

Women in Literature
50:350:388
Spring 2010
MW 1:20-2:40 CS 110
Office hours MW 11:15-12:15 and by
appointment

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Course Description

This class will investigate how women authors from different backgrounds and time periods describe their experiences in print. We will explore whether women's writing has a particular aesthetic or voice that sets it apart from men's. For example, we will ask ourselves if women are attracted to some styles or themes more than others. By approaching texts by women of different races, sexual orientations, and social classes, we'll see how diversity creates a lively dialogue about what it means to be female. Texts will include Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*, Rita May Brown's *Rubyfruit Jungle*, and Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, along with various short stories.

Texts

- *We Are the Stories We Tell*, Pantheon, 1990
- Emily Brontë, *Wuthering Heights*, Oxford, 2008
- Toni Morrison, *The Bluest Eye*, Vintage, 2007
- Rita Mae Brown, *Rubyfruit Jungle*, Bantam, 1983
- Selected readings on e-reserves & Sakai

Requirements and Grading

Rough draft paper 1 & workshop "paperwork" (5%)
5-page paper 1 (15%)
5-page paper 2 (25%)
Midterm (15%)
Final Exam (30%)
Participation (10%)

Academic Integrity and Penalties

Refraining from plagiarism or cheating in any form fosters an environment of fairness vital to your academic success and that of your peers. Because "grey areas" can appear in a variety of situations, please review the Rutgers Camden academic integrity policy: <http://www.camden.rutgers.edu/RUCAM/Academic-Integrity-Policy.php>. You will be held accountable to this standard. If you have any questions about citations, group work, or exam preparation, please do not hesitate to contact me. I am happy to help you steer through these perilous waters.

Late papers are subject to a reduction of 1/3 of a letter grade for each calendar day past the due date. For example, if the paper is due Monday and the student turns it in on Tuesday, the paper that would have been an A will now earn an A-. On Wednesday the grade will become a B+, on Thursday a B, and so on.

Being repeatedly absent from class (more than three times over the course of the semester) will seriously affect your participation grade. To receive an "A" for the participation portion, you must be both present and actively engaged with the class during discussion. I define "active engagement" as the following: answering and/or asking questions, responding to your classmates' ideas, and volunteering to read passages or to perform a scene.

Assignments

Introduction

- W 01.20.10 Introduction to the course
- M 01.25.10 Excerpt from Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own* (link to text under "Resources" on Sakai)

I. Coming of Age

- W 01.27.10 Joyce Carol Oates, "Where Are You Going? Where Have You Been" in *Stories* (pp. 98-115)
- M 02.01.10 Sandra Cisneros, "Hips" and Susan Minot, "Lust" in *Stories* (pp. 255-263 & pp. 244-254)
- W 02.03.10 Rita Mae Brown, *Rubyfruit Jungle* (pp. 3-54)
- M 02.08.10 *Rubyfruit Jungle* (pp. 55-131)
- W 02.10.10 *Rubyfruit Jungle* (pp. 132-195)
- M 02.15.10 *Rubyfruit Jungle* (pp. 196-246)

II. Identity

- W 02.17.10 Flannery O'Connor, "A View of the Woods" in *Stories* (pp. 38-60)
- M 02.22.10 Toni Morrison, *The Bluest Eye* ("Foreword" through p. 57)
- W 02.24.10 *The Bluest Eye* (pp. 58-93)
- M 03.01.10 *The Bluest Eye* (pp. 94-163)
- W 03.03.10 **ROUGH DRAFT PAPER 1 DUE; WORKSHOP IN CLASS**

M 03.08.10 *The Bluest Eye* (p. 164 to conclusion)
W 03.10.10 **PAPER 1 DUE**

03.15.10-03.19.10 SPRING BREAK

M 03.22.10 Louise Erdrich, "Fleur" in *Stories* (pp. 289-303)

III. Love

W 03.24.10 Emily Brontë, *Wuthering Heights* ("Introduction" & pp. 3-44); EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITY TODAY*

M 03.29.10 *Wuthering Heights* (pp. 45-118)

W 03.31.10 *Wuthering Heights* (pp. 119-196)

M 04.05.10 *Wuthering Heights* (pp. 197-274)

W 04.07.10 **MIDTERM EXAM**

M 04.12.10 *Wuthering Heights* (pp. 275-conclusion)

W 04.14.10 Becky Birtha, "In the Life" in *Stories* (pp. 310-322)

M 04.19.10 Bobbie Ann Mason, "Shiloh" in *Stories* (pp. 218-233)

IV. Motherhood

W 04.21.10 Hiyase Yamamoto, "Seventeen Syllables" (e-reserves)

M 04.26.10 Alice Walker, "The Abortion" in *Stories* (pp. 207-217)

W 04.28.10 Margaret Atwood, "Giving Birth" in *Stories* (pp. 134-149)

M 05.03.10 **PAPER 2 DUE**; Final exam review

FINAL EXAM MONDAY MAY 10TH 2-5PM

* Attend Women's History Month discussion and receive 5 extra credit points on your midterm exam. Wednesday, March 24 at 12:20 pm in the Armitage Faculty Lounge, Dr. Holly Blackford, Department of English, Rutgers: "Persephone in the Twilight Zone of Divorce: Lost Child, Underworld Queen in Stephenie Meyer's Adaptation of Emily Brontë." Lunch will be provided.