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ENG 5000-001: Introduction to Methods and Issues in English Studies

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Subjectivity, Narrative, and the Need to Know

This course is designed for the advanced study of current methods and issues in literary studies in English. Such fields of inquiry include literary form, history, psychology, gender, class, race, and disability. Based broadly in the study of narrative, the course will examine issues of characterization, plot development, rhetorical strategies, major historical developments in the novel, theories of emotion, and political economy. It will introduce you to several current theoretical approaches to literary study. The course will consider the swelling importance—and alternate diminishment—of the subject from the perspective of Romantic-era-texts. Looking at the history of the rise of modern market culture from the eighteenth through the nineteenth centuries, the course starts with the premise that narratives not only gave generic shape to readers’ consumer expectations, but also popularized a new and rampant cult of feeling. The course asks questions about subjectivity that are highly relevant to today’s conceptions of consumer identity. It is no coincidence that narratives of all sorts have one thing in common: they must center on a person—or a thing that shows the features of a person. As J. Hillis Miller puts it, “without personification there can be no storytelling.” What does it mean, after all, to have a story to tell? To be a subject? Freedom or subjection or a blend of the two? How does the subject express desires, or hide them? Who listens to the subject, or shuts her down? And why does narrative so often recount a need to know more information about others and the self?

Texts


Reading
As this is a graduate-level literature course, there will be reading aplenty. I expect every member of our class to keep up with the reading and be prepared for seminar discussion. There will be approximately 100-150 pages of fiction and roughly 50 pages of literary criticism or theory per week. Keep up by pacing yourself. Even with 150 pages of nineteenth-century prose to read every week, for example, this would mean only 30 pages for each of 5 days.

I have placed several essays and fictional excerpts on e-Reserves for our class. You will need to print out and bring each assigned reading to class.

Requirements
Participation in seminar discussion (20%)
Short writing assignments and class presentation (20%)
Essay One (20%)
Essay Two (40%)

LATE POLICY: Essays—and all other assignments—are due at the beginning of class.

1) Late essays will be marked a full grade lower for every day late. Essays turned in a week past the deadline will be given a “zero.”
2) Short at-home writing assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class. Late ones will not be accepted.
3) In-class writing assignments and quizzes must be turned in by the end of class, and cannot be “made up” at a later date.

EMAILING POLICY: I want to get to know you and your work this semester. Thus I ask that you call me or stop by my office during office hours (or other scheduled times) so that we can talk. DO NOT EMAIL ME TO ASK FOR AN “UPDATE” ON MISSED ASSIGNMENTS, OR TO EXPLAIN AN ABSENCE. Working groups will be assigned so that you can contact group members for notes and missed work.

ESSAY FORMAT: Your paper should be paper-clipped. It must include page numbers. Format: 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, with one-inch margins.

Plagiarism
Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in a failing grade on the assignment, if not for the course. I will follow the departmental policy on plagiarism:

“Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—‘The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one’s own original work’ (Random House Dictionary of the English Language)—has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignments, of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.”

Always submit your papers using correct MLA (Modern Language Association) format.
**Professor Park / English 5000-001: Schedule of Classes, first half of the semester—subject to revision**

I’will distribute the schedule for the second half of the semester at a later date.

**WEEK ONE**  
Monday 1/12  
Introductions; *The Rise of the Novel and the Need to Know*  
--Ian Watt, “Realism and the Novel Form” (from *The Rise of the Novel*)—handout  
--J. Hillis Miller, “Narrative” (from *Critical Terms for Literary Study*)—handout  
--Jeremy Bentham, from *Panopticon; or, The Inspection-House* (1787)—handout

**WEEK TWO**  
1/19  
MLK Day, no class, READ!  
--William Godwin, *Things As They Are; or, the Adventures of Caleb Williams* (1794):  
   Editor’s Introduction and Volume I (pp. 55-175)

**WEEK THREE**  
1/26  
The Subject  
--Michel Foucault, from *Discipline and Punish*—handout  
--John Bender, “Impersonal Violence: The Penetrating Gaze and the Field of Narration in *Caleb Williams*” (from *Vision and Textuality*)—e-Reserves

**WEEK FOUR**  
2/2  
Sentiment  
--Adam Smith, from *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759)  
--*Caleb Williams*  
   Volume II in part (pp. 179-294); skip pp. 297-407  
   Volume III in part (pp. 408-434)  
   Appendix A (pp. 435-50): 1) original manuscript ending and 2) Preface to *Fleetwood* (1832)  
--Peter Brooks, “Narrative Desire”—e-Reserves  
--Adela Pinch, “Emotional Extravagance” (from *Strange Fits of Passion*)—e-Reserves

**WEEK FIVE**  
2/9  
Character: Last Vestige of Humanity?  
--William Wordsworth, from *The Prelude*: 1) 1799 *Prelude*, Part One, lines 1-374  
   2) 1805 *Prelude*, Book 7 (London), lines 589-741  
--Alex Woloch, *The One vs. the Many*: Introduction (pp. 12-42)  
--E.M. Forster, “Flat and Round Characters”—handout

**WEEK SIX**  
2/16  
Alienation  
--Adela Pinch, “Sentimentality and Experience in Charlotte Smith’s Sonnets” (from *Strange Fits of Passion*)  
--Deidre Lynch, “Jane Austen and the Social Machine” (from *The Economy of Character*)—e-Reserves  
--Alex Woloch, “Repetition and Eccentricity: Minor Characters and the Division of Labor” (155-66)  
--Alan Liu, *The Laws of Cool* (pages to be announced)

**WEEK SEVEN**  
2/23  
Action  
--Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park*: Volume I (pp. 35-190)  
--Anne-Lise François, *Open Secrets*: “Toward a Theory of Recessive Action” in part (pp. 1-38)

**WEEK EIGHT**  
3/2  
The Imperial Subject  
--*Mansfield Park*: Volume II (pp. 193-314)  
--Anne-Lise François, *Open Secrets*: “Fanny’s Labor of Privacy” in part (pp. 218-34)  
--Edward Said, from *Culture and Imperialism*  

**WEEK NINE**  
3/9  
CONFERENCES—PAPER ONE DUE  
--*Mansfield Park*: Volume III (pp. 317-468)  
--Anne-Lise François, *Open Secrets*: “Fanny’s Labor of Privacy” in part (pp. 234-68)
GRADING CRITERIA FOR ASSIGNMENTS

For your

Reference

"A" Range: Outstanding. Original and creative ideas developed exceptionally well. Assignment is flawlessly revised and proofread.

Content: A persuasive, insightful presentation of your own ideas that excels in responding to the assignment.
Organization: Identifies and responds to the needs of the audience clearly.
Evidence: Clearly states and specifies thesis or central idea.
Style: One that is well-structured, clearly written and logical.

"B" Range: Displays sound understanding of the topic, some originality, and a sense of the issues involved in writing a persuasive report. Rather than mere exposition; proofreading needed, mostly finished; may have one or two of the following problems:

Content: Structure and argument are clear, but ideas lack depth and/or detail.
Organization: Does not progress much beyond cliched ideas.
Evidence: Evidence is not integrated. Use of evidence to prove and flesh out the central idea.
Style: Language is clear and concise with few grammatical or stylistic errors.

"C" Range: Displays either an uneven performance (serious flaws of comprehension and/or presentation); competent exposition without a real attempt at thinking through the assignment; further revision needed; essay has not been proofread; may have three of the problems outlined in the "B" range and/or:

Content: No thesis or discernible argument.
Organization: Introduction too vague. Failure to adequately address needs of the audience.
Evidence: Little actual analysis. Few relevant pieces of evidence.
Style: Word choice often imprecise. Inconsistent tone and voice.

"D" Range: Paper is incoherent. It does not answer an assigned or approved topic. Displays fundamental misunderstanding of the topic. Major revising needed. Needs like a first draft. Has idea of more of the problems outlined in the "C" range. It does not fulfill page requirements.

"F" Range: Report submitted. Report has been plagiarized. Incorporates another author’s ideas or language without acknowledgment. It actually written by someone else.

COMMENTS: