographical features: “survey” connects to varying forms of observation—from statistical sampling to archeological field study to governmental surveillance to gazing at the earth and the stars.

Texts

Damrosch/Sherman. *Longman Anthology of British Literature: The Restoration and Eighteenth Century*

Defoe, Daniel. *Robinson Crusoe*.

Equiano, Olaudah. *The Interesting Narrative*.

Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von. *The Sorrows of Young Werther*

Hume, David. *Selected Essays*.

Laclos, Pierre Ambroise François Choderlos de. *Les Liaisons dangereuses*



Requirements

Participation	10%
Tests	25% (5% each for 5 Tests)
Explication Paper	30%
Final Writing Project and Exam	35%

Explication Paper (30%)

The explication paper consists of two parts: you must choose two passages from the selection of texts for this class, and offer a substantial “explication” of the passages. In other words, you will write a close reading of two passages of your choosing, one of which must be from the texts we have NOT YET covered in the course. Early in the semester, I hope before the fourth week of class, you will inform me, in a conference, of the passages you have chosen to analyze. Both explication will be due around midterm, but you may turn them at any time before October 17. **It is important that you consider the Explication Paper as a chance to investigate your potential interest in certain texts for your final writing project.** More information will be forthcoming.

Final Writing Project (35%)

The final writing project will consist of a project proposal (100-150 words, due November 3), a brief annotation of a secondary source (approximately 250 words, due November 10), course a brief (five-minute), informal presentation of the work you have done in preparing your final project in the final week of class (required, but ungraded), and a final paper of 8-12 pages due on Wednesday, December 17 at 10:15am. If the project proposals due on November 3 are particular lacking, I reserve the right to ask of you a 150- or 250-word abstract of your paper at the time you submit it on You are not required, **although I would encourage you**, to use secondary research beyond the one annotation for this project. You will, however, need to do some reading about the writer of the text you choose, and the work from which it is drawn.

Tests and Final Exam (25%, 5% each for five tests)

The tests will verify your engagement with the class material through identification and short-answer questions. The last of these tests constitutes your final exam, and is held during the exam period, on Wednesday, December 17 at 10:15am.

Class Participation (10%)

There will be a number of required, yet ungraded assignments throughout the quarter, constituting a portion your class-participation grade. I will expect you to come to class having read the material, and with questions or comments on the readings. While reading the course material, you should pinpoint specific moments of difficulty, and come to class with questions about them. If you attend class without reading the texts carefully and completely, and your class-participation grade will suffer immensely. This point is spelled out in more detail under “Course Policies,” below.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The primary aim of this course is to introduce you—through reading, writing, and discussion—to the field of literary theory and cultural criticism. In this course, I expect that you will:

- communicate effectively in both oral and written (i.e., “alien”) encounters;
- reflect upon your own considerations about “alien encounters” and consider the viewpoints and arguments of others (such as aliens);
- be introduced students to some important British writers and movements from the Restoration period and eighteenth century;
- gain an awareness of some of the major historical events and figures, social and political forces, and economic and scientific insights that were represented and fashioned by a selection of texts of the period;
- develop basic strategies used by literary scholars such as attentive reading practices, research into previous critical and theoretical analyses, and effective argument;
- economically incorporate and correctly document sources of ideas and information.

COURSE POLICIES

LATE POLICY

Essays are due at the beginning of class. Late essays will be marked a full grade lower for every day late. Essays turned in a week past the deadline will be given a “zero.” In-class writing assignments and quizzes must be turned in by the end of class, and cannot be “made up” at a later date.

EMAILING POLICY

I want to get to know you and your work this semester. Thus I ask that you stop by my office during office hours (or other scheduled times) so that we can talk. Don’t be afraid to talk to me after class about setting up a time to discuss the readings, the assignments, or anything else you ‘d like to talk about. However, **DO NOT EMAIL ME TO ASK FOR AN “UPDATE” ON MISSED ASSIGNMENTS, OR TO EXPLAIN AN ABSENCE.**

ESSAY FORMAT

Your paper should be paper-clipped. It must include page numbers. Format: 12-point Garamond font, double-spaced, with one-inch margins. Always submit your papers using correct MLA (Modern Language Association) format.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in a failing grade on the assignment, if not for the course. I will follow the departmental policy on plagiarism:

“Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—‘The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one’s own original work’ (*Random House Dictionary of the English Language*)—has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignments, of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.”

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

ATTENDANCE, READING, PARTICIPATION, AND GRADING

Attendance is required in this seminar. **Every class absence will result in a 0.5% deduction (on a 100-point scale) from the total course grade.** As this is an upper-division literature course, there will be plenty of reading. Everyone begins with a virtual 10% in the “Attendance and Participation in Discussion” category. As I mention above, you will lose a full 0.5% for every missed class period, or required conference with me.

In terms of participation, there are roughly 45 class meetings, such that each one is “worth” a quarter-percentage point (45 meetings x 0.25% = ~10%). If I sense your lack of preparation and an unwillingness to contribute to class discussion, I will mark a deduction of up to 0.25% per class meeting. Similarly, if you do not perform well on the occasional in-class writing assignment or quiz, or if you text, I also will deduct up to 0.25% per class. **If you miss 6 or more classes, you will fail this course.**

UNIVERSITY-WIDE POLICIES

Academic integrity

Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU’s Code of Conduct (<http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php>). Violations will be reported to the Office of Student Standards.

Students with disabilities

If you are a student with a documented disability in need of accommodations to fully participate in this class, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services (OSDS). All accommodations must be approved through OSDS. Please stop by Ninth Street Hall, Room 2006, or call 217-581-6583 to make an appointment.

The Student Success Center

Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center (www.eiu.edu/~success) for assistance with time management, text taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call 217-581-6696, or go to 9th Street Hall, Room 1302.

Eastern Illinois University Learning Goals (<http://www.eiu.edu/learninggoals/revisedgoals.php>)

EIU graduates reason and communicate clearly as responsible citizens and leaders in diverse personal, professional, and civic contexts.

Critical Thinking

EIU graduates question, examine, evaluate, and respond to problems or arguments by:

1. Asking essential questions and engaging diverse perspectives.
2. Seeking and gathering data, information, and knowledge from experience, texts, graphics, and media.
3. Understanding, interpreting, and critiquing relevant data, information, and knowledge.
4. Synthesizing and integrating data, information, and knowledge to infer and create new insights
5. Anticipating, reflecting upon, and evaluating implications of assumptions, arguments, hypotheses, and conclusions.
6. Creating and presenting defensible expressions, arguments, positions, hypotheses, and proposals.

Writing and Critical Reading

EIU graduates write critically and evaluate varied sources by:

1. Creating documents appropriate for specific audiences, purposes, genres, disciplines, and professions.
2. Crafting cogent and defensible applications, analyses, evaluations, and arguments about problems, ideas, and issues.
3. Producing documents that are well-organized, focused, and cohesive.
4. Using appropriate vocabulary, mechanics, grammar, diction, and sentence structure.
5. Understanding, questioning, analyzing, and synthesizing complex textual, numeric, and graphical sources.
6. Evaluating evidence, issues, ideas, and problems from multiple perspectives.
7. Collecting and employing source materials ethically and understanding their strengths and limitations.

Speaking and Listening

EIU graduates prepare, deliver, and critically evaluate presentations and other formal speaking activities by:

1. Collecting, comprehending, analyzing, synthesizing and ethically incorporating source material.
2. Adapting formal and impromptu presentations, debates, and discussions to their audience and purpose.
3. Developing and organizing ideas and supporting them with appropriate details and evidence.
4. Using effective language skills adapted for oral delivery, including appropriate vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure.
5. Using effective vocal delivery skills, including volume, pitch, rate of speech, articulation, pronunciation, and fluency.
6. Employing effective physical delivery skills, including eye contact, gestures, and movement.
7. Using active and critical listening skills to understand and evaluate oral communication.

Quantitative Reasoning

EIU graduates produce, analyze, interpret, and evaluate quantitative material by:

1. Performing basic calculations and measurements.
2. Applying quantitative methods and using the resulting evidence to solve problems.
3. Reading, interpreting, and constructing tables, graphs, charts, and other representations of quantitative material.
4. Critically evaluating quantitative methodologies and data.
5. Constructing cogent arguments utilizing quantitative material.
6. Using appropriate technology to collect, analyze, and produce quantitative materials.

Responsible Citizenship

EIU graduates make informed decisions based on knowledge of the physical and natural world and human history and culture by:

1. Engaging with diverse ideas, individuals, groups, and cultures.
2. Applying ethical reasoning and standards in personal, professional, disciplinary, and civic contexts.
3. Participating formally and informally in civic life to better the public good.
4. Applying knowledge and skills to new and changing contexts within and beyond the classroom.

Wharram / English 3805-001: *Schedule of Classes*—subject to revision

LA = *Longman Anthology of British Literature*.

For each class period, you need to have carefully read and be prepared to discuss the assigned selections in their entirety.

WEEK ONE

M 8/25 **INTRODUCTION: “Alien Encounters”**

David Wiesner, *Flotsam*; Ian Bogost, *Alien Phenomenology*

W 8/27 William Wordsworth, “Lines Left upon a Seat in a Yew Tree” (handout)

F 8/29 William Wordsworth, “Lines Left upon a Seat in a Yew Tree” (handout)
Daniel Defoe, *A Journal of the Plague Year* (“At the Burial Pit,” 2446-49)

WEEK TWO

M 9/1 **No Class (Labour Day)**

W 9/3 Supplementary Reading (LA xxxi-v; 2121-26)
Daniel Defoe, *A Journal of the Plague Year* (Defoe intro, 2437-39; “Encounter,” 2449-52)
Daniel Defoe, *A Journal of the Plague Year* (ix-xiii; 1-9) (D2L)

F 9/5 Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, *Selected Letters* (#109-112, 158-170)
“Saturday, The Small Pox” (BA 487); “A Plain Account of the Inoculating of the Smallpox
by a Turkey Merchant” (BA 496) (D2L)

WEEK THREE

M 9/8 Selected Writings on the Smallpox and Inoculation (D2L)

Monday 9/8—Deadline to drop course without a grade

W 9/10 Rene Descartes, from *Discourse on Method* (D2L)

F 9/12 **Conferences**
Padlet Assignment (ongoing)

WEEK FOUR

M 9/15

Conferences

Reading: Catherine Belling, "Introduction" from *A Condition of Doubt: The Meanings of Hypochondria* (D2L)

Tuesday, 9/16

Highly RECOMMENDED LECTURE: Dr. Catherine Belling's lecture, 6pm, Doudna Lecture Hall

"Historical Superbugs and Future Ebola: Medical Humanities Looks at Public Health"

Professor Catherine Belling, who teaches in the Program in Medical Humanities and Bioethics at Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine in Chicago, will serve as the 24th Annual Phi Beta Kappa Fall Lecturer. Dr. Belling's recent book, *A Condition of Doubt: The Meanings of Hypochondria* (Oxford, 2012), has won the Society for Literature, Science, and the Arts Award for Best Book. On the vanguard of the medical humanities, Dr. Belling's work on narratives, patients, and the profession of medicine is interdisciplinary thinking at its best.

W 9/17

William Wycherley, *The Country Wife*, Act I (BA, 180)
Supplementary: "Money, Manners, and Theatrics" (LA, 2126-34)

F 9/19

(Test #1); William Wycherley, *The Country Wife*, Act II-IV

WEEK FIVE

M 9/22

William Wycherley, *The Country Wife*, Act IV-V

W 9/24

Aphra Behn, *Oroonoko* (LA 2279-2321)

F 9/26

Aphra Behn, *Oroonoko* (LA 2279-2321)

WEEK SIX

M 9/29

John Locke, selection from *Two Treatises on Government* (handout)

W 10/1

Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe* (chapters TBA)

F 10/3

Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe* (chapters TBA)

WEEK SEVEN

M 10/6

Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe* (145-151)

W 10/8

(Test #2); reading TBA

F 10/10

Alexander Pope, *Essay on Man* (BA 463-468, to II.30)

WEEK EIGHT

M 10/13 **reading TBA**

W 10/15 Ottobah Cuongo, from *Thoughts and Sentiments on the Evil and Wicked Traffic of the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species* (handout)
Rev. Robert Boncher Nicholls, from *Observations* (handout)
Samuel Taylor Coleridge, from *On the Slave Trade* (handout)
John Newton, from *A Slave-Trader's Journal* (handout)

F 10/17 **MID-TERM WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE (hardcopy, no exceptions)**
No Class (Fall Break)

WEEK NINE

M 10/20 Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative* (pages TBA)

W 10/22 (review and catch-up day)

F 10/24 **(Test #3); reading TBA**

WEEK TEN

M 10/27 Eliza Haywood, *Eovaai* ("Translator's Preface" and chapters TBA)

W 10/29 Eliza Haywood, *Eovaai* (chapters TBA)

F 10/31 Oliver Goldsmith, *The Deserted Village* (BA 678) or TBA

WEEK ELEVEN

M 11/3 Individual conferences, 3010 Coleman

Tuesday, 11/4 class held in the ENGLISH CONFERENCE ROOM (3732 Coleman)

RECOMMENDED READING: Brian McGrath, "Introduction: Reading in the Dark" (1-15)
Ch. 5 "Lyric Yawns: Keats," *The Poetics of Unremembered Acts* (91-105)
John Keats, "Isabella or the Pot of Basil"—handout

GUEST LECTURER: Dr. Brian McGrath, Clemson University, will be the inaugural **English Research Seminar** teacher/lecturer.

W 11/5 Individual conferences, 3010 Coleman

F 11/7 Individual conferences, 3010 Coleman

Friday 11/7—Deadline to withdraw with a “W”

WEEK TWELVE

- M 11/10 Adam Smith, from *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (handout)
Prose and Poems on the Aeolian Harp (handout)
- W 11/12 Prose and Poems on the Aeolian Harp (handout)
- F 11/14 Prose and Poems on the Aeolian Harp (handout)
Supplement: Thom. Gray, *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* (BA 607)
-

WEEK THIRTEEN

- M 11/17 **(Test #4); reading TBA**
- W 11/19 **reading TBA**
- F 11/20 Individual conferences, 3010 Coleman
-

WEEK FOURTEEN M 11/24 – F 11/28 Thanksgiving Recess—NO CLASS

WEEK FIFTEEN

- M 12/1 J. W. von Goethe, *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (first half)
- W 12/3 Goethe, *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (second half)
- F 12/5 David Hume, *Selected Essays* (“On Suicide,” 315-324; and D2L)
-

WEEK SIXTEEN

- M 12/8 Presentations
- W 12/10 Presentations
- F 12/12 Presentations

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 14th—12:30 – 14:30 FINAL EXAM, Final Projects Due