

English 335 (Milton)
Spring 1999

Prof. Robert Entzminger
Office: 312 Palmer
Hours: MWF 10-11
TT 1:30-2:30
Phone: 843-3981

In this course we will examine all of Milton's major poetry, and some of the prose, and its relationship to a variety of contexts and traditions. Among the questions we will consider are those of genre (pastoral, masque, epic); of heritage (the uses of the classical and Biblical traditions); of the intellectual and literary tradition of Renaissance humanism; of the political, religious, and literary consequences of the Protestant Reformation and the Puritan Revolution in England; of responses, contemporaneous and subsequent, to Milton's work. While the volume of reading is not especially heavy, the poetry requires, and repays, careful reading and rereading. I encourage you to come to class armed with questions--whether specific ("What does this line mean?"), general ("Why are there so many allusions?"), or cosmic ("What's the big deal about Milton?"); and I expect that you will come ready to discuss the questions that others raise.

TEXT:

The Riverside Milton, ed. Roy Flanagan (Houghton Mifflin, 1998)

REQUIREMENTS:

Short (3-5 page) paper	15%	
Midterm Exam		15%
Participation		20%
Term Paper		25%
Final Exam		25%

SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS (tentative):

Jan. 13 W Introduction to course

Toward the 1645 Poems: Humanism, Protestantism, Revolution

15 F **Finding a Voice**

Poems of Mr. John Milton, pp. 31-37

Poemata, pp. 172-94, 201-22

18 M MLK Day--No class

20 W "On the Morning of Christ's Nativity," pp. 38-47

Elegy 6, pp. 195-98

22 F Nativity Ode, cont.

25 M Poems, pp. 48-65

27 W L'Allegro and Il Penseroso, pp. 65-77

29 F L'All and Il Pens, cont.

Feb. 1 M Sonnets, pp. 77-88

Letter to a Friend, pp. 1049-50

To My Father, pp. 223

3 W **Milton and the Aristocracy**

Arcades, pp. 89-93

A Mask, pp. 120-71

5 F A Mask, cont.

8 M A Mask, cont.

10 W A Mask, cont.
Paper #1 due

12 F **Epitaphs and Elegies**
“On the Death of a Fair Infant . . . ,” pp. 247-49
Lycidas, pp. 94-107
Johnson on Lycidas

15 M Lycidas, cont.
Damon’s Epitaph, pp. 148-61

17 W Lycidas, cont.

Controversy, Revolution, Blindness

19 F Poems, pp. 250-54, pp. 228-35
Of Education, pp. 980-86

22 M An Apology . . . , pp. 690-95 in Hughes, ed.
Reason of Church Government, Second Book, pp. 920-25

24 W Poems, prose cont.

26 F **Midterm Exam**

March 1 M Areopagitica, pp. 987-1024

3 W Areopagitica, cont.
Poems, pp. 254-85

5 F Second Defense, pp. 1096-1118

6-14 Spring Break

Restoration: Epic, Brief Epic, Tragedy

15 M Paradise Lost, Book I
Genesis 1-3

17 W Bk. I, cont.
Eliot, “A Note on the Verse,” pp. 12-18 in Martz, ed.
Lewis, “The Style of Secondary Epic,” pp. 40-55 in Martz, ed.

19 F Bk. II
Blake and Shelley on Satan

22 M Bk. III-IV

24 W Bk. III-IV, cont.

26 F Bk. V-VI

Johnson on Paradise Lost, pp. 71-84 in Thorpe, ed.

29 M Bk. V-VI, cont.

31 W Bk. VII-VIII

April 1-4 Easter Break

5 M Bk. IX-X

7 W Bk. IX-X, cont.

9 F Bk. XI-XII

12 M Bk. XI-XII, cont.

14 W Paradise Regained, Book I
Matthew 3:16-17; 4:1-11; Mark 1:1-13; Luke 4:1-13

16 F Bk. II-III

19 M Bk. IV

21 W Early Lives, pp. 1-30

23 F Samson Agonistes
Judges 13-16

26 M Samson, cont.
Johnson on Samson

28 W Samson, cont.

30 F Samson, cont.
Term Paper due

FINAL EXAM: Friday, May 7, 8:30--11 a.m.

PLEASE NOTE:

1) Your discussion grade includes response papers, which will be assigned and submitted at various times during the semester, and may include one or more quizzes.

2) Papers are due at the beginning of class on the day assigned unless other arrangements are made ahead of time. A penalty of 10% per day will be assessed on all late papers. Papers more than one week late will not be accepted.

3) Habitual tardiness or absence will be penalized.

4) All work in this course will be fully pledged under the Honor System.

Interpreting Grades

A: Reserved for papers showing the highest quality of insight, organization, and style. It presents sophisticated ideas in an interesting way, with a clearly articulated thesis generating a logically developed argument and employing a style capable of expressing complex ideas in clearly and effectively. It should be virtually error-free.

B: Typically, a paper that presents sound ideas in an effective way, and employs a clear, mature style appropriate to college-level writing. It should have few if any errors.

C: Usually, a paper that expresses competently ideas that fail to go beyond the obvious or the commonplace. Often a C paper is one that gives the impression of “going through the motions.” It will fail to engage the reader because it has failed to engage the author. It may contain some errors, but not many and not serious ones.

D: A paper that lacks a clear point of view or fails to develop an argument, often because the author’s grasp of the material is at best superficial. Usually the style is also ineffective and may be marred by mistakes of a relatively serious nature.

F: An unacceptable paper, either because it shows a failure to understand the subject, because it is poorly written, usually with many mistakes, or both. Often it is the product of obvious haste, written without any serious thought or effort.