Course Number
EGL-230-01
Course Description
In her seminal study, Revolution and the Word: The Rise of the Novel in America, Cathy N. Davidson argues that literature is not simply words upon a page but a complex social, political, and material process of cultural production (viii). The eighteenth-century sentimental novel serves to highlight a moment in history lodged among judgments, anxieties and controversies about the direction the newly-formed American Republic would take at the end of the Revolution. Embedded within these narratives are questions about both men's and women's power and authority in the public and private spheres, the negation of the female self, the seductive function of romance and courtship, and the perception of women's bodies as moral, social, and biologic commodities. This course seeks to explore disjunctions between the sentimental structure of the early American novel and its contradictory attitudes toward liberty and self-expression. Through the lens of queer theory, affect theory, and new materialism, students will examine how seduction, homoerotica, and cross-dressing both reinforce and subvert American values and ideals that are distinct from European standards of morality. The readings will also consider how the cult of true womanhood, prominent during the first few decades of the nineteenth century, suppressed pleas for women's equality. How do the texts under consideration help to define the new nation, its citizens, and boundaries? In what ways do these texts consolidate nationhood through the formation of a national literature and the narrative structure of a national history, culture, and consciousness? Do these novels construct, conserve, or undermine American cultural institutions?
Academic Term
22/FA
Instructor
Murphy, Jillmarie
Location & Meeting Time
M/W/F 09:15AM-10:20AM LEC
Credits
1.00
Capacity
20
Total Students
0
Additional Information
http://www.union.edu/English
Common Curriculum
HUL Literature
HUM Arts & Humanities
WAC Writing Across Curriculum
Interdisciplinary Programs
American Studies
Gender/Sexuality/Women's St
Academic Department
English
Field Of Study
English (EGL)