

## **Spring 2012**

### **English 5000 Captivity Narratives**

Professor Jeanne Holland

### **English 5280 Nineteenth Century British Literature**

Professor Eric Nye

Milton's influence on his successors cannot be ignored. In the eighteenth century the Miltonic mode dominates forms of poetry and the political commitments of men and women of letters. But with the coming of the romantics, Milton's influence shifts. We will study the profound significance of *Paradise Lost* for Blake, Wordsworth, and Coleridge. How do they deal with the anxiety of influence? How do their successors in the second generation? Are there other, subtler ways that Milton continues to shape forms of literature less obviously indebted to him? For example, it could be argued that Jane Austen's whole career is spent trying to demonstrate the reversibility of male-female antagonism spawned in Eden. What are the prospects for the restoration of paradise, of felicity between the sexes? How does Milton help supply the romantics with visions of integrity, hope, and the literary vocation?

### **English 5530 Contemporary Critical Theory: Affect Theory: A Cultural History of Emotion.**

Professor Julia Obert

This course serves in part as an introduction to a mode of thought: we will approach critical theory less as a monolithic 'discipline' – a set of "difficult" philosophical texts to be read, summarized, and set aside at semester's end – than as an analytical tool that we can usefully apply in an ongoing way to life and to literature. The course is also a look into an emerging critical field: affect theory draws on psychology, neurobiology, cultural studies, and more to try and help us understand that most inscrutable of human motivations: our feelings. Throughout the semester, we will look at what, exactly, emotion is, where it comes from, and how it affects our orientations towards the world. We will also examine emotion historically (why did the Victorians consider "hysteria" a viable medical diagnosis?) and culturally (why are different 'feeling-states' variously valued and regulated by different cultural groups?), ultimately coming to understand affective encounters, at least in part, as socially constructed experiences. We will read a series of key theoretical texts over the course of the semester, and will also apply their (and our) insights to literature, film, and other cultural phenomena (the intensity of feeling inspired by, say, Obama's election or the prospective building of the Islamic Cultural Center in New York). The course serves as a useful introduction to the kinds of theoretical work you will likely encounter throughout graduate school.

### **English 5870 Feminist Methodologies**

Professor Mary P. Sheridan

This course introduces you to common methods (e.g., archival research; discourse analysis; interviews; ethnography) used to examine textually-mediated research projects. Within this overview, we will investigate what makes certain methods feminist ones.

Likely questions that will ground this course include: How do we determine viable and responsible research projects? What are ethical considerations of representation, of both living participants and dead subjects? How do we limit the contexts in which we frame our research? How do we negotiate our relationships with our participants? Our institutions? And our field?

Likely texts include a course packet as well as Gesa E. Kirsch's *Ethical Dilemmas in Feminist Research: The Politics of Location, Identification and Publication*; Nancy Naples' *Feminism & Method: Ethnography, Discourse Analysis, and Activist Research*; Eileen E. Schell and K.J. Rawson's *Rhetorica in Motion: Feminist Rhetorical Methods and Methodologies*.

### **English 5880 “‘Stop the Presses’: Digital Poetics and the Future of Literary Scholarship”**

Professor Andy Fitch

In classic American films, a newspaper reporter screams “Stop the presses!” whenever he or she comes across an urgent, unexpected story. In this course we will examine one of the most urgent stories to hit contemporary literary practice: a story concerning the impact that digital databases, web-based journals and computer-generated critical discussions have on whom we read, how we study, and which media we deem worthy of scholarly attention. “Stop the Presses” will focus on the field of 20th/21st-century experimental poetry—in order to ask broader questions about how we absorb, analyze, classify and preserve literary texts. We will expand the conception of a poetic text by treating audio- and video-recordings of live poetic performances as accessible, primary-source documents. We will explore connections between twenty-first century poetry, art, music, dance and film by perusing digital databases from each of these disciplines. We will survey the leading digital publications available to contemporary poets, students and scholars, and we will study recent literary works designed through computer-based compositional techniques.