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ENG 3903-001: Gendered Spaces

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English 3903--"Gendered Spaces"

Since the advent of modern culture, with its attempted gendered division of experience, creative women have negotiated the opportunities and subverted the limitations of both private and public spaces. Their writing has helped to articulate and explore women's literal and figurative places in the world. Concentrating on works of fiction and autobiography, we will consider the following questions: Where do women writers fit in the space of literary history? How have these writers constructed and envisioned the spaces/shapes of their stories? How do female and male characters define and experience interior and community spaces? How have socially constructed and geographical spaces influenced these writers' identities and work?

Texts
- Cahill, Writing Women's Lives
- Allison, Two or Three Things I Know for Sure
- Cisneros, The House On Mango Street
- Naylor, Mama Day
- Olsen, Tell Me a Riddle
- Piercy, Woman On the Edge of Time
- Smiley, A Thousand Acres
- Woolf, A Room of One's Own

Requirements
- Active reading and class participation. Please have all readings completed by assigned days and be prepared with questions and discussion topics. Because the success of this class depends so completely on our collective participation, I have the following attendance policy: More than three unexcused absences will lower the class participation grade to an F. As outlined in the student catalogue, I will consider an absence excused only for "reasons of illness, emergency, or university activity." Please provide me with a memo when excused absences occur. Class participation =10% of the final grade.
- Short writes. In order to begin discussion, there will be brief short writes at the start of some class periods. I may occasionally ask for a brief short write outside of class as well. Short writes=10%.
- A reading journal/reaction notebook. Think of this as a place to consider informally the readings, the class discussions, or other directly relevant experiences. It's a site of discovery, meant primarily to record your developing thoughts and reactions to our topic. It also may provide you with possible essay topics. Because it's informal, I am not concerned with editing or formal structure. I would, however, ask that you focus on one topic per entry and not simply freewrite or brainstorm. Please do two entries per week, for a total of 28 entries Each entry should be at least 300 words. You may use a spiral notebook or do your entries on the computer and collect them in a pocket folder. I will collect the journals, unannounced, every so often, so please bring them to class each period. Journal=20% of the final grade.
- Midterm and Final Examinations. These exams will be essay format. Midterm=15% and the Final (cumulative)=20%
- Formal Essay. This essay will be four to eight pages. Essay=25%.

Disability Policy
- If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.
Spring 1999

Syllabus--English 3903

Week 1
T 1/12—"Story of an Hour"; Introductions
Th 1/14—Woolf chpt. 1

Week 2
T 1/19—Woolf chpts. 2-4; Finch and Behn (handout)
Th 1/21—finish Woolf

Week 3
T 1/26—Olsen’s “I Stand Here Ironing”; Cahill—Olsen
Th 1/28—Olsen’s “Tell Me a Riddle”

Week 4
T 2/2—Cahill—Gilman, Levertov, Simpson, and Dog
Th 2/4—Secrets and Lies

Week 5
T 2/9—Secrets and Lies
Th 2/11—begin Mama Day

Week 6
TTh 2/16 & 18—continue with Mama Day; Daughters of the Dust (excerpts)

Week 7
T 2/23—Cahill—Gornick, Welty, and Campbell
Th 2/25—midterm

Week 8
TTh 3/2 & 4—A Thousand Acres; Discuss Essay--due April 20th. Clear topic with me by March 25th.

Week 9
TTh 3/9 & 11—continue with A Thousand Acres

Week 10
TTH 3/23 & 25—The House on Mango Street

Week 11
T 3/30—finish The House on Mango Street; Cahill—Harrison and Houston
Th 4/1—Work day
Week 12
TTh 4/6 & 8—Two or Three Things I Know for Sure; Cahill--Dideon

Week 13
T 4/13—Cahill--Lorde, Mairs, McCarthy
Th 4/15—Cahill—Sarton, Hooks, and Glancy

Week 14
TTh 4/20 & 22—Woman on the Edge of Time; Essay Due 4/20

Week 15
T 4/27—finish Woman on the Edge of Time
Th 4/29--Closings