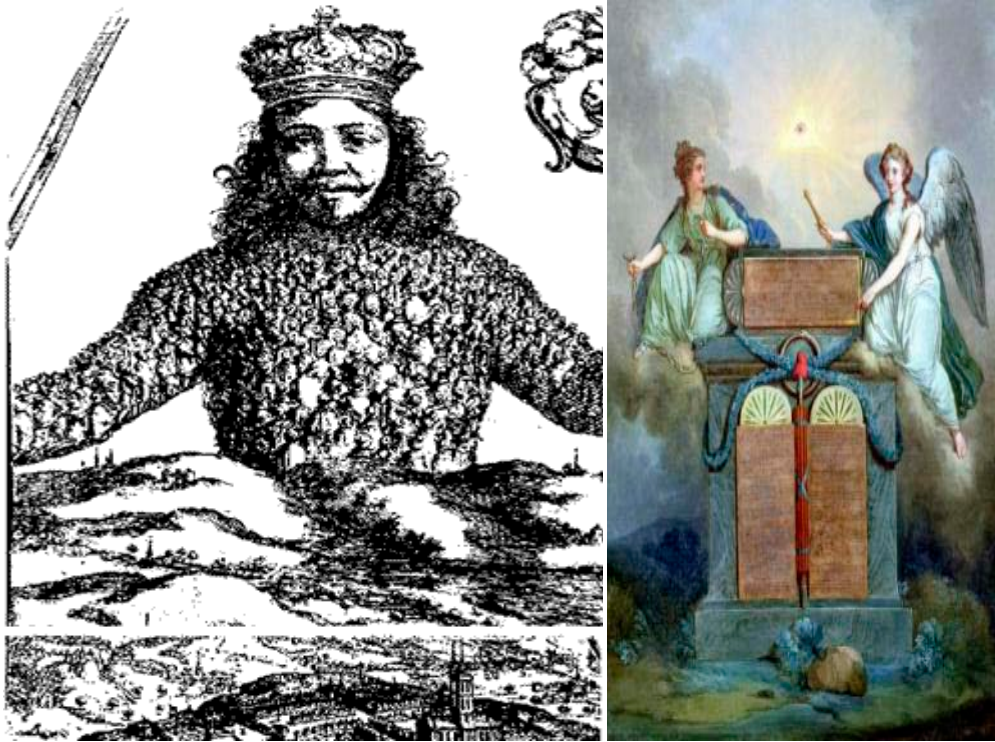


EN 8533: Political Philosophy and Eighteenth-Century Fiction

Wednesday 6pm-8:30pm
Dr Peter DeGabriele



In literary and political terms the eighteenth-century was an age of innovation. On the literary front, it saw the rapid rise of the novel form, while politically it was the crucible of many of the ideas that form the backbone of the way we think of our society and of the social bond today. In this class, we will look at what these two very different innovations had in common. In particular, we will look at the way the 18th century novel responds to and engages with different movements in the political philosophy of the period. In doing so, we will cover themes like social contract theory, the marriage contract, sympathy and the rights of man and look at what the novel says about these things that political philosophy does not or cannot. The reading for the class will primarily consist of novels by, among others, Aphra Behn, Daniel Defoe, Horace Walpole, Ann Radcliffe and William Godwin. We will also read selections from major works of political philosophy by Thomas Hobbes, Mary Astell, John Locke, David Hume, Edmund Burke, Thomas Paine and Mary Wollstonecraft.

Assessment will consist of two papers (one 5 page paper, and one 15 page research paper); regular reading responses; a class presentation; and a final exam.