English 451: The Novel and the Museum   Sean Silver
MW 9:00AM-12:00PM 2013F   srsilver@umich.edu
3302 Haines Hall   Angell 4200

The first modern novel was arguably Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko*, which concerns events taking place in the 1660s. The first modern museum was arguably the Royal Society's Repository, substantially founded in the same decade. The novel and the museum have shared a history ever since, the collecting of material goods in the one mirroring the experience of people in a material world in the other. This course will trace the material development of the novel, pairing it against the historical development of collections of all sorts, from large, state-run museums, to the most intimate personal collections. This will also give us the opportunity to explore approaches to literature interested in literature's material forms and debts. This includes studies in the nature and circulation of books and pamphlets, sociologically based approaches to the symbolic meanings of historical objects, and philosophical remarks on the nature, status, and significance of the material world to the immaterial content of things like narrative.

Readings will stretch from the late 17th century (selections from *Oroonoko*, traveler's reports, some scientific writing) to more recognizable novels around the turn of the 19th century (*Evelina*, *Mansfield Park*). It will also read, along the way, essays by philosophers, critics, and curators, as we develop a set of tools for thinking about the purpose and organization of the museum. Assignments for this class all point towards a final collection of objects assembled from the texts we read. Throughout the semester, we will be collecting objects from assigned readings, capturing them in object descriptions, and assembling them in a virtual museum of literary objects. These objects will appear in an end-of-term exhibit catalog, containing images, captions, and critical essays.

Course Texts (available at the bookstore):

Aphra Behn, *Oroonoko*
Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*
Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*
Horace Walpole, *Castle of Otranto*
Laurence Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*
Frances Burney, *Evelina*
Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey*
Edward Carey, *Observatory Mansions*

Course Texts (available on the course website):

Joseph Addison, from the *Spectator*
Robert Hooke, from *Micrographia*
John Locke, from *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*
William Stanley Jevons, "On the Use and Abuse of Museums"
Richard Ligon, from *History of Barbados*

Secondary readings are distributed via ctools. These include readings included on the syllabus, but also those that we identify in teams over the course of the semester.

Date		Primary Text	Secondary Text	Assignments Due
Sept				
	4	Locke, *Essay*		
	9	Addison (WA and Coin)	Jevons	TEAMS FORMED
	11	Ligon, *Barbados* Hooke *Micrographia*		
	16	*Oroonoko*	Kopytoff	
	18	*Oroonoko*		Object Record 1
	23	Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* I	Pomian	
	25	Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* III		
	30	Defoe, *RC*	Latour	
Oct	2	Defoe, *RC*		Object Record 2
	7	Defoe, *RC*		Essay 1
	9	RESEARCH METHODS		
	14	FALL BREAK		
	16	Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*		Object Record 3
	21	Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*		
	23	Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*		
	28	Walpole, *Castle of Otranto*		
	30	Walpole, *Castle of Otranto*		Object Record 4
Nov	4	EXHIBIT CATALOGS: MEET AT LIBRARY		Essay 2
	6	Frances Burney, *Evelina*		
	11	Frances Burney, *Evelina*		
	13	Frances Burney, *Evelina*		Object Record 5
	18	Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey*		
	20	Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey*		
	25	Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey*		Object Record 6
	27	THANKSGIVING		
Dec	2	Edward Carey, *Observatory Mansions*		Essay 3
	4	Edward Carey, *Observatory Mansions*		
	9	TEAM PRESENTATIONS		
	11	PLANNING SESSION		Final Essays

Course Requirements:

1. Regular attendance and participation is mandatory—not least because there will be several in-class "projects" which will affect your final grade. Casual class absences are unacceptable. (10 points)
2. Object Records. Curators generally generate "object records" or data sheets for the objects in a collection. Several times during the semester, you will be asked to identify individual objects from the readings and produce such a record of roughly one page, describing the physical details of the object, its provenance (as far as can be identified), its cultural or textual significance. Object records may involve some research, in which case you must clearly indicate your sources in the space provided. (10 points)
3. Research Bibliographies. Your research team will put together a brief bibliography of 3 critical essays that bear on your object category. These bibliographies will be compiled into a resource for the class, and made available through the ctools site. (5 points)
4. Essays. You will be asked to produce three essays of 4-6 pages, each of which will develop a discussion about an object (or collection or type of object) you began in one of your object records. Instructions will be distributed the session before each essay is due. These essays may involve some research, in which case you must clearly cite your sources. (15 points each)
5. Exhibit Catalogue. You will be asked substantially to revise and to condense two of your essays, incorporating instructor comments. The objects of these essays will comprise our Museum of Literary Objects; the essays will be included in the exhibition catalogue. (30 points)
6. Teams. Teams of three or four curators each will be formed on the second day of class. Each group will select a category of object, and members of that group will confine themselves (somewhat loosely speaking!) to discussing that type of object in their essays and context sheets. A list of possible categories appears at the end of this document; these categories will be used to structure the final exhibit. If your team would like to develop a category that does not appear here, let me know and we will discuss it as a class.

All written assignments (except for the Final Essays) must be submitted in hard copy. Final Essays are to be emailed to the instructor in .doc or .docx files. Because of the pacing of this course, late assignments can not be accepted; please see me if a problem develops and we will work something out.

- Readings that do not appear in the Course Texts list (above) will be available on the CTools site.
- As students occasionally have differently paginated editions of the assigned books, I have not indicated page numbers in the reading assignments. Rather, I'll expect you to have read roughly one half of the assigned text each day for those books assigned over two days, one third for those assigned over three days, and so on, unless otherwise noted.
- Object Records are due at the beginning of class. Arrive prepared to discuss them!
- It is especially easy when dealing with object literature to end up incorporating material in the public domain or from other sources. This is acceptable only if it is properly contextualized and cited. Assignments that do not indicate the sources of images, information, or quotations must be corrected before they can be accepted.

Curatorial Teams

Sentimental Objects	Objects that Alter Light
Objects Relating to Time	Miniature Objects
Representative Art Objects	Food
Aesthetic Objects	Commodities
Mass-Produced Objects	Media or Communication Objects
Sacred Objects	Objects of Play or Discipline
Objects of Nostalgia or Mourning	Objects of Transition and Passage
Fragments	Tools