- Faculté des lettres et sciences humaines
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Seminar 3: Early Modern Literature: Early Modern Prose Fiction (2AN1482)

Filières concernées	Nombre d'heures	Validation	Crédits ECTS
Pilier B A - langue et littérature anglaises	**Séminaire: 2 ph**	**Voir ci-dessous**	6

ph=période hebdomadaire, pg=période globale, j=jour, dj=demi-jour, h=heure, min=minute

Période d'enseignement:

- Semestre Automne

Equipe enseignante

Prof. Emma Depledge

Contenu

When students think of prose texts, they tend to think in terms of nineteenth-century novels, but what kind of prose fiction was being produced and consumed in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries? In this course you will be introduced to a variety of prose texts and styles and will be encouraged to reflect on the emergence of the novel, related genres, ways in which critics across time have defined the novel (and, consequentially, shaped the literary canon), and the politics and prejudices that underscore much of the thinking about the novel that we have inherited as students of literature. The main focus will be on the work of three female authors of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries but we will also analyse extracts of important texts produced in the sixteenth and early seventeenth century, such as Thomas More's Utopia, Thomas Nash's The Unfortunate Traveller, and Mary Wroth's Urania. The authors we will study in detail are Margaret Cavendish, Aphra Behn and Eliza Haywood, three writers whose works – although not well known today – had a profound impact on literary history. To take examples from texts we will read, Cavendish's The Description of a New World, Called the Blazing World is the first example of science fiction writing in English, Behn's Oroonoko is often credited with being the first European work of fiction to contain sympathetic representations of enslaved people (some even read the novella as proto-abolitionist), and Haywood's Fantomina is groundbreaking in its depiction of the problems facing women across the social spectrum. These writers also wrote in other genres and were equally influential in areas such as philosophy and scientific writing, espionage, politics, diplomacy and journalism.

Forme de l'évaluation

A ten-page, argumentative essay in which you explore at least three of the texts we studied during the semester. Your essay must be submitted in electronic and printed form by January 31 2025.

Essays must be a student's own work – you are not permitted to work collaboratively or to use AI. All sources must be correctly referenced in line with UniNe rules concerning plagiarism.

In the event of a sanitary crisis, the modalities for assessment remain the same but teaching will switch to distance learning with seminars held via WebEx.

Modalités de rattrapage

A new or revised essay (to be agreed with the tutor) to be submitted by June 2025.

Documentation

A course reader will be available for purchase.

Pré-requis

Regular attendance is compulsory for anyone wishing to take this course for credits, as are the weekly reading requirements and active participation during in-class discussions.

Forme de l'enseignement

Seminars.

Objectifs d'apprentissage

Au terme de la formation l'étudiant-e doit être capable de :

- Interpret representations of female characters, gender, class, sex, race and personhood
- Formulate questions for your peers
- Compare the work of different prose writers

URLs	1) https://moodle.unine.ch/course/view.php?id=11027#section-0

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- Write argumentative essays
- Question previous definitions o the novel and the politics that underpin them
- Analyse a range of prose texts and styles
- Associate different authors with different styles and approaches
- Conceptualise different histories of prose fiction in English between the 16th and the 18th century
- Categorise different forms of prose fiction

Compétences transférables

- Work as part of a team
- Synthesise complex arguments and material
- Explain difference and developments
- Communicate ideas and opinions in an articulate manner
- Interpret data

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