

## EN4/6733: Eighteenth-Century Literature

Spring 2018, TR 9:30-10:45

Professor: Peter DeGabriele

### Satire, Comedy, and Social Commentary in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century



This class will explore various modes of social commentary in 18<sup>th</sup> century literature and culture. Focusing on the genres of satire and comedy, the class will ask how literary texts (novels, poems, and plays) comment on aspects of their contemporary culture. In particular, we will look at how these texts both critique everything from fashion, manners, speech, and sexual habits, and discipline those who do not conform to certain moral or cultural ideals. We will read essays from the *Spectator* and *the Female Spectator*, poetry by Swift, Pope, and Gay, as well as a variety of 18<sup>th</sup> century plays. In addition to a standard research paper, students will conduct some primary source research (using the ECCO database) in which they will explore some of the issues raised in the texts we read in class in a wider variety of eighteenth century writing.