Dr. Natasha Simonova

Authors and Readers in the Eighteenth Century

This course will examine how the practices of writing, publishing, and reading literature changed over the first half of the eighteenth century. Seminars will focus on the development of literary criticism, the canon, and standards of value and originality; as well as the rise of professional authorship and its dark negative in the Grub Street ‘hack,’ debates over piracy and copyright, and the dynamics between writers and their audience. Overall, we will be asking how this period conceived of the ideal author and the ideal reader, and how real authors and readers sometimes did not conform to those ideals.

Further details on reading and how to access the less widely-available sources will be circulated toward the end of Michaelmas term.

Seminar 1 – Criticism and the Canon

Primary:
Joseph Addison, *The Spectator* (# 62, 253, 267, 279, 409, 411-21, and 523)
Jonathan Swift, ‘The Battle of the Books’
Alexander Pope, ‘An Essay on Criticism’
Anthony Ashley Cooper, Earl of Shaftsbury, ‘Soliloquy; or, Advice to an Author’

Secondary:

Seminar 2 – Grub Street and Failure

Primary:
Alexander Pope, *The Dunciad* (in four books)
Richard Savage, *An Author to be Lett*
Samuel Johnson, *The Life of Mr Richard Savage*

Secondary:
Rogers, Pat. *Grub Street: Studies in a Subculture* (1972), reprinted as *Hacks and Dunces: Pope, Swift and Grub Street*.

Seminar 3 – Piracy and Originality

Primary:
The Copyright Act of 1710 (Statute of Anne)
Samuel Richardson, selected correspondence and The Case of Samuel Richardson...with regard to the invasion of his property in The History of Sir Charles Grandison
William Warburton, A Letter from an Author, to a Member of Parliament concerning Literary Property
Edward Young, Conjectures on Original Composition

Secondary:
Mark Rose, Authors and Owners: The Invention of Copyright (1993).
Thomas Keymer and Peter Sabor, Pamela in the Marketplace (2005).

Seminar 4 – Women Reading and Writing

Primary:
Charlotte Lennox, The Female Quixote
Dorothy Bradshaigh, correspondence with Samuel Richardson and annotations in Clarissa (ed. Janine Barchas)
Elizabeth Echlin, An Alternative Ending to Richardson’s Clarissa (ed. Dimitir Daphinoff)

Secondary: