

Professor Francus  
English 693: Monstrous Motherhood  
Spring 2015  
Tuesdays, 4:00- 6:50  
Office: 227 Colson Hall  
Office Hours: Tuesdays 2:00-4:00 and by appointment  
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- January 13 Introduction
- January 20 Fertility and Infertility in Restoration and 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Culture  
*Aristotle's Masterpiece* (1694), Chapters 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, 18 (available on EBBO)  
Mary E. Fissell, "Hairy Women and Naked Truths: Gender and the Politics of Knowledge in "Aristotle's Masterpiece," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, Vol. 60, No. 1, Sexuality in Early America (Jan., 2003), pp. 43-74 (available on JSTOR)  
Mary E. Fissell, *Vernacular Bodies: The Politics of Reproduction in Early Modern England*, Chapter 7, "The Restoration Crisis in Paternity," pp. 196-243 (available on ebrary)
- January 27 Rare Book Room Visit/Midwifery and the Rise of the Male Gynecologist  
Laurence Sterne, *Tristram Shandy* (1759-1767), Volume I, Chapter 7; Volume II, Chapters 6-10; Volume III, Chapters 13-17  
<http://www.tristramshandyweb.it/>  
Roy Porter, "A touch of danger; the man-midwife as sexual predator" in *Sexual Worlds of the Enlightenment*, ed. G.S. Rousseau and Roy Porter, pp. 206-32 (handout)  
Lisa Forman Cody, *Birthing the Nation: Sex, Science, and the Conception of Eighteenth-Century Britons*, Chapter 2, "Mothers, Midwives, and Mysteries," pp. 31-45 (available on ebrary)
- February 3 Deformed Children and the Myths of Monstrosity  
Alexander Pope, *The Dunciad* (1742)  
*Martinus Scriblerus*, Chapters 14 and 15 (handout)  
Lisa Forman Cody, *Birthing the Nation: Sex, Science, and the Conception of Eighteenth-Century Britons*, Chapter 5, "Imagining Mothers," pp. 120-51 (available on ebrary)  
Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, "Monster Culture (Seven Theses)" in *Monster Theory: Reading Culture* pp. 3-25 (available on ebrary)  
**Response Paper #1 Due**
- February 10 Conduct Manuals and the Proper Mother, Part I  
Marquis of Halifax, *Advice to a Daughter* (1688; 1707 edition on ECCO)  
[Richard Allestree] *The Ladies Calling* Part II (1673); 11<sup>th</sup> ed. 1720 on ECCO  
Selection from William Fleetwood's *Relative Duties of Parents and Children* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1716) (Duties of Parents to Children, Discourses IV, V, and VI; available on ECCO)

- February 17      Conduct Manuals and the Proper Mother, Part II  
                       Thomas Gisbourne's *Enquiry into the Duties of the Female Sex* (4<sup>th</sup> ed. 1799) on  
                           "Female Education" and "Parental Duties" (available on ECCO)  
                       Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792)
- February 24      Mothers, Nursing, and Wet Nurses  
                       Samuel Richardson, *Pamela* Volume IV (1741-42), Letters VI and VII, VIII  
                           (Available on ECCO)  
                       William Cadogan, *Essay Upon Nursing* (1748) (available on ECCO)  
                       Toni Bowers, "A point of Conscience: Breastfeeding and Maternal Authority in  
                           *Pamela, Part 2*" *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* Vol. 7 #3 (April 1995) pp.  
                           259-78 (available on Project Muse)  
                       Ruth Perry, "Colonizing the Breast: Sexuality and Maternity in Eighteenth-  
                           Century England," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* (Oct. 1991) pp.  
                           204-234 (available on JSTOR)
- March 3            Infanticidal Mothers  
                       Trial reports from the Old Bailey (1660-1750)  
                           <http://www.oldbaileyonline.org/>  
                       Papers of the Mary Cook case: *The Cruel Mother* (1670); *Blood for Blood*  
                           (1670); *Inquest after Blood* (1670) (all on EBBO)  
                       Jonathan Swift, *A Modest Proposal* (1728)  
                       Mark Jackson, *New-Born Child Murder: Women, Illegitimacy and the Courts in*  
                           *Eighteenth-Century England*, Chapter 2, "The generation of suspicion:  
                           single women, bastardy, and the law," pp. 29-57 (handout)  
                       Josephine McDonagh, *Child Murder and British Culture, 1720-1900*, Chapter 1  
                           "Child murder and commercial society in the early eighteenth century,"  
                           and Chapter 2, "'A Squeeze in the Neck for Bastards': the uncivilised  
                           spectacle of child-killing in the 1770s and 1780s" pp. 14-67 (handout)  
                       **Response Paper #2 Due**
- March 10          Abandoning Mothers, Part I  
                       Daniel Defoe, *Moll Flanders* (1722)  
                       Valerie Fildes, "Maternal Feelings Re-Assessed: Child Abandonment and  
                           Neglect in London and Westminster," in *Women as Mothers in Pre-*  
                           *Industrial England*, pp. 139-78 (handout)
- March 17          Abandoning Mothers, Part II  
                       Daniel Defoe's *Roxana* (1724)  
                       Terry Castle, "'Amy, Who Knew my disease': A Psychosexual Pattern in  
                           Defoe's *Roxana*," in *The Female Thermometer*, pp. 44-55 (available on  
                           ebrary)
- March 24          Spring Break
- March 31          Fairy Tales and Motherhood  
                       Charles Perrault, *Histoires, or Tales of Passed Times* 1729 (a.k.a *Mother Goose*  
                           *Tales*) (available on ECCO)  
                       Ruth Bottigheimer, *Fairy Tales: A New History*, Chapter 3, "The Late  
                           Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Layers: Perrault, Lheritier, and  
                           Their Successors," pp. 53-74 (available on ebrary)  
                       **Response Paper #3 Due**

- April 7           Spectral Maternity and Maternal Surrogacy  
                     Sarah Fielding, *The Governess* (1749)  
                     Judith Burdan, "Girls Must be Seen and Heard: Domestic Surveillance in Sarah  
                     Fielding's *The Governess*," *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*  
                     Vol. 19 #1 (1994) pp. 8-14 (available on Project Muse)
- April 14          Trying to do it all  
                     Hester Thrale, excerpts from *The Family Book* (handout)
- April 21          Monstrous Motherhood  
                     Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*
- April 28          Conclusions  
                     **Research Essay Due**

The course schedule may change at the instructor's discretion.

Course Description: The eighteenth century is often considered to be the moment in which the rise of domesticity occurred in Great Britain, as land enclosure, economic growth, and empire led to the separation of public and private spheres according to gender. The rise of domesticity centers on a powerful image: that of the angelic mother who is nurturing, loving, and at home. This maternal image has shaped expectations of women in British society and culture even into the 21st century, and has influenced American culture as well. This course will challenge scholarly assumptions regarding domesticity and motherhood through the analysis of the maternal narratives at the origin of the rise of domesticity: narratives of maternal absence, surrogacy, infanticide, and maternal oppression. In so doing, the course will contest and reconfigure gender roles, family history, and social history. This course supports graduate courses in gender studies, cultural studies, and Anglo-American studies from the 18<sup>th</sup>-century to the present.

#### Course Objectives:

- To provide students with guided research and writing experience in 18<sup>th</sup>-century studies.
- To develop an understanding of literature within its cultural and historical context.
- To analyze literature from a variety of critical frameworks.
- To recognize and analyze 18<sup>th</sup>-century British literature within broader literary contexts.
- To analyze gender roles from a variety of critical and theoretical frameworks.

#### Course Assignments

Students will have the following options:

- (1)     Three response papers (~3 pages/900 words each)  
        One conference-length research essay (10 pages/3,000 words)
  
- (2)     One response paper (~3 pages/900 words)  
        Editing an 18<sup>th</sup>-century text OR reconstructing a specific maternal experience OR  
        evaluating 18<sup>th</sup>-century media (newspapers, ballads, etc.) on monstrous motherhood  
        (~6-7 pages/1,800-2,100 words)  
        One conference-length research essay (10 pages/3,000 words)

Response paper: a response paper is an opportunity to elaborate on an idea that intrigues you, or expand an idea that was raised in class, or pursue an idea that we did not have an opportunity to discuss. If you prefer, think of a response paper as the preliminary articulation and testing of a thesis statement.

Editing an 18<sup>th</sup>-century British text: in consultation with me, choose a short text that lacks a modern edition (for example, an issue of an 18<sup>th</sup>-century weekly periodical, or one of the briefer chapters of *Aristotle's Masterpiece*) and create an edition for that text. You will need to make a number of decisions for your edition: regarding retaining or modernizing 18<sup>th</sup>-century spelling, capitalization, italics, and punctuation (or something in between); whether particular terms and ideas need to be defined in notes; etc. When you submit your edition, please also submit a brief narrative (~2 pages) in which you explain your editorial criteria and comment on particular challenges or issues that you addressed in your edition.

Reconstructing a maternal experience essay: in consultation with me, choose an 18<sup>th</sup>-century British mother whose narrative has not been sufficiently excavated or told, and recuperate part of that mother's narrative history. For instance, focus on a particular parenting moment (like childbirth, or nursing, or sending a child off to school, etc.), and reconstruct and analyze that maternal experience.

Evaluating 18<sup>th</sup>-century media essay: in consultation with me, choose a particular monstrous mother event (such as an infanticide or a monstrous birth in England) or a particular 18<sup>th</sup>-century British mother who garnered media attention (Queen Charlotte; the actress Sarah Siddons; etc.) and write a thesis-driven analysis of that event or person in 18<sup>th</sup>-century British media (such as newspapers, ballads, broadsides, etc.)

Conference-length research essay: a thesis-driven essay, reflecting your ideas and research on an aspect of 18<sup>th</sup>-century monstrous motherhood. It is important to master the conference-length essay—not only is conference participation expected of academic professionals, but often conference presentations are the basis of publications, which are the academic coin of the realm.

Notes:

1. Setting the parameters is a key to success in all of these assignments. Better to develop a focused, thorough analysis on a specific subject than to present sweeping statements that are difficult (and may be impossible) to analyze fully or carefully.
2. The page lengths are guidelines; for instance, if you submit 5 pages for a response essay, or 12 pages for the research essay, don't worry. If you think that you will be submitting 1 page or 15 pages for the response essay—or 6 pages or 20 pages for the research essay—please contact me.
3. You may refer to/work with 19<sup>th</sup>-, 20<sup>th</sup>-, and 21<sup>st</sup>-century texts in your written work, but I need evidence of significant engagement with 18<sup>th</sup>-century British texts and ideas in your assignments.
4. You may pursue 18<sup>th</sup>-century monstrous motherhood outside of Great Britain in your written work, but here too, I need evidence of significant engagement with course texts and ideas.
5. For those who choose to write one response paper and an edition/reconstruction/media analysis, please note that you have two scheduling options: you can submit your response paper on February 3<sup>rd</sup> and your edition/reconstruction/media essay on March 31<sup>st</sup>, or you may submit your edition/reconstruction/media essay on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, and your response paper on March 31<sup>st</sup>.
6. The research essay has the same due date for everyone—April 28<sup>th</sup>, the last day of class.

### Submission of Assignments:

- All assignments must include the appropriate heading: name, course title, instructor's name, assignment name, and date. Please include page numbers and your last name in the header on all assignments longer than one page.
- Your papers should be typed (11 or 12 point font), with sufficient space in the margins for comments. (One-inch margins will do). Papers should be double-spaced.
- Your papers should reflect careful reading and thinking about your subject. Do not summarize a work, or subsume your voice to another scholar.
- You may use either *The MLA Handbook* or *The Chicago Manual of Style* for formatting and documentation—but whichever one you choose, please use it consistently.
- It is highly recommended that you keep a photocopy or a back-up disk of every assignment that you hand in.
- Hand in papers on time. Late submissions will receive a lower grade unless the student has a viable reason (such as illness, familial emergency) for his/her lateness, **and** has notified me within 24 hours of the original due date. Your grade will be lowered a fraction for every day your work is late (ex. B to B- for one day late).

### Grading Criteria:

A (90-100) – 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 (80-89) – 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 substantive revisions, but few or no stylistic ones.

C (70-79) – 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 (60-69) - 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. Written assignments lack analysis, evidence, and organization; extensive substantive and stylistic revisions are necessary.

F (<59) – 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.

Online Resources (via WVU Library Database System):

*17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> Century Burney Collection of Newspapers* – an archive of 1 million newspaper pages from the British Isles, with a strong search engine and downloading capabilities

*Ebrary* – online archive of hundreds of thousands of scholarly books, available to download.

*Eighteenth-Century Collections Online* (ECCO) – an archive of over 136,000 digitized eighteenth-century texts in literature, history, geography, theology, philosophy, politics, science, medicine, and law. Primarily British works, but ECCO includes some American, French, and Italian texts as well. Texts are searchable, and can be downloaded. The primary database for scholars in the field.

*Early English Books Online* (EBBO) – an archive of over 125,000 digitized texts published between 1473 and 1700 in Great Britain, in fields including literature, history, philosophy, theology, science, mathematics, and education. Texts are available for downloading, but they are not yet searchable (although they will be soon). For the purposes of our course, this database is most useful for Restoration texts (1660-1700).

*British Periodicals* – an archive of 500+ digitized British periodicals from 1680-1930. For our course, this is most useful for book reviews and theatre reviews, and for a sense of the journalistic milieu of the period.

*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (ODNB) – a reliable source for biographies of the famous and not-so-famous in Great Britain. Each entry includes sources, including (when available) relevant archival sources, wills, and portraits.

*Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) – the primary dictionary of the English language, which is not only acclaimed for its precision of definition, but for tracing the meaning of a word through time by providing examples of usage in various time periods.

*JSTOR* – a text-based archive of 1,000+ academic journals, with academic articles available for downloading.

*Project Muse* – a text-based archive of scholarly books and journals published by 120+ presses, which is searchable and available for downloading.

*MLA International Bibliography* (via EBSCO Host) – a comprehensive bibliography of world literature, linguistics, folklore, and film studies. It does not provide texts, although the MLA Bibliography has links to WVU holdings that will guide to you access.

*WorldCat* – a database of 10,000+ libraries worldwide. If our library does not have what you need, WorldCat will guide you to the closest collection with the resource. (Note: our interlibrary loan services are excellent.)

Online Resources (General)

Jack Lynch's Eighteenth-Century E-Texts: <http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/18th/etext.html>

Carnegie Mellon University's Eighteenth-Century Studies Page: <http://18th.eserver.org/>

Voice of the Shuttle Restoration and 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Page: <http://vos.ucsb.edu/browse.asp?id=2738>

American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies Home Page: <http://asecs.press.jhu.edu/>

### Academic Integrity Syllabus Statement

The integrity of the classes offered by any academic institution solidifies the foundation of its mission and cannot be sacrificed to expediency, ignorance, or blatant fraud. Therefore, I will enforce rigorous standards of academic integrity in all aspects and assignments of this course. For the detailed policy of West Virginia University regarding the definitions of acts considered to fall under academic dishonesty and possible ensuing sanctions, please see the West Virginia University Academic Catalog at <http://catalog.wvu.edu/undergraduate/coursecredittermsclassification/#academicintegritytext>. Should you have any questions about possibly improper research citations or references, or any other activity that may be interpreted as an attempt at academic dishonesty, please see me before the assignment is due to discuss the matter.

### Inclusivity Statement:

The West Virginia University community is committed to creating and fostering a positive learning and working environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion.

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 the Office of Accessibility Services (293-6700). For more information on West Virginia University's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives, please see <http://diversity.wvu.edu>.

### Adverse Weather Commitment Statement

In the event of inclement or threatening weather, everyone should use his or her best judgment regarding travel to and from campus. Safety should be the main concern. If you cannot get to class because of adverse weather conditions, you should contact me as soon as possible. Similarly, if I am unable to reach our class location, I will notify you of any cancellation or change as soon as possible (by 3 o'clock) using MIX to prevent you from embarking on any unnecessary travel. If you cannot get to class because of weather conditions, I will make allowances relative to required attendance policies, as well as any scheduled tests, quizzes, or other assessments.