

18th Century British Literature

18th Century British Literature: An Age of Reason and Revolution

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1. The Age of Reason and its Literary Manifestations

18th-century British literature, often referred to as the Augustan Age, reflects the intellectual ferment of the Enlightenment. This era witnessed a profound shift towards reason, empiricism, and a questioning of traditional authority. The emphasis on order, clarity, and wit is evident in the dominant literary styles of the time: Neoclassicism and its emphasis on classical forms and ideals. Thinkers like John Locke profoundly impacted the cultural landscape, influencing the focus on individual liberty and the importance of reason in shaping society. 18th-century British literature engaged directly with these ideas, grappling with questions of morality, politics, and the nature of human existence.

2. Dominant Literary Forms in 18th Century British Literature

Poetry: The poetry of the 18th century saw the flourishing of heroic couplets, as exemplified by the works of Alexander Pope (*The Rape of the Lock*, *An Essay on Criticism*) and John Dryden. Their poetry was characterized by wit, precision, and a keen satirical edge, often used to critique social ills and hypocrisy. However, alongside this dominant form, poets like Thomas Gray (*Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*) explored more emotional and melancholic themes, hinting at the burgeoning Romantic movement.

Drama: While the dominance of Shakespeare waned, 18th-century drama saw the rise of sentimental comedy and the continued popularity of tragicomedy. Playwrights like Richard Sheridan (*The School for Scandal*) masterfully employed wit and social satire to entertain and critique the social conventions of the time. The emphasis shifted from grand tragedy to more socially relevant and domestically focused themes.

The Novel: Arguably the most significant development in 18th-century British literature was the rise of the novel as a major literary form. Authors like Daniel Defoe (Robinson Crusoe), Samuel Richardson (Pamela), and Henry Fielding (Tom Jones) pioneered the genre, establishing various narrative techniques and exploring diverse themes, from adventure and survival to social commentary and moral instruction. The novel provided a space for realistic portrayals of social life and individual experience, paving the way for future developments in the genre. The growth of literacy and the rise of the middle class created a large readership eager to consume these new narratives.

The Essay: The essay, a flexible and influential form, found its voice in the 18th century. Joseph Addison and Richard Steele's *The Spectator* is a landmark example, showcasing the essay's power to shape public opinion and offer commentary on society and culture. Through the essay, writers could explore a vast range of topics, from fashion and morality to politics and philosophy, making the essay a significant tool for social commentary.

3. Key Themes in 18th Century British Literature

The exploration of reason and its limits is a recurring theme throughout 18th-century British literature. Works often grappled with the tension between reason and emotion, exploring the complexities of human nature. Satire emerged as a powerful tool for social critique, exposing hypocrisy and challenging societal norms. The rise of individualism and the exploration of identity are other important themes, especially evident in the developing genre of the novel. Questions of social class, gender roles, and the nature of power were explored in a nuanced way, reflecting the changing societal dynamics of the time. The Enlightenment's emphasis on progress and the burgeoning of scientific thought also permeated literature.

4. The Transition to Romanticism

Towards the end of the 18th century, the seeds of Romanticism began to take root. A shift away from the strict formalism of Neoclassicism became apparent, with an increasing emphasis on emotion, imagination, and the individual's subjective experience. Poets like William Blake, though technically belonging to the late 18th and early 19th centuries, foreshadowed the Romantic movement with their unconventional style and focus on the power of imagination. This transition marked a significant shift in literary sensibilities, laying the groundwork for the next major era in British literature. The seeds of this change were visible within the 18th century itself, demonstrating the fluidity and evolution of literary movements.

5. The Legacy of 18th Century British Literature

18th-century British literature continues to exert a profound influence on contemporary literature and thought. The sophisticated use of language, the exploration of fundamental human questions, and the insightful social commentary all remain relevant. The innovations in novel writing and the development of the essay as a significant form continue to shape literary practices. Understanding 18th-century British literature provides essential context for understanding the development of the

English language and the evolution of literary styles. Its exploration of universal themes of reason, emotion, and society continues to resonate with readers today. The impact of 18th-century British literature on subsequent literary movements cannot be overstated, making its study crucial to a comprehensive understanding of literary history.

Conclusion:

18th-century British literature represents a pivotal period in literary history, marked by intellectual dynamism, stylistic innovation, and a profound engagement with the ideas of the Enlightenment. By examining its major authors, dominant forms, and key themes, we gain valuable insight into a period that shaped the cultural and literary landscape of Britain and the world. The legacy of this era remains powerfully present in contemporary literature and thought.

FAQs:

What is Neoclassicism in 18th-century British literature? Neoclassicism is a literary movement that emulated the styles and forms of classical Greek and Roman literature, emphasizing reason, order, and wit.

Who were the major female writers of 18th-century British literature? While male authors dominated, significant female voices include Aphra Behn (though technically predating the 18th century but highly influential), Mary Wollstonecraft (author of *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*), and Fanny Burney (author of *Evelina*).

How did the rise of the novel impact 18th-century society? The novel's rise fostered literacy, provided a wider range of voices and perspectives, and offered a new form of social and moral commentary.

What role did satire play in 18th-century British literature? Satire was a powerful tool for social critique, exposing hypocrisy and challenging societal norms. It was frequently employed in poetry, drama, and the novel.

How did the Enlightenment influence 18th-century British literature? The Enlightenment's emphasis on reason, individualism, and empiricism shaped the dominant literary styles and themes of the period.

What is the difference between the Augustan Age and the Romantic era? The Augustan Age prioritized reason, order, and classical forms, while the Romantic era emphasized emotion, imagination, and individual expression.

What are some key works of 18th-century British drama? *The School for Scandal* by Richard Sheridan and the plays of Oliver Goldsmith are notable examples.

How did 18th-century British literature reflect the social changes of the time? It mirrored the growing middle class, the changing social hierarchy, and evolving ideas about gender and social mobility.

Where can I find more information on 18th-century British literature? University libraries, academic journals, and reputable online resources offer extensive information.

Related Articles:

The Rise of the Novel in 18th-Century Britain: Explores the development of the novel as a major literary form, examining key authors and their contributions.

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18th century british literature: A History of Eighteenth-Century British Literature John Richetti, 2017-10-05 A History of Eighteenth-Century British Literature is a lively exploration of one of the most diverse and innovative periods in literary history. Capturing the richness and excitement of the era, this book provides extensive coverage of major authors, poets, dramatists, and journalists of the period, such as Dryden, Pope and Swift, while also exploring the works of important writers who have received less attention by modern scholars, such as Matthew Prior and Charles Churchill. Uniquely, the book also discusses noncanonical, working-class writers and demotic works of the era. During the eighteenth-century, Britain experienced vast social, political, economic, and existential changes, greatly influencing the literary world. The major forms of verse, poetry, fiction and non-fiction, experimental works, drama, and political prose from writers such as Montagu, Finch, Johnson, Goldsmith and Cowper, are discussed here in relation to their historical context. A History of Eighteenth-Century British Literature is essential reading for advanced undergraduates and graduate students of English literature. Topics covered include: Verse in the

early 18th century, from Pope, Gay, and Swift to Addison, Defoe, Montagu, and Finch Poetry from the mid- to late-century, highlighting the works of Johnson, Gray, Collins, Smart, Goldsmith, and Cowper among others, as well as women and working-class poets
Prose Fiction in the early and 18th century, including Behn, Haywood, Defoe, Swift, Richardson, Fielding, and Smollett
The novel past mid-century, including experimental works by Johnson, Sterne, Mackenzie, Walpole, Goldsmith, and Burney
Non-fiction prose, including political and polemical prose
18th century drama

18th century british literature: Literature and the Social Order in Eighteenth-Century England
Stephen Copley, 2020-01-08 Recent scholarship had emphasised the importance of a number of non-literary, economic and social debates to the understanding of Augustan Literature. Debates over the place of land, money, credit and luxury in society, as well as strands of radical thinking, are prominent throughout the period. Originally published in 1984, this anthology of eighteenth century writings about contemporary society is divided into sections on the social order, economics, the poor and crime, with a general introduction identifying some of the dominant social discourses of the period. They reflect the emergence of an embryonic capitalist society, with its challenge to feudal ties, and of a nascent bourgeois class. This collection of writings is not intended to provide material for an empirical historical account of these changes, but to give some idea of the ideological terms in which they are perceived, endorsed or contested by contemporaries; and provide a set of discursive contexts in which the imaginative literature of the period can be read. The texts themselves repay close analysis as the bearers of complex ideological positions and it is interesting to observe how, for example, Pope accommodates Shaftesbury and Mandeville in the Moral Essays. A fascinating anthology, Literature and the Social Order in Eighteenth-Century England, complete with editor's introduction and notes on the passages, aims to suggest lines of inquiry without offering a "total" reading.

18th century british literature: The Invention of Northern Aesthetics in 18th-Century English Literature
Yvonne Bezrucka, 2021-09 Free, romantic, and individualistic, Britain's self-image in the eighteenth century constructs itself in opposition to the dominant power of a southern European aesthetics. Offering a fresh understanding of how the British intelligentsia created a "Northern" aesthetics to challenge the European yoke, this book explores the roots of British Romanticism and a newly created past. Literature, the arts, architecture, and gardening all contributed to the creation of this national, "enlightened", Northern cultural environment, with its emphasis on a home-grown legal tradition, on a heroic Celtic past, and on the imagined democracy of King Arthur and his Roundtable of Knights as a prophetic precursor of Constitutional Monarchy. Set against the European Grand Tour, the British turned to the Domestic, Picturesque Anti-Grand-Tour, and alongside a classical literary heritage championed British authors and British empiricism, against continental religion that sanctioned an authoritarian politics that the Gothic Novel mocks. However, if empiricism and common law were vital to this emerging tradition, so too was the other driving force of Britain's medieval inheritance, the fantasy world of mythic heroes and a celebration of what would come to be known as the "fairy way of writing".

18th century british literature: Women Writing Music in Late Eighteenth-Century England Leslie Ritchie, 2017-07-05 Combining new musicology trends, formal musical analysis, and literary feminist recovery work, Leslie Ritchie examines rare poetic, didactic, fictional, and musical texts written by women in late eighteenth-century Britain. She finds instances of and resistance to contemporary perceptions of music as a form of social control in works by Maria Bartholomew, Harriett Abrams, Mary Worgan, Susanna Rowson, Hannah Cowley, and Amelia Opie, among others. Relating women's musical compositions and writings about music to theories of music's function in the formation of female subjectivities during the latter half of the eighteenth century, Ritchie draws on the work of cultural theorists and cultural historians, as well as feminist scholars who have explored the connection between femininity and performance. Whether crafting works consonant with societal ideals of charitable, natural, and national order, or re-imagining their participation in these musical aids to social harmony, women contributed significantly to the formation of British cultural identity. Ritchie's interdisciplinary book will interest scholars working in a range of fields, including gender studies, musicology, eighteenth-century British literature, and cultural studies.

18th century british literature: English Literature and Society in the Eighteenth Century Leslie Stephen, 2022-09-16 DigiCat Publishing presents to you this special edition of English Literature and Society in the Eighteenth Century by Leslie Stephen. DigiCat Publishing considers every written word to be a legacy of humankind. Every DigiCat book has been carefully reproduced for republishing in a new modern format. The books are available in print, as well as ebooks. DigiCat hopes you will treat this work with the acknowledgment and passion it deserves as a classic of world literature.

18th century british literature: Effeminate Years Declan Kavanagh, 2017-06-23 Effeminate Years: Literature, Politics, and Aesthetics in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Britain investigates the gendered, eroticized, and xenophobic ways in which the controversies in the 1760s surrounding the political figure John Wilkes (1725-97) legitimated some men as political subjects, while forcefully excluding others on the basis of their perceived effeminacy or foreignness. However, this book is not a literary analysis of the Wilkes affair in the 1760s, nor is it a linear account of Wilkes's political career. Instead, Effeminate Years examines the cultural crisis of effeminacy that made Wilkes's politicking so appealing. The central theoretical problem that this study addresses is the argument about what is and is not political: where does individual autonomy begin and end? Addressing this question, Kavanagh traces the shaping influence of the discourse of effeminacy in the literature that was generated by Wilkes's legal and sexual scandals, while, at the same time, he also reads Wilkes's spectacular drumming up of support as a timely exploitation of the broader cultural crisis of effeminacy during the mid century in Britain. The book begins with the scandals and agitations surrounding Wilkes, and ends with readings of Edmund Burke's (1729-1797) earliest political writings, which envisage political community as a vision, that Kavanagh argues, is influenced by Wilkes and the effeminate years of the 1760s. Throughout, Kavanagh shows how interlocutors in the political and cultural debates of the mid-eighteenth-century period in Britain,

such as Tobias Smollett (1721-1771) and Arthur Murphy (1727-1805), attempt to resolve the problem of effeminate excess. In part, the resolution for Wilkes and Charles Churchill (1731-1764) was to shunt effeminacy onto the sexually non-normative. On the other hand, Burke, in his aesthetic theorization of the beautiful privileges the socially constitutive affects of feeling effeminate. Through an analysis of poetry, fiction, social and economic pamphlets, aesthetic treatises, journalism and correspondences, placed within the latest queer historiography, Kavanagh demonstrates that the mid-century effeminacy crisis served to re-conceive male heterosexuality as the very mark of political legitimacy. Overall, *Effeminate Years* explores the development of modern ideas of masculinity and the political subject, which are still the basis of debate and argument in our own time.

18th century british literature: Eighteenth-century English Literature Maximillian E. Novak, 1983-01-01

18th century british literature: Eighteenth Century English Literature Charlotte Sussman, 2013-04-18 This engaging book introduces new readers of eighteenth-century texts to some of the major works, authors, and debates of a key period of literary history. Rather than simply providing a chronological survey of the era, this book analyzes the impact of significant cultural developments on literary themes and forms - including urbanization, colonial, and mercantile expansion, the emergence of the public sphere, and changes in sex and gender roles. In eighteenth-century Britain, many of the things we take for granted about modern life were shockingly new: women appeared for the first time on stage; the novel began to dominate the literary marketplace; people entertained the possibility that all human beings were created equal, and tentatively proposed that reason could triumph over superstition; ministers became more powerful than kings, and the consumer emerged as a political force. *Eighteenth-Century English Literature: 1660-1789* explores these issues in relation to well-known works by such authors as Defoe, Swift, Pope, Richardson, Gray, and Sterne, while also bringing attention to less familiar figures, such as Charlotte Smith, Mary Leapor, and Olaudah Equiano. It offers both an ideal introduction for students and a fresh approach for those with research interests in the period.

18th century british literature: Painting the Novel Jakub Lipski, 2017-12-22 *Painting the Novel: Pictorial Discourse in Eighteenth-Century English Fiction* focuses on the interrelationship between eighteenth-century theories of the novel and the art of painting – a subject which has not yet been undertaken in a book-length study. This volume argues that throughout the century novelists from Daniel Defoe to Ann Radcliffe referred to the visual arts, recalling specific names or artworks, but also artistic styles and conventions, in an attempt to define the generic constitution of their fictions. In this, the novelists took part in the discussion of the sister arts, not only by pointing to the affinities between them but also, more importantly, by recognising their potential to inform one another; in other words, they expressed a conviction that the theory of a new genre can be successfully rendered through meta-pictorial analogies. By tracing the uses of painting in eighteenth-century novelistic discourse, this book sheds new light on the history of the

so-called rise of the novel.

18th century british literature: *Novel Bodies* Jason S. Farr, 2019-06-07 *Novel Bodies* examines how disability shapes the British literary history of sexuality. Jason Farr shows that various eighteenth-century novelists represent disability and sexuality in flexible ways to reconfigure the political and social landscapes of eighteenth-century Britain. In imagining the lived experience of disability as analogous to and as informed by queer genders and sexualities, the authors featured in *Novel Bodies* expose emerging ideas of able-bodiedness and heterosexuality as interconnected systems that sustain dominant models of courtship, reproduction, and degeneracy. Further, Farr argues that they use intersections of disability and queerness to stage an array of contemporaneous debates covering topics as wide-ranging as education, feminism, domesticity, medicine, and plantation life. In his close attention to the fiction of Eliza Haywood, Samuel Richardson, Sarah Scott, Maria Edgeworth, and Frances Burney, Farr demonstrates that disabled and queer characters inhabit strict social orders in unconventional ways, and thus opened up new avenues of expression for readers from the eighteenth century forward. Published by Bucknell University Press. Distributed worldwide by Rutgers University Press.

18th century british literature: *Candide* By Voltaire, 2019-06-10 *Candide* is a French satire by Voltaire, a philosopher of the Age of Enlightenment. It begins with a young man, Candide, who is living a sheltered life in an Edenic paradise and being indoctrinated with Leibnizian optimism (or simply Optimism) by his mentor, Pangloss. The work describes the abrupt cessation of this lifestyle, followed by Candide's slow, painful disillusionment as he witnesses and experiences great hardships in the world. Voltaire concludes with Candide, if not rejecting optimism outright, advocating a deeply practical precept, we must cultivate our garden, in lieu of the Leibnizian mantra of Pangloss, all is for the best in the best of all possible worlds. *Candide* is characterized by its sarcastic tone, as well as by its erratic, fantastical and fast-moving plot. A picaresque novel it parodies many adventure and romance clichés, the struggles of which are caricatured in a tone that is mordantly matter-of-fact. Still, the events discussed are often based on historical happenings, such as the Seven Years' War and the 1755 Lisbon earthquake. As philosophers of Voltaire's day contended with the problem of evil, so too does Candide in this short novel, albeit more directly and humorously. Voltaire ridicules religion, theologians, governments, armies, philosophies, and philosophers through allegory; most conspicuously, he assaults Leibniz and his optimism. As expected by Voltaire, *Candide* has enjoyed both great success and great scandal. Immediately after its secretive publication, the book was widely banned because it contained religious blasphemy, political sedition and intellectual hostility hidden under a thin veil of naïveté. However, with its sharp wit and insightful portrayal of the human condition, the novel has since inspired many later authors and artists to mimic and adapt it. Today, *Candide* is recognized as Voltaire's magnum opus and is often listed as part of the Western canon; it is arguably taught more than any other work of French literature. It was listed as one of The 100 Most Influential Books Ever Written.

18th century british literature: *Eighteenth-Century British Literature and Postcolonial*

Studies Suvir Kaul, 2009-02-25 'This book convincingly challenges both the extremely short historical memory of most postcolonial work and the all-too-insularly English world still conjured by period specialists. Hogarthian whores and Grub Street hacks, coffee houses and fashionable pastimes, and the burgeoning of print culture all stand revealed as intimately bound to portents of plantation insurgency, agitation for abolition, and the vast fortunes produced by the labouring bodies of the poor, the colonized, and the enslaved. Eighteenth-century studies has never appeared in a more engaged and fascinating light.' Professor Donna Landry, University of Kent In this volume Suvir Kaul addresses the relations between literary culture, English commercial and colonial expansion, and the making of 'Great Britain' in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He argues that literary writing played a crucial role in generating the vocabulary of British nationalism, both in inter-national terms and in attempts to realign political and cultural relations between England, Scotland, and Ireland. The formal innovations and practices characteristic of eighteenth-century English literature were often responses to the worlds brought into view by travel writers, merchants, and colonists. Writers (even those suspicious of mercantile and colonial expansion) worked with a growing sense of a 'national literature' whose achievements would provide the cultural capital adequate to global imperial power, and would distinguish Great Britain for its twin success in 'arms and arts'. The book ranges from Davenant's theatre to Smollet's Roderick Random to Phillis Wheatley's poetry to trace the impact of empire on literary creativity. Key Features* An introduction to the impact of mercantilism and empire on the crafting of eighteenth-century British literature* Encourages students to examine the key formal innovations that define eighteenth-century British literary history as they were produced by writers who redefined

18th century british literature: Birds in Eighteenth-Century Literature Brycchan Carey, Sayre Greenfield, Anne Milne, 2020-09-22 This book examines literary representations of birds from across the world in an age of expanding European colonialism. It offers important new perspectives into the ways birds populate and generate cultural meaning in a variety of literary and non-literary genres from 1700 to 1840 as well as throughout a broad range of ecosystems and bioregions. It considers a wide range of authors, including some of the most celebrated figures in eighteenth-century literature such as John Gay, Henry Fielding, Laurence Sterne, Anna Letitia Barbauld, William Cowper, Mary Wollstonecraft, Thomas Bewick, Charlotte Smith, William Wordsworth, and Gilbert White.

18th century british literature: Common Sense in Early 18th-Century British Literature and Culture Christoph Henke, 2014-10-14 While the popular talk of English common sense in the eighteenth century might seem a by-product of familiar Enlightenment discourses of rationalism and empiricism, this book argues that terms such as "common sense" or "good sense" are not simply synonyms of applied reason. On the contrary, the discourse of common sense is shaped by a defensive impulse against the totalizing intellectual regimes of the Enlightenment and the cultural climate of change they promote, in order to contain the unbounded discursive proliferation of modern learning. Hence, common sense discourse has a vital regulatory function in cultural negotiations of political and

intellectual change in eighteenth-century Britain against the backdrop of patriotic national self-concepts. This study discusses early eighteenth-century common sense in four broad complexes, as to its discursive functions that are ethical (which at that time implies aesthetic as well), transgressive (as a corrective), political (in patriotic constructs of the nation), and repressive (of otherness). The selection of texts in this study strikes a balance between dominant literary culture – Swift, Pope, Defoe, Fielding, Johnson – and the periphery, such as pamphlets and magazine essays, satiric poems and patriotic songs.

18th century british literature: The Chinese Taste in Eighteenth-Century England David Porter, 2010-11-11 Eighteenth-century consumers in Britain, living in an increasingly globalized world, were infatuated with exotic Chinese and Chinese-styled goods, art and decorative objects. However, they were also often troubled by the alien aesthetic sensibility these goods embodied. This ambivalence figures centrally in the period's experience of China and of contact with foreign countries and cultures more generally. David Porter analyzes the processes by which Chinese aesthetic ideas were assimilated within English culture. Through case studies of individual figures, including William Hogarth and Horace Walpole, and broader reflections on cross-cultural interaction, Porter's readings develop new interpretations of eighteenth-century ideas of luxury, consumption, gender, taste and aesthetic nationalism. Illustrated with many examples of Chinese and Chinese-inspired objects and art, this is a major contribution to eighteenth-century cultural history and to the history of contact and exchange between China and the West.

18th century british literature: The Emergence of Literary Criticism in 18th-Century Britain Sebastian Domsch, 2014-08-19 This study tries, through a systematic and historical analysis of the concept of critical authority, to write a history of literary criticism from the end of the 17th to the end of the 18th century that not only takes the discursive construction of its (self)representation into account, but also the social and economic conditions of its practice. It tries to consider the whole of the critical discourse on literature and criticism in the time period covered. Thus, it is distinctive through its methodology (there is no systematic account of the historical development of critical authority and no discussion of the institutionalization of criticism of such a scope), its material of analysis (most of the many hundred texts self-reflexively commenting on criticism that are discussed here have been so far virtually ignored) and through its results, a complex history of criticism in the 18th century that is neither reductive nor the accumulation of isolated aspects or author figures, but that probes into the very nature of the activity of criticism. The aim of this study is both to provide a thorough historical understanding of the emergence of criticism and as a consequence an understanding of the inner workings and power relations that structure criticism to this day.

18th century british literature: A History of Eighteenth-century British Literature John J. Richetti, 2017 A History of Eighteenth-Century British Literature is a lively exploration of one of the most diverse and innovative periods in literary history.

18th century british literature: Heteronormativity in Eighteenth-Century Literature and Culture Dr Ana de Freitas Boe, Professor Abby Coykendall, 2015-01-28 Understanding heteronormativity is imperative for understanding the culture of the eighteenth century writ large, as well as the imaginaries of sex and sexuality that it bequeaths to the present. This collection foregrounds British, European, and transatlantic heteronormativities to pose vital, if vexing, questions about the degree of continuity subsisting between heteronormativities past and present, questions compounded by the aura of transhistoricity lying at the heart of heteronormativity as an ideology.

18th century british literature: The Cambridge Introduction to the Eighteenth-Century Novel April London, 2012-04-05 A clearly written account of the development of the novel over the course of the long eighteenth century.

18th century british literature: The Grammar of Empire in Eighteenth-Century British Writing Janet Sorensen, 2000-10-19 This study, first published in 2000, examines the role of language as an instrument of empire in eighteenth-century British literature.

18th century british literature: The New Eighteenth Century Felicity Nussbaum, Laura Brown, 1987

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18th century british literature: The Late Eighteenth-Century Confluence of British-German Sentimental Literature Xiaohu Jiang, 2020-10-15 The Late Eighteenth-century Confluence of British-German Sentimental Literature: The Lessing Brothers, Henry Mackenzie, Goethe, and Jane Austen analyzes the literary exchange and influence between British and German literature. Xiaohu Jiang focuses particularly on the process of this mutual influence—that is, translation—by observing how the political and cultural imbalance between the British and German literary fields impacted the conceptions, attitudes, and (in)visibility of translators in Britain and Germany in the late eighteenth century. To this end, Jiang carefully reads the paratexts of these translations, analyzing the resemblances between Henry Mackenzie's *The Man of Feeling* and Goethe's *Die Leiden des jungen Werther* and arguing that *The Man of Feeling* is a vital source of influence for *Die Leiden des jungen Werther*. Furthermore, this book also presents an in-depth analysis of Jane Austen's creative appropriation of *Die Leiden des jungen Werther* and her oscillating attitudes toward sensibility, which is evidenced not only in her own texts, but also from her brother's articles in *The Loiterer*. Scholars of literature, history, and international relations will find this book particularly useful.

18th century british literature: Adapting the Eighteenth Century Maria Park Bobroff, 2020 The eighteenth century was a golden age of adaptation: classical epics were adapted to contemporaneous mock-epics, life-writing to novels, novels to plays, and unauthorized sequels abounded. In our own time, cultural products of the long eighteenth century continue to be widely adapted. Early novels such as *Robinson Crusoe* and *Gulliver's Travels*, the founding documents of the United States, Jane Austen's novels, Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*—all of these have been adapted so often that they are

ubiquitous cultural mythoi, even for people who have never read them. Eighteenth-century texts appear in consumer products, comics, cult mashups, fan fiction, films, network and streaming shows, novels, theater stagings, and web serials. Adapting the Eighteenth Century provides innovative, hands-on pedagogies for teaching eighteenth-century studies and adaptation across disciplines and levels. Among the works treated in or as adaptations are novels by Austen, Defoe, and Shelley, as well as the current worldwide musical sensation Hamilton. Essays offer tested models for the teaching of practices such as close reading, collaboration, public scholarship, and research; in addition, they provide a historical grounding for discussions of such issues as the foundations of democracy, critical race and gender studies, and notions of genre. The collection as a whole demonstrates the fruitfulness of teaching about adaptation in both period-specific and generalist courses across the curriculum. SHARON HARROW is Professor of English at Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania. KIRSTEN T. SAXTON is Professor of English at Mills College.

18th century british literature: The Oxford Handbook of the Eighteenth-Century Novel J. A. Downie, 2016 The Oxford Handbook of the Eighteenth Century Novel is the first published book to cover the 'eighteenth-century English novel' in its entirety. It is an indispensable resource for those with an interest in the history of the novel.

18th century british literature: The Broadview Anthology of British Literature: Volume 3: The Restoration and the Eighteenth Century - Second Edition Joseph Black, Leonard Conolly, Kate Flint, Isobel Grundy, Don LePan, Roy Liuzza, Jerome McGann, Anne Lake Prescott, Barry Qualls, Claire Waters, 2012-08-28 In all six of its volumes The Broadview Anthology of British Literature presents British literature in a truly distinctive light. Fully grounded in sound literary and historical scholarship, the anthology takes a fresh approach to many canonical authors, and includes a wide selection of work by lesser-known writers. The anthology also provides wide-ranging coverage of the worldwide connections of British literature, and it pays attention throughout to issues of race, gender, class, and sexual orientation. It includes comprehensive introductions to each period, providing in each case an overview of the historical and cultural as well as the literary background. It features accessible and engaging headnotes for all authors, extensive explanatory annotations, and an unparalleled number of illustrations and contextual materials. Innovative, authoritative and comprehensive, The Broadview Anthology of British Literature has established itself as a leader in the field. The full anthology comprises six bound volumes, together with an extensive website component; the latter has been edited, annotated, and designed according to the same high standards as the bound book component of the anthology, and is accessible by using the passcode obtained with the purchase of one or more of the bound volumes. For the second edition of this volume a considerable number of changes have been made. Henry Fielding's Tragedy of Tragedies has been added, as has a new section of material from eighteenth-century periodicals. A new Contexts section entitled "Transatlantic Currents" includes writings by such figures as Paine, Franklin, and Price, as well as material on the slave trade. The Contexts sections on "Town and Country" and on "Mind and God, Faith and Science" have also been expanded; a variety of writings on the

Royal Society and other scientific matters have been added to the latter. Additional chapters from Equiano's Interesting Narrative have been added, and there are new selections by Samuel Johnson (including his "Letter to Lord Chesterfield" and facsimile pages from the Dictionary). Book 3 from Gulliver's Travels has been added; that work now appears in its entirety. There are also additional selections by Pope, Pepys, and Astell. The Castle of Otranto and The Wiltings have been moved from the bound book to the website component of the anthology. (Both are available as volumes in the Broadview Editions series, and may be added at a very modest additional cost in a shrink-wrapped combination package.)

18th century british literature: Eighteenth Century English Poetry Nalini Jain, John Richardson, 2016-07-01 This anthology of 18th-century English poetry is extensively annotated for a new generation of readers. It combines the scope of a period anthology with the detailed annotations of an authoritative single-author edition. Selected poets include John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, John Dryden, Jonathan Swift, Anne Finch, Countess of Winchelsea, Joseph Addison, Alexander Pope and William Cowper. The guiding principle of the annotation is one of thoroughness: the editors concentrate on works where the meanings have changed, on primary allusions and on relevant details of social and political history.

18th century british literature: The Self and It Julie Park, 2010 The Self and It makes a fresh and bold intervention in histories and theories of the rise of the novel by arguing that the material objects proliferating in eighteenth-century England's consumer markets worked in conjunction with the novel as vital tools for fashioning the modern self.

18th century british literature: Women and Gift Exchange in Eighteenth-Century Fiction Linda Zionkowski, 2016-05-26 This book analyzes why the most influential novelists of the long eighteenth century centered their narratives on the theory and practice of gift exchange. Throughout this period, fundamental shifts in economic theories regarding the sources of individual and national wealth along with transformations in the practices of personal and institutional charity profoundly altered cultural understandings of the gift's rationale, purpose, and function. Drawing on materials such as sermons, conduct books, works of political philosophy, and tracts on social reform, Zionkowski challenges the idea that capitalist discourse was the dominant influence on the development of prose fiction. Instead, by shifting attention to the gift system as it was imagined and enacted in the formative years of the novel, the volume offers an innovative understanding of how the economy of obligation shaped writers' portrayals of class and gender identity, property, and community. Through theoretically-informed readings of Richardson's Clarissa and Sir Charles Grandison, Burney's Cecilia and The Wanderer, and Austen's Mansfield Park and Emma, the book foregrounds the issues of donation, reciprocity, indebtedness, and gratitude as it investigates the conflicts between the market and moral economies and analyzes women's position at the center of these conflicts. As this study reveals, the exchanges that eighteenth-century fiction prescribed for women confirm the continuing power and importance of gift transactions in the midst of an increasingly commercial culture. The volume will be essential reading for scholars of the

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18th century british literature: *Novel Beginnings* Patricia Meyer Spacks, 2008-10-01 In this study intended for general readers, eminent critic Patricia Meyer Spacks provides a fresh, engaging account of the early history of the English novel. *Novel Beginnings* departs from the traditional, narrow focus on the development of the realistic novel to emphasize the many kinds of experimentation that marked the genre in the eighteenth century before its conventions were firmly established in the nineteenth. Treating well-known works like *Tom Jones* and *Tristram Shandy* in conjunction with less familiar texts such as Sarah Fielding's *The Cry* (a kind of hybrid novel and play) and Jane Barker's *A Patch-Work Screen for the Ladies* (a novel of adventure replete with sentimental verse and numerous subnarratives), the book evokes the excitement of a multifaceted and unpredictable process of growth and change. Investigating fiction throughout the 1700s, Spacks delineates the individuality of specific texts while suggesting connections among novels. She sketches a wide range of forms and themes, including Providential narratives, psychological thrillers, romances, the clef, sentimental parables, political allegories, Gothic romances, and many others. These multiple narrative experiments show the impossibility of thinking of eighteenth-century fiction simply as a precursor to the nineteenth-century novel, Spacks shows. Instead, the vast variety of engagements with the problems of creating fiction demonstrates that literary history "by no means inexorable" might have taken quite a different course.

18th century british literature: *Ends of Empire* Laura Brown, 1993 This book explores the representation of women in english literature from the Restoration to the fall of Walpole.

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Frances Burney and William Beckford.

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