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NEWS

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For Immediate Release:

WHAM KEYNOTE EVENT TO FOCUS ON HARRIET TAYLOR MILL AS A LOVER AND A MOTHER

CHARLESTON – Guest speaker Jo Ellen Jacobs will discuss Harriet Taylor Mill's roles as a lover and a mother – with emphasis on the former – when she comes to campus next week as the keynote speaker for Eastern Illinois University's Women's History and Awareness Month celebration.

Jacobs, who is a professor of philosophy at Millikin University in Decatur and a resident of Charleston, will begin her talk at 7 p.m. Monday, March 3, in the Charleston/Mattoon Room of the University Union. Admission is free and open to the public.

Jacobs plans to examine the relationship between Harriet Taylor Mill and her second husband, philosopher John Stuart Mill. The couple met in 1830 while Mrs. Taylor was still married to her first husband, John Taylor, and the ensuing relationship led to both the deterioration of her marriage and rumors of scandal among their friends.

Jacobs will discuss how Mrs. Taylor and Mill continued to collaborate – both emotionally and professionally – over the next 20 years. John Taylor died of cancer in May 1849 and, two years later, Mrs. Taylor and Mill married.

Monday's discussion also will address Taylor's mothering skills, including her portrayal as an alleged "controlling demon" to her daughter and two sons.

Jacobs, who received her undergraduate degree from Eastern, later attended both La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia, and Boston College, where she received her master's degree. She completed her doctoral work at Washington University in St. Louis.

Her specialties in the field of teaching include philosophical ideas in literature, ancient philosophy and humanities. Jacobs has taught at Millikin since 1981.

Jacobs' presentation is one of several events scheduled in commemoration of Eastern's WHAM 2003 celebration. A listing of other events can be found at <http://www.eiu.edu/~pubaff/events.htm>.