

ENG 427A Women in Literature

Wintermester 2019

Number of Credits

3

Instructor

Johnson

Catalog Description

Women writers and the ways in which women are portrayed in literature.

Required Textbooks/Materials

The following texts are required material in this course:

Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi. *We Should All Be Feminists*. Anchor Books, 2012. ISBN: 978-1-101-91176-1

Hwang, David Henry. *M. Butterfly*. Plume, 1986. ISBN: 978-0-452-27259-0

Mason, Bobbie Ann. *In Country*. Harper Perennial, 1985. ISBN: 978-0-06-083517-0

Walker, Alice. *The Color Purple*. Harcourt, Inc., 1982. ISBN: 978-0-15-602835-6

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successfully completing ENG 427A, students will be able to

- demonstrate familiarity with foundational feminist and gender theories, as well as their history;
- speak knowledgeably about how diverse social positions and experiences are reflected (or not) in and reinforced by texts;
- write an analytical paper that integrates ideas from feminist and gender theories with literary interpretation, using a variety of sources;

- differentiate between and understand basic interpretative approaches to various literary genres including poetry, fiction, and film;
- articulate close readings of selected passages of literature in support of larger arguments in brief analytical paragraphs and in class discussion; and
- articulate connections between literature, theory, personal experience, and other subject areas in which you have expertise.

First Week of Materials/Assignments

The following schedule is subject to change:

January 2: Introductions and Syllabus and Course Requirements Overview

C: "What Is a Woman? Sex, Gender, and the Body in Feminist Theory" by Toril Moi

January 3: Adichie in entirety

C: selections from Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*; Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wall-Paper"

January 7: C: selections from Sandra Lee Bartky's *Femininity and Domination*; selections from Camilla Griggers' *Becoming Woman*; Flannery O'Connor "A Good Man Is Hard to Find"; Jamaica Kincaid's "Girl"

Film Interpretation Assignment due

Film Interpretation Presentations

Course Details

This upper-division course investigates American literature written primarily by women to interrogate the question: What is a woman? Moving from white feminist studies to women of color and conceptions of the deviant body, we will interrogate what it means to be woman in American literature and culture. Tracing this conversation, we will invest ourselves in theoretical texts as well as poetry, short stories, drama, and the novel. Given this array of perspectives and genre, we will focus on what American society asks of its women citizens, what pressures women must deal with, how they negotiate these pressures, and how they rebel against them and the patriarchal authority that institutes them. This course asks you to imagine what it means to be woman theoretically and practically and then see how that image is or is not reflected in popular media—literature and film. It is important to understand the constraints placed upon women in

both a historical and present sense so that we may begin to dismantle the limitations put upon woman and her body.

This class satisfies CO10 and CO13.

Grade Breakdown

The point distribution for the course is:

Assignment	Percentage
Participation	10
Discussion Leader Assignment	10
Scholarship Leader Assignment	10
Film Interpretation Assignment and Presentation	15
Image Response, Rationale, and Presentation	15
Literary Analysis Essay	25
Final Presentation	15
<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>

The percentage distribution for the course is:

Letter	Percentage
A	93–100
A-	90–92.9
B+	87–89.9
B	83–86.9
B-	80–82.9
C+	77–79.9
C	73–76.9
C-	70–72.9
D+	67–69.9
D	63–66.9
D-	60–62.9
F	below 59.9