I. ABSTRACT

This proposal is for a 4-week unit on “Coffee & Coffeehouse Culture in Eighteenth-Century London” that culminates in a pop-up museum exhibit developed and produced by the students in lieu of an exam. Coffee is a familiar commodity that many students consume but take for granted; in the course, coffee becomes a vehicle for exploring the history of Enlightenment London from a multi-pronged economic, political, cultural, social, scientific, and gender perspective. Students become the teachers as they build on in-class learning and individual research to create an immersive educational experience for the college community, transforming the classroom into an eighteenth-century coffeehouse. The following provides an overview of the proposed readings, assignments, and schedules, as well as a post-mortem reflection on the experience of teaching the unit in an Honors section of a General Education course, “Reading the Eighteenth Century (EWL 317),” at Marymount Manhattan College in Fall 2018.

II. THE COURSE: A QUICK OVERVIEW

Course: EWL 317. Reading the Eighteenth Century (Honors Section)
Type: General Education course (International & Cultural Perspectives requirement); also fulfills a requirement in English & World Literatures major
Description: This course explores select writers of the 18th c., with focus on the many purposes, genres, and styles that characterize the era. The aim is for students to develop an understanding of some of the major works of the period while also examining the links between the literature and the complex intellectual, social, and cultural milieu in which it was produced. (from the syllabus)

The theme for the current semester is “Sex and the City.” We will read literary works that engage issues of urban geography and its intersection with sexual identities, markets, practices, crimes, and fantasies in eighteenth-century London and Paris. Topics to be explored include desire, luxury, seduction, pleasure, gender identity, commodity culture, and fashion. We will also read select works of urban and gender theory. (from the syllabus)
Course units:  I. London: Geographies of Sexual Commerce  
II. London: Crime & Punishment  
  III. Intoxicating Brew: Coffee, Coffeehouses & London Society  
IV. Paris: Pleasure Capital

III. THE CONCEPT AND PROPOSAL

The London Coffeehouse Pop-Up Museum is designed to be the culminating project (and assessment measure) of a four-week unit on coffee and coffeehouse culture in Enlightenment London, titled “Intoxicating Brew: Coffee, Coffeehouses, and London Society.” This multi-week collaborative project is embedded into a course on eighteenth-century studies. Although originally designed for an upper-level thematic literature course, “EWL 317. Reading the Eighteenth Century,” the unit is portable to a variety of courses since it approaches the subject of coffee and its introduction into Europe from a multi-pronged economic, political, social, literary-cultural, and gender perspective.

The pop-up museum format offers a transformative learning-through-teaching model: a collaborative research assignment that puts students in charge of communicating what they know to a wider audience in non-traditional, multimodal formats. The goal is to deepen students’ understanding of the course material through independent research and multimodal presentation, while also building skills of leadership, collaboration, planning, management, and creativity. Because the pop-up museum is public-facing, it has the potential to transform the traditional student-instructor transaction through a new model whereby students demonstrate their proficiency with the course content to their peers and the community (rather than just to the instructor). The stakes are thus higher and more personal. Since students also have to argue for why their contribution should be included, they feel a sense of accomplishment and investment, as well as an obligation to their classmates to do their best for the team.

The final goal is for students to become the teachers, to work collaboratively and creatively on producing a communal learning experience that is both informative and engaging. Like a pop-up restaurant or store, the temporary, the pop-up museum has the potential to produce a sense of variety, interest, surprise, and community spirit.1 Moving learning from the traditional lecture or seminar rooms to a public space within the college puts the students in charge, and allows them to appropriate institutional spaces to new, creative purposes. Pedagogically, the pop-up (as conceived here) aligns with established methodologies such as place-based and project-based learning.

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The museum assignment is listed on the course syllabus so that students are thinking about it from day one, and especially as they progress through the coffee unit readings (see section IV below).

The first two weeks of the unit (4 sessions) are dedicated to discussion of assigned readings and key concepts. **Week One** focuses on coffee’s role in the growth of commodity culture, global imperialism, and orientalism; the gender dynamics of urban space and consumption; the social and cultural hysteria over this “dangerous” new drug; and coffee’s representation in the arts and literature. The primary texts for exploring these issues are Alexander Pope’s poem, *Rape of the Lock* (1712), and several plates from William Hogarth’s progresses. **Week Two** readings address such topics as the social and political importance of coffeehouses in the formation of a public sphere; and sedition, sociability, and the periodical press.

**Week Three** includes a museum visit in order for students to reflect on and gain an awareness and understanding of museums and exhibitions, as well as to develop deeper comprehension of the time period and course material. Following the museum visit, the class brainstorms a concept and structure for the pop-up, and students are prompted to develop proposals for an individual or group display to submit the next class session. The second day of week three is devoted to workshopping proposals. The instructor brings in a sample display as a guide. Students are asked to identify materials they will need to complete their display (instructor will provide these), and to develop a timeline and research agenda.

**Week Four** is devoted to conducting research, collaborating on research and planning, and developing and mounting the exhibition. Students also sign up for times to act as tour guides for visitors. There is then a significant debrief, reflection, and quiz following the experience.

**IV. SYLLABUS, ASSIGNMENTS & READINGS**

**SYLLABUS (Schedule of Readings and Assignments)**

**III. Intoxicating Brews: Coffee, Coffeehouses, and London Society**

**Week I.**
- Pope, *Rape of the Lock* (cantos I-III)
- Pope, *Rape of the Lock* (cantos IV-V)
- Hogarth, *Rake’s Progress and Marriage à la Mode*

**Week II.**
- Perspectives: Reading Papers (Addison, Steele, et al)
- Habermas, from *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*
- Walvin, “Coffee” from *Fruits of Empire: Exotic Produce and British Taste*
Exhibit proposal due

Week III. In-class visit to the Colonial Dames Museum; Activity: Designing an Exhibit
Workshopping of exhibits

Week IV. Mount the exhibits; student-led tours
Debrief & Reflection

Readings:

PRIMARY TEXTS:
Hogarth, The Rake’s Progress and Marriage à la Mode from Longman Anthology

“Perspectives: Reading Papers” section from Longman Anthology
News and Comment
from Mercurius Publicus [Anniversary of the Regicide]
from The London Gazette [The Fire of London]
from The Daily Courant No. 1 [Editorial Policy]
Daniel Defoe: from A Review of the State of the British Nation, Vol. 4, No. 21

Periodical Personae
Richard Steele: from Tatler No. 1 [Introducing Mr. Bickerstaff]
Joseph Addison: from Spectator No. 1 [Introducing Mr. Spectator]
from Female Spectator, Vol. 1, No. 1 [The Author’s Intent; Erminia]
Richard Steele: from Tatler No. 18 [The News Writers in Danger]
Joseph Addison: from Tatler No. 155 [The Political Upholsterer]
Joseph Addison: from Spectator No. 10 [The Spectator and Its Readers]

Getting, Spending, Speculating
Joseph Addison: Spectator No. 69 [Royal Exchange]
Richard Steele: Spectator No. 11 [Inkle and Yarico]
Advertisements from the Spectator

Pope, Alexander. Rape of the Lock from Longman Anthology

SECONDARY READINGS:


RECOMMENDED READING:
ASSIGNMENT

Requirements and Guidelines:

PROPOSAL:
Write a formal proposal of 2 to 3 pages for a display or artifact to be included in the coffeehouse museum. Your proposal should include:

- a description of your exhibit;
- a rationale for what your exhibit adds to the museum and why it should be included;
- a timeline, research agenda, and materials needed for completing it.

If working in a group, the group should submit one proposal that identifies the contribution of each group member.

EXHIBIT:

- Create a museum plaque with explanatory text to accompany the display. The plaque should include a significant quote from one of the readings that exemplifies your topic and concept, and any research sources used in its creation.
- Execute/produce and mount your display and plaque.
- Post-mortem reflection.

Goals:

- Develop, produce, and mount an artifact or interactive display for the coffeehouse exhibit
- Summarize key course concepts in writing (exposition, concision, rhetorical situation) through a plaque to accompany the artifact or display
- Articulate and execute an action plan (project proposal)
- Meet deadlines
- Read analytically and respond to, curate, and produce effective multimodal communication
- Articulate a meaningful individual and intellectual connection to the course materials

V. TEACHING THE UNIT – FALL 2018

In fall 2018, I included the coffeehouse unit and pop-up in an Honors section of the course “EWL 317. Reading the 18th Century,” an advanced interdisciplinary perspectives course in Marymount’s General Education curriculum. The pop-up museum served in lieu of a midterm exam concluding a four-week unit on coffee and coffeehouse culture in London.

The first two weeks of the coffeehouse unit were dedicated to discussion of the assigned readings, with special attention to the social, cultural, and political importance of coffee and coffeehouses in the period. Students were assigned responsibility for presenting particular texts in class, so that discussion was
student-focused and purpose-driven, as I kept the museum endgoal on our radar each session. At the end of each class session, students were asked to write something interesting or unexpected they learned about coffee that day, and what more they wanted to know about it. As part of the brainstorming and planning process in Week Three, students were also asked to walk in groups of two or three in different four-block radiuses around the College in order to document the number and kinds of coffee establishments in the immediate Marymount area. The goal was for the students to reflect on coffee culture today—its prevalence, character, clientele, business, and services—as a starting point for comparison and contrast with what they were to learn and discover about the first coffeehouses in England.

In Week Three, students visited the Colonial Dames Museum in Manhattan which specializes in 17th- and 18th-century colonial New York history. There the students learned about the decorative arts and social customs of the period, including learning to dance a minuet in costume. They were encouraged to visit other museums on their own to think more deeply about exhibition formats and goals.

During brainstorming, students chose both to develop informational displays and to recreate an 18th-century London coffeehouse (an immersive model based on the Colonial Dames Museum). They subsequently planned and produced interactive displays individually or in groups that showed the connections among the rise of coffee, coffeehouses, newspapers (and other periodical literature), commodity culture, and liberal democracy. Students also connected coffee’s past with its continued importance in culture today. The coffee-house was named “Julian’s” after a notorious figure at the coffeehouses mentioned widely in the periodical literature of the period though his identity remains more legend than fact.

The final outcome was a three-day research-based pop-up museum open to the College community, and which included student-led in-person and video tours of the exhibits (the latter posted on Facebook), and digital audio guides created by the students. Because this was an honors section, the level of intellectual engagement, creativity, and polish was high and resulted in excellent final exhibits. Students helped each other problem-solve, shared research, and developed highly-creative projects, from a Clue-style board game based on actual 18th-century criminal cases and characters, to “Julian’s”-branded coffee tokens (named after a notorious coffeehouse denizen), and a BuzzFeed quiz matching players with the appropriate 18th-century coffeehouse (and its closest counterpart in contemporary New York). As a result, the pop-up revealed the 18th-century origins of many aspects of U.S. café culture today—from the Starbucks mermaid logo (an image popular on 18th-century coffee-house signs) to the café-as-workspace. Students created a comment box (styled after a coffeehouse letter box designed by Hogarth) and a guestbook that invited visitors to weigh in on the coffee debate (modeled on the “letters to the editor”).
Students were also sensitive to the issue of accommodating visitors with disabilities and created audio guides for each display. Students created eight exhibits in total:

2. *Coffeehouses, Periodical Literature & the Public Sphere*
3. *Coffee as Medicinal and Recreational Drug in 18th-Century London* (collaboration between a pre-med and Theatre arts student)
4. *17th & 18th-Century Coffee Preparation* (with free coffee samples)
5. *Coffeehouse “personalities”*
6. *Changing Gender Dynamics of Coffeehouses*
7. *Coffeehouse Crimes & Legal Cases: Clue-Style Board Game*

The museum was mounted in a room off the main cafeteria, a high-traffic area. It was visited by several classes, the college President, and hundreds of individual students, staff, and faculty over the three days. As students became the teachers, they worked collaboratively and creatively to produce a sensory and intellectual experience that was as engaging as it was eye-opening for their peers and the wider college community. It was exciting to see student voices fill the room—not just the students in the course who designed, built, and launched the pop-up, but also the student-visitors (and staff and faculty visitors) who were empowered as co-creators and co-producers of the experience. Everyone involved became active and reflective participants in the process of meaning-making.

**Promotional Flyer**
VI. FINAL REFLECTIONS

The payoff for devoting several weeks to the project was an increase in understanding of critical terms and concepts, confidence with comprehension of course material, development of a purpose-driven research agenda, and ownership of learning. It also made for a good transition from our study of London to the next and final unit on Paris, and inspired interesting final research projects.

One unexpected outcome was that the museum offered a learning opportunity for other courses. Several instructors brought their classes to view the exhibit, and in some cases were given guided tours by the professor and/or students. One professor who brought two sections of a Journalism course wrote me afterward: “I was really impressed with the way you guided the students to use coffee as a vehicle to examine so many other aspects of society, including feminism and commodification. I was impressed with the links to present day popular culture but also the strong ties to history. You really got me thinking about branding and other ideas connected to this period and today. . . . What a creative endeavor.”

Faculty in Business and in Communication Arts have subsequently proposed collaborating on a future expansion of the pop-up museum.

Most importantly, the pop-up assignment reversed the traditional student-teacher dynamic, while involving and valorizing all voices in the class. The format motivated students by providing choice and
negotiation opportunities. The quieter and less confident students became vocal and engaged, even taking on leadership roles within their groups and the class as a whole. The pop-up allowed for integration of prior learning and development of customized pathways into the material and their research projects. Indeed, the unconventional assignment allowed students to express multiple facets of their identities (learner, teacher, activist, barista, poet, and so on). The opportunity to discover and admire the students’ various talents and capabilities (not always apparent in a literature classroom) turned out to be one of the unexpected delights of embracing the pop-up format. For example, one student worked as a barista off-campus and chose to research the kinds, methods, and paraphernalia for making coffee in the eighteenth century—and then used these to brew coffee that closely approximated what customers drank in the eighteenth century (including offering mustard and vinegar as condiments!). Another student, although an English and Pre-Med double major, chose to do his project on the economics of coffee, embracing the pop-up’s interventionist potential to raise awareness about the sources and effects of coffee assumption around the world.

Finally, the labor-intensive, creative project turned out to be a wonderful bonding experience. The ephemeral nature of the work served to heighten creativity and foster collaborative and cooperative freedom.

Like all experiments, the endeavor also had its challenges. Lack of funding and scheduling constraints set limits on what we could accomplish within the pop-up framework. The quality of the exhibit items varied depending on student motivation and priorities. It might be helpful to assign each student a role beyond their responsibility for their individual display, such as project manager, marketer, head curator, community liaison, and so on, creating a clear flowchart of work for each position.

Overall, it was a positive experience that allowed for the maintenance of rigorous expectations for research and written communication, while embracing digital, visual, and kinetic expression. The success of the museum has raised the profile of the Literature Department on campus, and added excitement to our course offerings. Perhaps the greatest feature of the pop-up format is its flexibility. It can be used in almost any discipline, for almost any topic; expanded to an entire semester, or reduced to a week (the flash pop-up); replace student presentations, final exams, or traditional research essays; open a semester, close it, or provide a useful transition between segments. Pop-ups are a lot of work—for the students and the instructor—however, they offer an opportunity for collaboration, bonding, creativity, and fun. Most importantly, they allow students to become teachers, not only in the bounded space of the classroom but on the open stage of the campus.
FROM CLASSROOM TO COFFEE-HOUSE: An Immersive Model for Teaching the 18th Century

ASECS March 19, 2020
Innovative Course Design Panel
Cecilia Feilla, Marymount Manhattan College
Course: EWL 317. Reading the Eighteenth Century (Honors Section)

Type: General Education course (International & Cultural Perspectives requirement); also fulfills requirement in English & World Literatures major

Description: This course explores select writers of the 18th c., with focus on the many purposes, genres, and styles that characterize the era. The aim is for students to develop an understanding of some of the major works of the period while also examining the links between the literature and the complex intellectual, social, and cultural milieu in which it was produced.

The topic for the current semester is “Sex and the City.” We will read literary works that engage issues of urban geography and its intersection with sexual identities, markets, practices, crimes, and fantasies in eighteenth-century London and Paris. Topics to be explored include desire, luxury, seduction, pleasure, gender identity, commodity culture, and fashion. We will also read select works of urban and gender theory. (from syllabus)
Course Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the semester, students will:

- Demonstrate an understanding of select literature and culture of eighteenth-century Europe in historical and global context;
- Exhibit knowledge of issues in urban and gender studies;
- Demonstrate an understanding of literary forms and genres (comedy, satire, essay, lyric, novel);
- Demonstrate understanding of literature’s contribution to local and global cultures;
- Analyze literature and theory closely and critically;
- Communicate their knowledge of eighteenth-century literature and culture verbally and in writing.
**Assignment:**

*Pop-Up Museum on Coffeehouse Culture in 18th-Century London*

In lieu of a midterm exam, students will produce a pop-up museum. Students will work in teams to design and execute a display based on the exhibit theme. This will require research, creativity, planning, and teamwork. Detailed guidelines and requirements will be distributed as the due date approaches. (from the syllabus)
Assignment Guidelines:

You will work individually or in a group to:

• Design, develop, and mount an artifact or display for the exhibit;
• Submit a proposal for your contribution (description, rationale, timeline, research agenda)
• Conduct independent research relevant to your contribution to the pop-up;
• Write, print, and mount a plaque to accompany the artifact/object (must be descriptive and explanatory, and include a relevant quote from one of the texts read in class);
• Be available to give tour(s) and answer questions about the exhibit;
• Take down exhibit and post-mortem reflection.
Assignment Goals:

After completing this assignment, students will have:

- Designed, developed, and executed a multimodal presentation about coffee and coffeehouse culture in the 17th and 18th centuries
- Effectively presented their ideas orally, visually, and in writing
- Demonstrated and applied knowledge of the course material
- Summarized key concepts and information from the course and their own research
- Developed a research agenda
- Articulated and executed an action plan (project proposal)
- Met deadlines
- Analyzed, discussed, and responded to course readings
Brainstorming and Planning:

To begin thinking about the exhibit, students will:

• walk in groups of 2-3 in different 4-block radiuses from the college, and document the number and kinds of coffee establishments you find;
• report back on findings, incl. the products for sale and clientele on site
• visit a museum (both as a class and on your own) to learn more about the period and to think more deeply about exhibits.
• In-class brainstorming on overall museum format, and on individual displays and research
Coffee-House Unit Readings:

Preparatory readings in the third unit of the syllabus, “Intoxicating Brews: Coffee, Tea, and London Society” included:

Primary
• Pope, *The Rape of the Lock*
• Addison & Steele, articles from the *Spectator* and *Tatler* on coffeehouses
• Haywood, from *The Female Spectator*
• Defoe, select newspaper articles

Secondary
• Habermas, excerpt from *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*
• Chapter on “Coffee” from Walvin, *Fruits of Empire: Exotic Produce and British Taste, 1660-1800* (1997)
Syllabus schedule

Part III: Intoxicating Brews: Coffee, Tea, and London Society

VI. 10/9  Pope, The Rape of the Lock (1712/1714)
      10/11  Pope, Rape of the Lock; *mapping 6*

      **In-class visit to the Colonial Dames Museum; meet in the lobby**

VII. 10/16  Pope, Rape of the Lock; **Essay 2 due**
       10/18  Addison, Steele, et al, articles from the Spectator and Tatler on coffeehouses
          Habermas, from *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere; mapping 7*
       10/19  Optional visit to the Morgan Library: 9:30am rare book tour; 11:30am exhibit tour

VIII. 10/23  In-class activity: Designing an Exhibit
            10/25  Workshopping of exhibits; **display proposal due**

IX. 10/30  ADVISEMENT DAY – No classes; **Mount the exhibit**
          11/1  Debrief & Reflection
Julian's Coffeehouse

An Introduction to London's Coffee Culture

October 30 – November 1, 2018
Carson Hall Café Room
Organized by Dr. Cecilia Feilla's Honors Section of
EWL 317: Reading the 18th Century

Student led tours will be available from 12:00-3:00pm
on Tuesday, October 30th

Free coffee to the first 20 visitors!

Including exhibits on
Eighteenth-century coffee preparation
Pharmacological effects of coffee
Changing gender dynamics of coffeehouses
Coffeehouse crime and the 18th century fear of this new “drug”

Email cfeilla@mmm.edu for more information.
12 students created eight exhibits in total:

(1) Global Economics of Coffee: Then & Now (interactive digital exhibit)
(2) Coffeehouses, Periodical Literature & the Public Sphere
(3) Coffee as Medicinal and Recreational Drug in 18th-Century London
   (collaboration between a pre-med and Theatre arts student)
(4) 18th-Century Coffee Preparation (with free samples!)
(5) Coffeehouse “personalities”: Diversity of sites, clients, purposes
(6) Changing Gender Dynamics of Coffeehouses
(7) “Clue”-style Boardgame based on Coffeehouse Crimes & Legal Cases
(8) Coffeehouse Rules, Etiquette, Iconography & Advertising
Global Economics of Coffee, Then & Now

2.25 billion cups of coffee are consumed every day.

10,000,000 tons of coffee are produced every year.

Coffee is a $100 billion industry.

Coffee is the second most traded commodity in the world, behind oil.

Vietnam - Germany
15% of Vietnam's coffee produce is exported to Germany.
Coffeehouse “personalities” – Buzzfeed quiz
Coffeehouse (Pop) Culture: A Gendered History
Coffeehouse “Clue” Boardgame: Based on Crimes & Legal Cases
Coffeehouse Rules, Etiquette, Iconography & Advertising
Student’s Favorite Research Findings

• 3x more coffeehouses in 17th c. London than Starbucks® in Manhattan today
• women were barred from entering coffeehouses (unless she was the proprietress)
• the king and women activists tried to ban coffee — unsuccessfull
• popular “molly houses” (homosexual clubs) opened under the mask of coffeehouses
• mustard was a popular addition to coffee in the 18c
• coffee was sold at apothecaries not shops
Student Experience Findings

Students appreciated:
• creativity/fun/collaboration/bonding
• deep dive into a single topic
• ability to choose their own focus within the topic
• opportunity to apply prior learning to new topic
• making material personal
• public aspect; being the expert
• excitement of discovery and sharing of research (felt there needs to be a real museum of coffee!)

Students did not appreciate:
• time crunch
• academic rather than personal connection to material
• short display time
• amount of additional labor and time
Faculty Experience Findings

Benefits:
• flexibility of pop-up format (customizable by topic, assignment, length of unit)
• reversed traditional student-teacher dynamic (students became teachers)
• engaged/valorized all voices in the class
• promoted personal and professional connections to the material
• developed purpose-driven research, and student ownership of learning
• made 18th-century material relevant to life today
• interdisciplinary: drew on students’ majors, interests, and prior learning
• potential for cross-departmental collaboration (colleagues in Communication Arts and Business proposed joining courses on a future pop-up)
• raised the department’s profile on campus
• created a community of researchers (student sharing of sources and ideas)

Challenges:
• a lot of work— for the students and the instructor
• funding (zero)
• uneven quality of displays
• time and space constraints
• perception by some that it was less “serious” than traditional assignments
Primary Sources:

Hogarth, *The Rake’s Progress* and *Marriage à la Mode* from *Longman Anthology of British Literature* (vol. 1c)

“Perspectives: Reading Papers” section from *Longman Anthology*

*News and Comment*
- *from* Mercurius Publicus [Anniversary of the Regicide]
- *from* The London Gazette [The Fire of London]
- *from* The Daily Courant No. 1 [Editorial Policy]
  - Daniel Defoe: *from* A Review of the State of the British Nation, Vol. 4, No. 21

*Periodical Personae*
- Richard Steele: *from* Tatler No. 1 [Introducing Mr. Bickerstaff]
- Joseph Addison: *from* Spectator No. 1 [Introducing Mr. Spectator]
  - *from* Female Spectator, Vol. 1, No. 1 [The Author’s Intent; Erminia]
- Richard Steele: *from* Tatler No. 18 [The News Writers in Danger]
- Joseph Addison: *from* Tatler No. 155 [The Political Upholsterer]
- Joseph Addison: *from* Spectator No. 10 [The Spectator and Its Readers]

*Getting, Spending, Speculating*
- Joseph Addison: Spectator No. 69 [Royal Exchange]
- Richard Steele: Spectator No. 11 [Inkle and Yarico]
- Advertisements from the *Spectator*

Pope, Alexander. *Rape of the Lock* from *Longman Anthology*
Secondary Sources

