

## Modern Legacies

### **Angelina Del Balzo**

#### **HONR 2100 SECTION 1: Jane Austen Adaptations, T/Th 10:00-11:15 am**

Jane Austen is probably behind only Shakespeare among writers in the size of her footprint on popular culture. This class will read three Austen novels alongside literary and film adaptations of her work that feature protagonists in different cultural contexts including the Bennets' silent servants, Japanese American suburbanites, an Afro-Latina teen in gentrifying Brooklyn, two cousins in 20th-century England and Nigeria, and a privileged Los Angeles queen bee. Over the course of the semester, we will use these texts to think through important questions about art and culture. How do Austen's plots and style influence later reimaginings? What can modern Austen adaptations tell us about the way we understand race, culture, class, imperialism, gender, etc.? Why are Austen's novels so popular to adapt?

### **Robert Carney**

#### **HONR 2100 SECTION 2 and 3: Dystopian Literature**

"Do you think, then, that we should attempt such a survey? For it is, I assure you, too big a task to undertake without thought."

"We know what we are in for,' returned Adeimantus, 'go on.'" (58)

—Plato, *The Republic*

The questions raised by Plato are some that we will pursue all semester. They're foundational. The States and possible futures built on that foundation are too many to list, so we'll focus on a few renowned and lesser-known works in the dystopian genre and ask, "Futuristic fiction: paranoia or prophecy?" This is fun, of course, but not as easy as it sounds. There's a lot of academic attention paid to these works, and many scholars liken dystopian authors to Old Testament prophets speaking out in the predominant form of our age. Another way to think of it is this: These fictive works are philosophy and social critique done as *demonstration* rather than *discussion*. We'll be doing a little bit of both as we interpret novels, short-stories, philosophy, and film and do some discussing, group presenting, and writing.

### **Leslie Simon**

#### **HONR 2100 SECTION 4: NARRATOLOGY, MW 1:00-2:15**

Food for thought: Is storytelling a biological imperative for humans (it's how we *think*—our brains are wired that way) or a rhetorical structure (it's how we *present*—our cultures have conditioned us to process through stories)?

Narrative theorists write that the "past couple of decades have witnessed an explosion of interest in narrative," as story has come to be seen by scholars in various branches of the humanities, social sciences, and sciences as "a basic human strategy for coming to terms

with time, process, and change.”<sup>[1]</sup> This uptick in interest in narrative—in academic disciplines as wide ranging as medicine, philosophy, business, law, cognitive and social psychology, sociology, and of course literature, linguistics, and the arts—has been called a “narrative turn” in scholarship. We will study (and participate in) this “narrative turn” this semester, examining narrative theory alongside examples of storytelling from across time and around the globe. We will trace the evolution of storytelling practices from the oral (ancient) to the written (modern) to the interactive (postmodern), exploring how narrative takes shape through increasingly varied and complex media forms: epic poems, novels, plays, films, and television series, yes, but also digital media, online games, graphic novels, data sets, medical and legal narratives, and even course syllabi (!).

<sup>[1]</sup> David Herman, Brian McHale, and James Phelan, eds., *Teaching Narrative Theory* (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2010): 1.

**Tiffany Nez**

### **HONR 2100 SECTION X01: American Indian Experience**

**Description:** In this class, we would like to understand and reimagine a discussion about the American Indian experience, both as history and as current topics. But our approach won't focus on a pinned and preserved subject already on display; neither will it attempt to clear the ledgers or balance the books on historical debts and cultural trauma. We will consider the subject through a variety of disciplines: narrative, history, art, philosophy, religion, and science. I would like to encourage you as students to draw from your own backgrounds and fields of study to relate to the subjects in unique ways and facilitate discussions that explore the ongoing reality of this cultural exchange. We will read Louise Erdrich, Leslie Marmon Silko, Alexie Sherman, N. Scott Momaday, David Grann.