

Milton
English 3350
Dr. Paul Wright
Spring 2004
TR 1:00-2:15, Tolentine 316

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Course Description

This course aims at an historically-informed understanding of the English Civil War through the lens of one of the era's most controversial poetic innovators, John Milton. This semester, we will not only be reading Milton's poetic masterpieces such as *Paradise Lost* and *Samson Agonistes*, but we will also examine his political prose and his career in the Republican regime of Cromwell. A key goal will be to contextualize Milton's literary efforts by looking at other political writing of the period, as well as dipping into some of the best historiography on the era. Lastly, we will devote some time to subsequent appropriations of Milton in literature and film. Requirements: regular attendance and committed participation; occasional reading quizzes; 3 papers; oral final exam. This course is designated "writing enriched" according to university guidelines; therefore, expect writing to be an important part of your work this term.

Breakdown of Grading Policy

Mandatory Requirement—ATTENDANCE (You are allowed TWO unexcused absences; beyond that you must give me a valid explanation for any absences, including a doctor's note in the case of illness.)

Mandatory Requirement—BEING ON TIME (If you are inordinately late, you will be marked as absent from the class.)

Mandatory Requirement—BRINGING TEXTS TO CLASS READY TO DISCUSS THEM

Unless these three basic obligations are met, passing the course is **not** possible. Given good attendance, punctuality, and reading, the grading breaks down as follows:

PARTICIPATION (25%)

FINAL EXAMINATION (20%)

ESSAYS (3) (45%) (Note: Essays that are do not meet length requirements or that are turned in late will be *substantially* marked down.)

READING QUIZZES (2) (10%)

Required Texts (available from the University Bookstore)

1. Orgel & Goldberg (eds.), *John Milton: The Major Works* (Oxford UP, ISBN 019280409x)
2. Elledge (ed.), *Paradise Lost* (Norton Critical Edition, 2nd ed., ISBN 0393962938)
3. Wootton (ed.), *Divine Right and Democracy* (Penguin, ISBN 0140432507)
4. Hill, *The Century of Revolution: 1603-1714* (Norton, ISBN 0393300161)

Schedule of Meetings & Assignments (key written assignments in bold)

Tuesday 1/13: Introductions

Thursday 1/15: "On the Morning of Christ's Nativity"; "On Time"; "On Shakespeare, 1630"; "On the University Carrier"; "Another on the Same"; "On the Death of a Fair Infant"

Tuesday 1/20: *Of Education*; "Canzone"; Sonnet 7 ("How soon hath time"); "L' Allegro"; "Il Penseroso"

Thursday 1/22: "Lycidas"

Tuesday 1/27: *Comus*

Thursday 1/29: *Comus*

Tuesday 2/3: Sonnet 15 ("On the Late Massacre in Piedmont"); Sonnet 16 ("When I consider how my light is spent"); Sonnet 19 ("Methought I saw my late espoused saint"); "On the New Forcers of Conscience"; Hooker, *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity (Divine Right & Democracy*, pp. 217-29)

Thursday 2/5: Elegy 1 (To Charles Diodati); Elegy 6 (To Charles Diodati, Staying in the Country); *Ad patrem* ("To My Father")

Tuesday 2/10: Introduction to Key Issues of the Civil War; James I, excerpts from *The Trew Law of Free Monarchies* and *A Speech to the Lords and Commons, 1610*; *The Petition of Right*; Charles I, *His Majesties Answer to the Nineteen Propositions of Both Houses of Parliament*; Hobbes, *Philosophical Rudiments Concerning Government and Society (Divine Right & Democracy*, pp. 99-110; 168-75, 450-78)

Thursday 2/12: *England's Miserie and Remedie*; *The Putney Debates*; Winstanley, *A New Year's Gift for the Parliament and Armie (Divine Right & Democracy*, pp. 276-83; 285-333)
(ESSAY #1 DUE on Friday 2/13)

Hill, *Century of Revolution*, pt. 1 should be completed

Tuesday 2/17: Introduction to Milton's political career and prose; "On the Lord General Fairfax"; "To the Lord General Cromwell"; Marvell's "Horatian Ode" (will be available on reserve)

Thursday 2/19: *Areopagitica*

Tuesday 2/24: *Areopagitica* **(READING QUIZ #1)**

Thursday 2/26: excerpts from *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*; *An Act for the Abolishing the Kingly Office*; *An Act for Subscribing the Engagement*; Allen, *Killing Noe Murder (Divine Right & Democracy*, pp. 355-58; 360-88)

Tuesday 3/2: NO CLASS—SPRING BREAK

Thursday 3/4: NO CLASS—SPRING BREAK

Tuesday 3/9: excerpts from *The Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth*

Thursday 3/11: NO CLASS

Hill, *Century of Revolution*, pt. 2 should be completed

Tuesday 3/16: Introduction to Milton's major poems

Thursday 3/18: *Paradise Lost*, bks. 1-2

Tuesday 3/23: *PL*, bks. 3-4

Thursday 3/25: *PL*, bks. 5-6

Tuesday 3/30: *PL*, bks. 7-8 **(ESSAY #2 DUE on Wednesday 3/31)**

Thursday 4/1: *PL*, bks. 9-10; excerpts from *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*

Tuesday 4/6: *PL*, bks. 11-12
Thursday 4/8: NO CLASS—EASTER BREAK

Tuesday 4/13: *Paradise Regained* (READING QUIZ #2)
Thursday 4/15: *Paradise Regained*

Tuesday 4/20: *Samson Agonistes*
Thursday 4/22: *Samson Agonistes*; Mandeville, excerpts from *The Fable of The Bees* (*Divine Right & Democracy*, pp. 493-503)
Hill, *Century of Revolution*, pt. 3 should be completed

Tuesday 4/27: NO CLASS FOR US—FRIDAY CLASS DAY (ESSAY #3 DUE)
Wednesday 4/28, 7PM: Screening of *The Devil's Advocate* (location TBA)
Thursday 4/29: excerpts from Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*; excerpts from Tolkien, *The Silmarillion* (materials will be available on reserve)

Friday 4/30: READING DAY
Tuesday 5/4, 1:30-4:00: FINAL EXAMINATION

Note: The final exam cannot be rescheduled for any reason. The only exception occurs when a student has three or more examinations on the same day.

Additional (and more intangible) Requirements

- Our keywords: *toleration, patience, intellectual flexibility, responsibility, accountability*. This is a course in which reading, writing, and discussion are continually integrated. We can't think of these processes as operating in a vacuum. They are fundamentally communal events that go well beyond a limited understanding of instruction. Let's suspend the idea that learning is transmitted from one who has knowledge to those who do not. Instead, let's consider ourselves fellow-travelers at various stages of preparation and development in our critical faculties. In that way, the class becomes less about expertise and authority, and far more about dialogue and exchange.

The Writing Component of the Course

- You are responsible for knowing the MLA documentation style as given in *A Writer's Reference* (the text you purchased for your Core Humanities seminars). Failure to abide by the handbook's conventions of punctuation, usage, etc. will result in *substantial* markdowns on essay assignments.
- Don't write to please me, but rather to engage your imagined audience. Stop envisioning writing as a combative process or an exercise in securing a favorable judgment. Write in service of ideas, not simply your grade.
- Critical thinking and reading are fundamentally signs of respect, not hostility. Don't shy away from these tools out of fear of giving (or taking) offense. Be tolerant but intellectually exacting, and you won't go wrong.
- Avoid sexist language and other forms of limiting expression. When in doubt, try to revise and restate.

Plagiarism, Cheating, and Miscellaneous Nastiness

- **An academic integrity violation will result in failure for the course, without exception.**
- There is a profound difference between learning and copying from others, whether they are your classmates, internet entrepreneurs, or long-dead scholars. Learning involves hard work, even when following in others' footsteps. It includes giving credit where credit is due, and it goes a long way towards my earlier advice about acknowledging limitations. By acknowledging the sources of our ideas, we both put them in their proper context and intellectually raise the bar for ourselves. Cutting

and pasting from the net, lifting from books, forging, having others take tests, etc.—these are all unnecessary, self-defeating, and subject to severe measures from me and any other self-respecting instructor. Lastly, you only do *yourself* a disservice when you disregard the conventions by which we recognize the hard work of others—cheating only shows that you do not belong in a community wherein we appreciate rather than exploit one another.

- Cheating can include misrepresentation as well as copying. This includes all forms of dishonesty whether intellectual, administrative, or otherwise detrimental to the work and sense of community we strive for in this course. Lying to me about reasons for absence is a close relative to the more obvious examples of integrity violations.
- Believe it or not, ethics is at heart *pragmatic*. You can accomplish much more through integrity, propriety, and the admission of intellectual indebtedness than you can cutting corners and kidnapping the expressions and ideas of others. In fact, I insist that cheating wastes more time than doing the work oneself.
- Having said all this, I understand that in many cases, especially with plagiarism, things get rather ambiguous. If necessary, I will devote class time to clarify what is meant by cheating in its various forms. Many students stumble into plagiarism rather than will it; we can discuss how to avoid these more innocent (but no less harmful) errors. And of course, when in doubt, talk to me. I will gladly help out.

Additional Resources, Clarifications, and Advice

In order for all of us to get the most possible out of our time together, the following resources will prove indispensable:

- *The Villanova Writing Center*, located in Dalton Room, Old Falvey 202 (Ph. 519-4604). Writing consultations are available by appointment or on a walk-in basis, but it is best to make appointments, particularly at peak times. Don't hesitate to go—no one's writing is too polished to benefit from a consultation, nor is anyone's writing too irredeemable. Certain writing assignments over the course of the term will require Writing Center visits.
- It is the policy of Villanova to make reasonable academic accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities. If you are a person with a disability and wish to request accommodations to complete your course requirements, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss the request. If you would like further information or are uncertain whether you are eligible for such accommodations, contact the Office of Learning Support Services at 519-5636, or visit the office in Geraghty Hall. Note that disabilities can include learning impediments as well as physical limitations.
- I'm available to help you with any course-related matter or academic issue. If you feel your problem is too personal or I feel it is beyond my expertise, I will do my best to direct you to an appropriate resource on campus. Do not feel your problems are ever trivial or can bear putting off—let me know right away if anything is impeding you in dealing with the demands or reaping the rewards of the course. I will keep an open mind if you will likewise keep me up-to-date on matters of importance to you, stressful or otherwise. I am thrilled to hear your good news as well as any problems or complaints.
- Take note of your classmates and fellow students campus-wide. You will likely learn as much from one another ultimately as from me. Don't let unhealthy forms of competitiveness or preconceptions about one another muddy the waters—consider and treat one another with the respect and toleration merited by colleagues and friends.