

**EN4/6733: Eighteenth-Century Literature**  
**Spring 2009, TR 11-11:50**  
**Professor: Peter DeGabriele**

**Satire and Sentiment in the Eighteenth Century**



Satire and sentimentality were two of the major rhetorical modes through which eighteenth-century writers in all genres (literary, philosophical and journalistic) conceived of the relation of the subject to society. Both satirical and sentimental works attempted to produce connections between self and society, and used the resources of their respective forms to perform far-reaching social critique. However, both these forms also threatened to leave the writer, subject or self profoundly alienated from a society that was either too corrupt for his stern virtue, or too harsh for her exquisitely sensible feelings. In this course we will read poetry, novels, drama, philosophy and periodical writings and explore how satire and sentiment engaged in and, to some extent organised, debates about governance, charity, virtue, economics and slavery. We will read such great satirists as Pope, Voltaire, Swift, Smollett, and perhaps Austen; and great sentimentalists like Sterne, Mackenzie and Radcliffe.

During the semester, you will write bi-weekly reading responses, compose two short essays and sit for two exams: one midterm and one final.