5 Questions With…

Kandice Sharren, PhD Candidate

Q: What is your current research project?
My dissertation looks at the way fiction in the early nineteenth-century frames its readers. I look at a strain of fiction that pushes back against the general understanding of novel readers as vulnerable to corruption through their reading material. I’m also the project manager for Michelle Levy’s database, the Women’s Print History Project, which tries to account for women’s involvement in print in Great Britain and Ireland between 1750 and 1836, and putting together a proposal for a postdoc project that thinks about the relationship between celebrity authors’ bodies and the material form their texts take in the Romantic period.

Q: What are you reading for fun?
A collection of short stories by Constance Fenimore Woolson, The Girls by Emma Cline, the first volume of Pretty Deadly by Kelly Sue DeConnick, and a book of literary criticism that I’m reluctant to name because I can’t talk about it without mentioning how tempted I am to defenestrate it (technically this isn’t for fun, I guess, but I take a lot of joy in hate-reading it). I’m also slowly finding my way through Marianne Moore’s Collected Poems.

Q: What are your hobbies outside academia?
Camping, hiking, skiing—anything outside, really. Also, cooking, which has become a creative outlet as well as my only practical skill. My goal is to make myself indispensable in a post-apocalyptic scenario.

Q: What “classic” have you not actually read but maybe occasionally pretend to have read?
To Kill a Mockingbird. Trying to explain how not reading it happened always derails the conversation so much that I’ve just stopped telling people.

Q: What defines “English” for you?
I’m not sure this is a definition, exactly, but what draws me to it as a discipline is its flexibility—how anything can be approached as a text worthy of critical examination.