

DANGEROUS LIAISONS: PASSION, BETRAYAL, AND INTRIGUE IN 18TH CENTURY LITERATURE

GNDR_ST 361 & ENGLISH 344

SPRING
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The recent surge in popularity of the 18th-century period drama evinced by series like *Bridgerton* and *The Great*, and films like *The Favourite* and *Portrait of a Lady on Fire*, speak to our modern moment's fascination with the era when, arguably, modernity was born. This course will approach a number of key 18th-century writings and their contemporary adaptations to reflect on the timeless appeal of the historical costume drama. In what ways does the eighteenth-century novel—a category only just beginning to define itself during the period—particularly lend itself to modern adaptation? And what do contemporary films and television series reveal about our relationship with the cultural sensibilities and complex politics of the past? Reading Enlightenment-era and Regency fictions like Jane Austen's satirical novella *Lady Susan*, Henry Fielding's rakish romp, *Tom Jones*, and Pierre Choderlos de Laclos's novel of the French Revolution, *Dangerous Liaisons* alongside films like Stanley Kubrick's *Barry Lyndon*, Sophia Coppola's *Marie Antoinette*, and Amma Asante's *Belle*, we will investigate the ways in which visual and written mediums attempt to offer us a glimpse into the past, as well as how we use might use them to historicize and critique questions of class, race, gender, and sexuality—then and now.

Samantha Botz

MW 12:30-1:50pm
Univ Hall 318