Draft Syllabus – Contents Subject to Change

English 303C: The Networks of Enlightenment

Instructor: Mark Algee-Hewitt

Books:

The Broadview Anthology of Restoration and Early Eighteenth-Century Drama, Concise Edition
Francis Sheridan, The Memoirs of Miss Sidney Bidulph
Henry Fielding, Joseph Andrews and Shamela
Horace Walpole, The Castle of Otranto
Bruno LaTour, Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network Theory
Jürgen Habermas, The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere

*Note that because we will be working with entity extraction and networking software, we will also be using digitized versions of each primary text; however, the process of interpreting the network through discussion in class is best accomplished with an edited reference text.

Description

The eighteenth century is characterized by social change: whether through political upheaval, scientific discovery, or colonization, the ways in which people related to each other within public and private spaces both reflected the rapidly changing world and, in turn, precipitated this change. Although we do not have direct access to the ways in which social networks formed during the eighteenth century, we can recover the imaginative social spaces represented in the literature and drama of the period. In this course, we will use the emerging methods of social network analysis to investigate the different ways in which authors of the Enlightenment imagined social relationships and the work that they did. By combining computational and critical analysis of these networks we will see how different kinds of social spaces yield different kinds of relationships and how we can use the networks that characterize these relationships to better understand the social work of the novel or play.

Together we will read and analyze both the romantic entanglements of comedic plays and the dense political relationships of dramatic plays (from, for example, The Man of Mode to Venice Preserv’d), as well different kinds of eighteenth-century novels, from the Gothic conventions of The Castle of Otranto to the social conventions of Sidney Bidulph. Together and individually we will identify the social relationships in these texts as we use networking tools, such as igraph or Gephi, to visualize the social world of the text. We will supplement our computational experiments with theoretical readings, including excerpts from Habermas’ The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere and Latour’s Reassembling the Social. Students are not expected to have any previous experience in network analysis as this course will also function as a practical, methods-based introduction to network analysis in the Humanities.

Software Required:

All software required for this course is open source and freely available for download. Students are expected to have already downloaded and installed the platform-specific versions of this software on their own computers.

Gephi: http://gephi.github.io/
R: http://www.r-project.org/
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R Studio: http://www.rstudio.com/

Course Requirements:

Participation:

The goal of this course is to push the boundaries in our understanding of the representation of social relationships in eighteenth-century literature by applying new methods of network analysis to the texts. This means that the questions and concerns that you bring to class are crucial to our collective research. Like all Digital Humanities work, the work of this class is better when done collaboratively. You are therefore expected to fully participate in class discussions over the texts and their network representations. The presentation/visualization contribution described below will give you one such platform, but you are required to supplement this by additional in-class participation.

Network Contribution:

One of the first things that you will learn in this course is that there are an enormous number of ways to create a network out of a text. Your choices of nodes, edges, principles of connection, layout scheme, directedness, and clusteredness, as well as the various network measures, that you run, are all a function of your knowledge of the text/texts under investigation and, more importantly, what you want to know about those texts. Even questions such as “what is a character” become complicated when working with textual networks. During the first half of this class, you will learn how to use the tools at our disposal to extract information from texts and create a network from them. During the second half of the class, you will all be responsible for selecting one text from the syllabus and, either working alone or in groups, creating the network visualization from that text and presenting it to the class for that day’s discussion. This will include extracting the relevant information from the text, creating the network, visualizing it and running one or more metrics on it. You will sign-up for the individual texts in the third week of class.

Final Paper:

Your final paper for this course must make a substantive argument about socio-cultural or aesthetic phenomena as modeled in the literature of the long eighteenth-century using one or more of the social network methodologies that we have explored in class. This paper will be due at the end of the quarter.
Course Schedule

Class 1: Introduction

Class 2: The Social Eighteenth Century
  Jürgen Habermas. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*
  Roy Porter: *The Creation of the Modern World* 1-48 72-96; 230-258
  Elizabeth Eisenstein: *Print Culture and Enlightenment Thought*

Class 3: Social Networks
  Bruno Latour. *Reassembling the Social*
  Stephen P Borgatti et al. *Analyzing Social Networks* 100-125; 149-163

Class 4: Introduction to Literary Network Analysis
  Aphra Behn: *The Rover*
  Lawrence Sterne: Selections from *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy*

Class 5: Restoration Comedy 1
  William Wycherly – *The Country Wife* (Broadview)
  George Etherege – *The Man of Mode* (Broadview)
  Pierre Bourdieu. Selections from *Language and Symbolic Power*

Class 6: Restoration Tragedy
  Tomas Otway – Venice Preserved (Broadview)
  Joseph Addison – Cato

Class 7: Complex Associations
  William Congreve – *The Way of the World* (Broadview)
  John Gay – The Beggar’s Opera (Broadview)
Class 8: The Social World
Frances Sheridan: *The Memoirs of Miss Sidney Bidulph*

Class 9: Moving through the world
Henry Fielding: Joseph Andrews
Borgatti et al. *Analyzing Social Networks* 248-262
Michele Foucault *Other Spaces*

Class 10: Social Enclosure: The Gothic
Horace Walpole: The Castle of Otranto

**Students with Documented Disabilities**

Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). Professional staff will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty dated in the current quarter in which the request is being made. Students should contact the OAE as soon as possible since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk (phone: 723-1066, URL: [http://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/oae](http://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/oae)).

**Honor Code**

The Honor Code is the University's statement on academic integrity written by students in 1921. It articulates University expectations of students and faculty in establishing and maintaining the highest standards in academic work:

The Honor Code is an undertaking of the students, individually and collectively:

1. that they will not give or receive aid in examinations; that they will not give or receive unpermitted aid in class work, in the preparation of reports, or in any other work that is to be used by the instructor as the basis of grading;
2. that they will do their share and take an active part in seeing to it that others as well as themselves uphold the spirit and letter of the Honor Code.
3. The faculty on its part manifests its confidence in the honor of its students by refraining from proctoring examinations and from taking unusual and unreasonable precautions to prevent the forms of dishonesty mentioned above. The faculty will also avoid, as far as practicable, academic procedures that create temptations to violate the Honor Code.
4. While the faculty alone has the right and obligation to set academic requirements, the students and faculty will work together to establish optimal conditions for honorable academic work.