

S: Charming Lovers, Beautiful Toy-Boys, Pick-me-Girls and Bossy Girls: “Feminist” Love Narratives

Seminar Description:

Romantic fiction has emerged as one of the thriving genres in contemporary literature, particularly within the burgeoning digital book market. This seminar will explore the prevalent trend of “feminist” love narratives, a genre historically pioneered by female authors who intricately wove their own stories of love while negotiating societal gender norms. Notably, Jane Austen’s works have left an indelible mark on both literature and modern fan fiction, highlighting the enduring relevance of female perspectives on romance.

In an era characterized by increased feminist consciousness, we observe a paradox: the visibility of female subjectivity appears to be diminishing. This is particularly striking in light of the self-assured depictions of women in both everyday life and literary works. Our inquiry will delve into the nature of this perceived disappearance. Are contemporary narratives genuinely feminist, or do they merely masquerade as such? What are the implications for women's self-perception and agency within these narratives?

This seminar aims to critically assess the intersection of feminism and female subjectivity in today’s cultural landscape, questioning the authenticity of the narratives that shape women’s experiences and identities. Through this lens, we seek to redefine what it means to be a woman in contemporary society or a heroine in literature.