This course focuses on the work of poet, politician, and revolutionary, John Milton. Completely blind by the age of 46, and forced into hiding for his role in the overthrow and execution of England’s king, Milton still managed to compose one of the most important works in the English language, the epic poem *Paradise Lost*. The story of Satan’s rebellion against God, and of Adam and Eve’s fall from paradise, *Paradise Lost* attempts nothing less than to “justify the ways of God to men.” We’ll also attend to Milton’s other major works, *Paradise Regained*, which finds a darkly witty Satan seducing unsuspecting souls, and *Samson Agonistes*, a searching meditation on cultural difference and religious violence. Milton’s work forces us to reckon with some large questions: the nature of good and evil, the conflict between freedom and fate, the necessity of rebellion and political transformation, the seductions of figurative language, the battle between religious and scientific worldviews, and Christianity’s vexed encounter with other cultures and beliefs. This course fulfills the pre-1860 requirement.
The “Age of Unreason” (1660 – 1790) began roughly twenty years after a revolution unseated England’s king. While the aristocracy eventually returned safely to England, the country continued to experience a series of violent upheavals in its thought, culture, and literature. This course examines these revolutions by attending to the poems, plays, art, and philosophy of the eighteenth century. We’ll read texts extolling the birth of science alongside satires on experiment and reason. We’ll encounter accounts of fire and plague, a slave rebellion in Surinam, and the lives of London’s criminal underworld. We’ll take a look at contemporary gossip, read scurrilous love poetry, witness a host of scandals, and contend with some of the darkest satires ever written. We’ll also learn about the power of the imagination, the pleasures of beauty and sublimity, and the madness that seems to attend the poetic mind. Our tour through the “age of unreason” concludes, naturally, with the first instances of the horror novel in the English language. Above all, we’ll be concerned with the way in which literature during this period reflected and shaped the turbulent world of an increasingly modern age. Authors include Pope, Swift, Defoe, Behn, Haywood, Gay, Addison, Johnson, and Sterne. This course fulfills the pre-1860 requirement. Longer course description available on English department website.
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AMERICAN WOMEN WRITERS

D+ T/R 10:30-11:45am
Professor Ammons

20/21 century fiction, autobiography, and poetry by Native American, African American, white European American, Latina, and Asian American writers. Authors include Pauline Hopkins, Zitkala Ša, María Cristina Mena, Sui Sin Far, Edith Wharton, Helena María Viramontes, Toni Morrison, Margaret Atwood, Rita Wong, Louise Erdrich, Adrienne Rich, and Joy Harjo. Class is discussion-based and counts toward the Civic Studies major, the American Studies major, the WGSS major, and the post-1860 requirement for the English major. It is also open to all students.