Stanford- Johns Hopkins
Philosophy & Literature Conference
The Ethics of Reading
May 3rd - 4th, 2024

The Philosophy & Literature Workshop at Stanford and the Alexander Grass Humanities Institute at Johns Hopkins welcome submissions for the 5th annual Philosophy & Literature Graduate Conference to be held in person on May 3rd - 4th, 2024 at Stanford University. This year's conference topic, "The Ethics of Reading" brings together doctoral students and scholars that work at the intersection of philosophy, literature, the arts, and media studies to reflect on the role of ethics in creating and engaging with literature and, more broadly, art of all forms.

Description:
In 1987, J. Hillis Miller published *The Ethics of Reading*, in which he asks us: "In what sense can or should the act of reading be itself ethical or have an ethical import?" In wrestling with Miller's question, we hope this conference can serve as a space to better understand the ethical obligations that we – as scholars, thinkers, and humans – owe to artworks. Indeed, we should inquire, as Candace Vogler does, as to how reading might respond to the question of how one should live. Is it necessary that life, as Miller puts it, "make a detour through the mirroring of art in order to become visible and hence lovable"? What does reading do for us? Need it to *do* anything? What do we owe to a text? To the beauty it gives life to? Is fictional empathy practical? Does it even exist?

Some contributions might explore the following lines of investigation:

1. The moral/immoral/amoral dimensions of reading
2. Different modes of reading of narratives, artworks, and virtual experiences
3. Narrative conceptions of self
4. Expressing the inexpressible, responding to the limits of representation
5. Ethics of art and artifice
6. Literary and interpretive communities
7. Care for and responsibility to artworks
8. The ethics of historical narration

Professors Elaine Scarry (Harvard University) and Toril Moi (Duke University) will each deliver a keynote address during the conference, and Professor Mark Greif (Stanford University) will lead a workshop entitled "Who's Reading in Your Head?".

Proposal submission
All submissions must be sent via email in a single Word document entitled "Last Name Stanford-JHU" to PhilLitGradConference@gmail.com no later than January 31, 2024, and include the following items: (1) an abstract (200 words max), (2) a short bio, (3) your full name, email address, and affiliation. Please use "Philosophy & Literature Conference Stanford-JHU" in the subject line.