

David Mazella
Spring' 12: English 4396
1771: Four Cities in a Single Year

Office 223-D Roy Cullen
Phone: (713) 743-2953
email:dmazella@uh.edu

THIS COURSE FULFILLS THE PRE-1800 BRITISH LITERATURE REQUIREMENT

Course Description: This course will analyze the writings and events appearing in and around the year 1771, to show how that year unfolded in four different locations: London, Edinburgh, Jamaica, and Philadelphia. Reading these cities and texts together will provide a very different perspective on the British Empire at this time, and allow students to draw connections between political unrest in England, the Scottish Enlightenment, the Atlantic slave trade, and the commercial boom in the North American colonies. The cities will help ground our readings in the year 1771, and students will use the literary and biographical texts of Tobias Smollett, Henry Mackenzie, Benjamin Franklin, and Olaudah Equiano to learn more about this unique moment in the history of the British Empire.

A Research-Intensive Course: Because this is an advanced, research-intensive in literary studies, I also expect students to go beyond the assigned readings by learning about this historical moment from other primary sources, which might include additional literary works, as well as contemporary political pamphlets or newspapers. Student will also be conducting their own independent research into the historical background and secondary criticism of assigned works. We will be visiting special collections regularly to view archival materials, and making use of eighteenth-century documents available to us through the library's electronic databases. Students will be expected to participate in a course-blog with weekly responses and questions, prepare annotated bibliographies, present their research and other kinds of materials to the class, and develop a brief final research project (12-15 pp. research paper) in consultation with the instructor.

Prerequisites: Because of the research demands for this course, students should have completed Engl 3301: Intro to Literary Studies before enrolling in this course. If you have any questions about eligibility for the course, you may contact the instructor at dmazella@uh.edu.