

9:00-10:30am: Session I – Panel A

*The Romantic Novel: History and Change*

William Lackey **Romantic Disillusionment and its Historical Context in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein***

This presentation considers the possibility of Mary Shelley having a sense of personal romantic disillusionment resulting from living with romantic giants such as William Godwin, Percy Shelley and Lord Byron, whose egotistical tendencies may have been personified in Victor's character. In finding this, the paper also aims to work with the idea of her novel predicting the sense of disillusionment which was felt by many romantics following the Revolutions of 1848.

Justin Laudano **Eve's Mistakes Explained as Genderless through Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein***

In John Milton's representation of Genesis in *Paradise Lost*, it is the female character Eve that is depicted as the woman who causes the fall of paradise. Mary Shelley will revise John Milton's representation of the female character of Eve by showing that men are just as capable of engaging in a singularly focused ambition that leads to their demise. By noticing the connections between Walton, the Monster, and Victor and how they are similar to the mindset of Eve, we can realize that Shelley's text is advocating for gender equality while denouncing the idea that Eve's mistakes are made because of her gender.

Allie Ogden ***Waverley* in History: Or, 'Tis 60 and 270 Years Since**

Sir Walter Scott wrote his novel *Waverley: Or 'Tis Sixty Years Since* sixty years after the 1745 Jacobite rebellion in Scotland against English rule. Yet the novel follows the adventures of Edward Waverley through Scotland during the time of the uprising. This presentation will explore the historical context in which the narrative is placed as well as the time it was written. It will also make claims to Scott's purpose in writing the novel, focusing on his beliefs about how to view the past and his hopes for the future of the British union.

*Chair: Rick Incorvati*

*Robin Inboden*

*Mac McClelland*

9:00-10:30am: Session I – Panel B

## *Gender in the Restoration and 18<sup>th</sup> Century*

**Michael French** **Women, Wit, and the Male Tease in the Works of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu**

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, one of the more prominent female writers of the 18th century, covered in her writings the subject of the coquette, or tease, which was often applied to the female gender of the time. This was a standard established for females, in a debilitating and often derogatory manner, which portrayed them as seeking the attention of men without considering the consequences of their actions. In Lady Montagu's literature, however, it was not the female, but the male that was actually presenting himself as the coquette.

**Lindsey Gaterman** **The Role of Women in Swift's Work**

Jonathan Swift's "The Lady's Dressing Room" is often criticized for exposing the private female self. Due to the unrealistic expectations a woman is expected to meet in the poem, readers are quick to assume that Swift's beliefs on the female role align with those written in his work. By comparing and contrasting "The Lady's Dressing Room" alongside personal letters to the love of his life, this presentation concludes that Swift's beliefs do not correspond with those in "The Lady's Dressing Room."

**Logan Markko** **The Voice of the Libertine: Understanding the Poetry of John Wilmot**

The poetry of John Wilmot was characterized by its explicit and obscene writing style, standing in stark contrast to the literary voice of seventeenth century England. The honest and vulnerable nature of Wilmot's poems shattered the paradigm of traditional love poetry, effectively bridging the divide between the public and private selves. Wilmot expressed a voice of self-dependency and introspection in his writing that made him stand out from his contemporaries, and ensured that the love poem genre would never be the same again.

*Chair: D'Arcy Fallon*

*Cynthia Richards*

*Ian MacDonald*

9:00-10:30am: Session I – Panel C

*American Voices, American Verses: 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Poetry*

**Jared Crum**    **Whitman and the Survival of Transcendentalism**

By drawing from the evolution of Walt Whitman's work, we are led to see the durability of human divinity and democratic thought. As Whitman struggles with the shortcomings of personal and national identity, transcendentalism and the idea of an American renaissance are allowed to grow and endure through the Civil War.

**Alyssa Hughes**    **Playing with Ecstasy: Emily Dickinson's Faith**

Emily Dickinson felt constrained by 19<sup>th</sup> -Century society, yet she transcended those pressures and discovered immense possibilities within herself. Within these possibilities she explored the sensation of ecstasy, though she only experienced part of this sensation through suffering and sexual desire; the ultimate ecstatic state can only be experienced in death.

**Jenny Klose**    **White Sustenance? What the Famous 'White Dress' Meant to Emily Dickinson**

Between her most productive years of 1862-1865, Emily Dickinson used the color white extensively in her poetry, as well as dressing in the famous white dress. Scholars have long debated over what the color white meant to Dickinson, but I argue that she associated white with her childhood friend, Susan Gilbert. This presentation examines selected poems by Dickinson, as well as her complicated relationship with the woman she loved dearly.

*Chair: Mike Mattison*

*Bob Davis*

*Jody Rambo*

**10:45am - 12:15pm: Session II – Panel A*****Representing Race, Culture, and Community*****Trevor Brown** **Labor, Community, and Alienation: Towards a Marxist Reading of Frederick Douglass's *My Bondage and My Freedom***

This project reads Frederick Douglass's second autobiography through a Marxist lens, paying particular attention to the economic- and labor-centric critique and analysis of slavery that he presents. In addition to developing a labor theory of value and a theory of surplus value, Douglass presents the slave system as alienating all those that are complicit within it — people are alienated from their natural selves, from other people, and from nature. We can partially trace Douglass's physical and mental liberation by his ability to control the efforts of his labor. We find that the labor that he controls, labor that affirms the humanity of the otherwise commodified people enslaved, and labor that is thus communally beneficial — becomes his avenue for liberation. The presentation is less important in terms of making ideological claims about Douglass, and more so in understanding the economic dimension of white supremacy — and its endurance — in the American experience.

**Julie Cascino** **Transcending the Gaze: A Rejection of the Communal Reality in Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God***

Much of the scholarship centering on Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* argues that the novel is distinctively marked by the character's perceptions of their own race in a white-dominated society. However, Hurston herself once claimed, "I belong to no race nor time. I am the eternal feminine with its string of beads." Therefore, this presentation will instead examine the novel from a feminist perspective, arguing that Hurston's protagonist, Janie, ultimately chooses to reject her place within communal society, in order to protect her own sense of identity from being predetermined by others' perceptions of her physical traits and expectations for her behavior.

**Nathan Marceau** **Operation Culture Swap: Examining the Obstacles of Reconciling Two Cultures in *We Should Never Meet* and *Daughter from Danang***

My presentation is about the struggles of identity in Aimee Phan's book *We Should Never Meet*, and the PBS documentary *Daughter from Danang*. Both of these narratives are about Vietnamese adoptees finding who they truly are after they grew up in the United States. The paper discusses cultural identity and a feeling of belonging in a world that is entirely out of the characters' control. What we see in both Aimee Phan's 2004 novel *We Should Never Meet* and Gail Dolgen's 2003 documentary, *Daughter from Danang*, is how transnational adoptees come to an inevitable crossroads between Vietnamese culture as a culture of origin, and the American culture in which they grew up.

***Chair: Bob Davis******Mike Mattison******Kate Polak***

**10:45am - 12:15pm: Session II – Panel B*****Women and Agency***

**Kayla Chatterton**    **The Flirtatious Game: The Power of the Coquette in the Courtesan Story of *Fantomina***

The character of Fantomina in Eliza Haywood's novel, *Fantomina; or Love in a Maze*, uses her coquette-like-characteristics to create agency and the freedom and capacity to live and act by one's own choosing and power. This image of a tease, although seen negatively, can be used instrumentally as a way to empower herself in a time when the empowering woman was rare in existence.

**Savannah Fox**    **Fleeing From Fainting: Paralysis and Mobility in Austen's *Love and Freindship***

In her juvenilia, Jane Austen parodies the work of popular sentimental fiction novels, as well their originator Samuel Richardson and his work *Clarissa*, to provide a mature and satiric critique of the social standards that were in place at the time by conduct books. Austen uses Richardson's work as the foundation for ironic comment on the tensions of mobility and paralysis in her piece *Love and Freindship*, which she penned when she was only fourteen years old. The outcome is a direct and comedic account on the imitations of females that also appear in her later works, but in a much more subtle fashion.

**Alicen Tisch**    **Nature, Regeneration, and Phases in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles, A Pure Woman Faithfully Presented***

Thomas Hardy, in the title of his novel, calls his lead female character a "pure woman" despite the fact that she has lost her virginity outside of marriage. While this is incongruent with Victorian-era social values, there is another moral system that allows for this. By examining the novel through mythology, Tess's lost purity is reconstructed and Angel Clare and Alec d'Urberville emerge as the truly impure characters.

***Chair: Robin Inboden***

***D'Arcy Fallon***

***Ian MacDonald***

1:00-2:30pm: Session III – Panel A

## *Strange Worlds in the Long English Renaissance*

**Louis Bruck**    **Social Progress Through the Utopian Form**

This presentation considers John Milton and Margaret Cavendish's use of the utopian form within the social debate of the Querelle des Femmes. Milton's *Paradise Lost* rewrote the Eve script and, although he presents Eve in a progressive manner, he is positioning women as inferior to men as the authoritative sex. Cavendish's fantasy *Blazing World*, on the other hand, presents a female utopia, offering a means for feminine critique to be heard within the male-dominated debate.

**Nathan Dillahunt**    **When in Rome: King Arthur and the Allegory and Quest for National Stability**

This looks at the different Arthurian works and how the influence of and combat against Rome and the Roman Empire influences the perception of national stability throughout the Arthurian stories. This surveys works ranging from the Renaissance through the Victorian era including Thomas Malory's *Le Morte d'Artur*, Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*, and Tennyson's *Idylls of a King*. Finally, it concludes with a brief stop at Steinbeck's unfinished work *The Deeds of King Arthur and his Nobel Knights*.

**Jeff Hurley**    **Giving Reality a Green World: A Look at Fantasy in *Were the World Mine* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream***

Ever wonder how magic finds its way into the world? This presentation will answer that question. Journey into the Green World and hear how the 2008 motion picture, *Were the World Mine*, and the 1999 film adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, attempt to bring the magic of William Shakespeare's original play into reality. Magic does exist, but there are rules. Does the film capture Shakespeare's vision?

*Chair: Ty Buckman*

*Sha'Dawn Battle*

*Rick Incorvati*

**1:00-2:30pm: Session III – Panel B*****Redemption and Recovery*****Jeffrey Freeman A Search for Hidden Agency in the Lais of Marie de France**

It is no surprise that women, even those of the nobility, living in medieval Europe lacked agency. It is in the male-dominated social atmosphere of this period that Marie de France performed her *lais* and maintained her livelihood. Heather M. Arden, a renowned scholar on Marie de France and medieval literature, believed Marie de France recognized the male-dominated social structure of the time period and wrote her *lais* in a way that maintained the establishment of masculine authority. Though Arden is correct in her analysis of these *lais*, there is still a hidden, empowering aspect for women within these texts. Through the character of the wife in her work "Yonec," which best displays this hidden empowerment, Marie de France creates a martyr figure that provides a subtle form of agency for women.

**Sean McCullough Broken for Whom? Reading Richardson's *Clarissa* as the Eucharist**

Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa* is a pivotal feminist novel that deals with questions of the body, love, authority, and power. Throughout his work, Richardson ostensibly adheres to a Judeo-Christian allegory, his novel bearing not only resonances to, but also quoted passages from Milton's widely disseminated *Paradise Lost*. However, concomitantly, Richardson also aligns Clarissa with Christ's narrative in the New Testament. Not only is she Milton's Eve, she is Christ. Through this double allegory, Richardson emancipates Clarissa and all women from the constraints of what scholars refer to as the "Eve Script." In this interpretation, Clarissa's textual body (her collection of letters) is the body of Christ broken for all to consume and experience salvation. Like Jesus, once Clarissa understands the limitations of her human body, the significance she places on it diminishes to allow her broken corpus of letters to become her new body; therefore, reading *Clarissa* becomes the Eucharist.

**Amarra Oriaku A Portrait of Oroonoko: Reviving Aphra Behn's 'Noble Savage' from Prose**

Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko*, published in 1688, is often described as a narrative on slavery or an abolitionist text; however, Behn's text reads more like a eulogy—one inundated with misfortune, cruelty, and violence. It is curious that Behn, a prolific playwright, chose to recover the history of her hero in prose rather than breathe life into him through the scene. This presentation will discuss Behn's efforts to revive her hero through the guise of her female pen, while ultimately leaving him buried in prose.

*Chair: Cynthia Richards*

*Ian MacDonald*

*Kate Polak*

## 1:00-2:30pm: Session III – Panel C

### *Victorian Men and Women*

**Elizabeth Doll**    **Possession and Ownership: Women as Property in Victorian Literature**

Both Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and Robert Browning's "My Last Duchess" showcase males, specifically Alec d'Urberville and the Duke, as evil, dominant owners of their female companions. I will compare the works to explore and critique their presentations of the controlling male characters. As writers in the Victorian Age, both authors present this from a unique point of view; they are sympathetic to the female characters and berate the actions done unto them. Looking at the works from this lens provides a new reading and brings about connections between the novel and poem.

**Olivia Flory**    **The Obsession with a Female's Purity: Transforming Victorian Values in *Tess***

Thomas Hardy's novel *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* focuses on a young woman who faces the societal beliefs of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in a fight for her purity. While Tess experiences an emotional hardship, Hardy intentionally challenges the victim blaming time period in order to initiate a change in the society's mindset in regard to rape. At the same time, his novel works to warn young women of the catastrophes they can face against powerful men.

**Audrey Phibbs**    **The Fine Line between Love and Hate: Robert Browning and the Dramatic Monologue**

Have you ever wondered what a murderer is thinking? What are their motives? How can they possibly bear to take away the breath of another human? Why are they so cruel, so selfish? Robert Browning takes his readers through the mind of a misogynistic murderer. Through his use of the dramatic monologue, Browning exemplifies the immense amount of domestic abuse toward Victorian women. The dramatic monologue successfully opens new doors to the interesting and sick mind of the murderer. Browning poems "Porphyria's Lover" and "My Last Dutchess" critique the "tolerable" norm of abuse and violence toward women.

*Chair: Robin Inboden*

*Jody Rambo*

*Mac McClelland*



**2:45-4:15pm: Session IV – Panel A*****Masculine and Feminine in the Modern American Novel*****Maddie Law    *The Disappearing Woman: Suicide in Kate Chopin's *The Awakening****

Kate Chopin, a forerunner to 20th century feminist authors, utilized suicide in her 1899 novel *The Awakening* as both a literal and symbolic tool. For her character of Edna Pontellier, suicide is used to convey the death of the feminine voice and creativity in a patriarchal world while simultaneously rejecting gender norms and denying Edna closure.

For a novel that acts as a precursor to feminist literature, suicide is incredibly freeing, and an expression of hope. For 21st century readers, this continual pattern of the death of the feminine artist is frustrating, bleak, and a seeming dead end. However, suicide can be seen as a stepping stone, a progression to deeper thought and a true expression of subversion by the feminine voice who refuses to provide the traditional ending full of closure and certainty.

**Simeon Monroe    *Dying Heroes: A comparison between *The American Adam* and *Light in August****

This presentation considers William Faulkner's novel *Light in August* in regards to R.W.B. Lewis's book *The American Adam*. The paper discusses Joe Christmas and Joanna Burden in light of their estranged relationship with society, despite a cultural tradition that celebrates American orphan characters. It concludes that Faulkner's characters actually become enemies of society through the various effects of their heritage and race.

**Sarah Royal    *The Queen: A Discussion of Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises****

When a man is feminized he is ridiculed for it. When a woman is masculinized she is celebrated for it. A masculine woman can be "just one of the guys," even more so if the woman is attractive and thus, is more widely accepted in a male dominant society. *The Sun Also Rises* by Ernest Hemingway raises the question of how feminization is celebrated and used as a form of domination over other humans. Brett Ashley, the main female character, seems to play the role of the monarch as the rest of the characters submit to her will and praise her endlessly. The male characters of the novel see Brett as a beautiful, womanly, attractive queen of sorts, and they all want to sleep with her. This allows Brett to feminize them and become the dominant male position as a female--all except for Jake Barnes.

**Lizzie Thompson    *Imprisoned by Design: Architecture and Freedom in Wharton's *The Age of Innocence****

The architecture and decor of homes depicted in Edith Wharton's novel, *The Age of Innocence*, symbolize the imprisonment felt by women in the late nineteenth century. Through careful analysis of the two main female characters, May Welland and Ellen Olenska and their respective homes, the audience can see the limitation placed upon these women with regard to expectations of their actions and desires. Throughout, this essay discusses Wharton's claim that women had little to no freedom to navigate society around them because of the patriarchal system in which they lived, and by which they were completely controlled, all of which is represented in the prison-like descriptions of their homes.

*Chair: Bob Davis*

*Sha'Dawn Battle*

*Mike Mattison*

**2:45-4:15pm: Session IV – Panel B*****Duality and Division*****Márcia Hawke Francis Burney's *Evelina*: The Truth about the Tease**

We have so many different labels for people in our society from “Slut” to “Prude” to “Naïve” to the “Tease.” This paper explores the label of the “Tease” and the trap that young girls and women may find themselves in. Sometimes we are labeled to be a certain way like “Naïve” just because we have not had “Experience.” But then other times we may be labeled a “Tease” when we have not offered or intended to promise anything. This truly is a struggle. And through using the book *Evelina, or, The History of a Young Lady's Entrance into the World* by Francis Burney, I attempt to explore these labels and the position some women find themselves in. Does inexperience really equal naivety? Does intelligence or experience really label one a “Tease” or something worse? Can one truly have credibility without experience? Is being labeled a “Tease” dangerous?

**Cameron Mackintosh Henry's Master of Self: A Reinterpretation of the Duality within Shakespeare's *King Henry V***

Of all of Shakespeare's princes and heroes, Henry is among the greatest and the most perplexing. On one hand, we see him as a humble leader and a noble warrior, one who inspires great courage among the soldiers under his command. On the other hand, Henry can also be seen as a man capable of unspeakable brutality and tyranny to all who would oppose him. How are we to understand this troubling dichotomy? In my paper, I propose that it is not Henry who is barbaric, but rather the horrific war that surrounds him. Henry is simply an adaptable character who uses both heroism and hatred to his advantage throughout the play. He is not torn apart by this duality, he is completed by it.

**Lauren Swanson Masquing, Not Masking: Disguising and Veiling of the Biographical Self in Eliza Haywood's Life and *Fantomina***

Eliza Haywood, the prolific writer of the 18th century, wrote over 75 novels, short stories, plays, and periodicals. Despite her literary fame, Haywood remains purposefully biographically anonymous. Through her amatory novella *Fantomina*, it is clear that Haywood suggests that in order to maintain control over her representation, one must shield her biography from the vulturous society. She allegedly led a scandalous life, crawling with rumors of sexual promiscuity and two illegitimate children. Haywood was able to avoid the celebrity and fame that would have been natural for her to succumb to.

***Chair: Cynthia Richards***

***Ty Buckman***

***Rick Incorvati***

**2:45-4:15pm: Session IV – Panel C*****American Post-Modern Novels*****Cali Clayton    Fact or Fiction: Manipulation through Narration in *Lolita***

This paper will discuss the tactics of author Vladimir Nabokov in his narrative style within his novel *Lolita*. This novel comes with heavy criticism and disgust at both subject matter and author. This discussion will be centered around separating author and narrator, as well as on the way both main character and author break the fourth wall through unreliable narration. It will also touch on the differences, or lack thereof, between the implied and physical audiences of the novel. Nabokov has said himself that “The writer’s job is to get the main character up a tree, and then once they are up there, throw rocks at them.” If you’re interested in throwing rocks at Humbert Humbert, (not me please) plan on attending.

**Andrew Haley    The Real and the Imaginary in Thomas Pynchon's *Crying of Lot 49***

Thomas Pynchon's *Crying of Lot 49* is a novel that deliberates the importance of the real and the imaginary through the hindrances upon Oedipa Maas's journey of self-discovery. Text is in fact what shapes the world, not a reflection of it. Oedipa embarks on a journey for self-discovery in which she seeks answers through the aforementioned text, in order to determine her purpose in the world.

**Kayla Murphy    Humbert Humbert versus Hannibal Lecter: A Contest for the Title of 'Most Despicable Character'**

This paper focuses on the atrocities that exist in the imagination. Two authors from different time periods created two equally despicable human beings. Vladimir Nabokov created Humbert Humbert in *Lolita*; Thomas Harris created Dr. Hannibal Lecter. Through the medium of Nabokov’s novel and a number of the films in which Hannibal Lecter stars, I will be analyzing the two fictional characters in comparison to each other; I seek to figure out which character could be considered most despicable, and why they are the way that they are.

*Chair: Mac McClelland*

*Kate Polak*

*D’Arcy Fallon*