ENG 4300-4390-003-097: Senior Seminar: Reading for Pleasure? Gender, Genre, and the Querelle des femmes, 1500-2012

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4300-003 Senior Seminar: Reading for Pleasure? Gender, Genre, and the Querelle des femmes, 1500-2010

Fall 2010

Dr. Campbell
CH 3572, 581-6974
Office hours TTH 12:30-2:00pm; 3:30-4:30pm
and by appointment

TTH 2:00-3:15pm
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Texts
Lawall & Mack, Norton Anthology of Western Literature, vol. 1, 8th ed.
Pizan, The Selected Writings of Christine de Pizan
Shakespeare, The Merchant of Venice, Othello, Much Ado about Nothing
Austen, Pride and Prejudice
Fielding, Bridget Jones' Diary
Esquivel, Like Water for Chocolate

EEBO
Anonymous, Hie Mulier
Anonymous, Haec Vir

On E-Reserve via Booth Library Homepage
Meun, excerpts from The Romance of the Rose
King and Rabil, “The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe…”
Andreini, “On Taking a Wife”
Antoniano, excerpt from Three Books on the Christian Education of Children
Marinella, excerpts from The Nobility and Excellence of Women…
Fonte, “The First Day,” excerpt from The Worth of Women
Gosynhill, “…The Schoolhouse of Women…” (note: should also be available through EEBO)
Gosynhill, “…Mulierum Paean…” (Note: should also be available through EEBO)
Jane Anger, “Her Protection for Women…” (note: also available through Women Writers Online and EEBO).
Hemingway, “Hills Like White Elephants”
Gilman, “The Yellow Wallpaper”

Course Focus
In this course we will explore popular genres of literature that have dominated several periods of literary history, examining the ways in which the centuries old Querelle des femmes, or the formal controversy over women, has informed them. Starting with Christine de Pizan, we will look at the roots of this phenomenon as they are illustrated in her God of Love’s Letter and Book of the City of Ladies, written largely in response to popular representations of women during her own day and specifically to those in the Romance of the Rose, from which we will also read excerpts. Then, we will take a broad-ranging foray through popular genres of literature in the ensuing literary periods. We will examine, for example, manifestations of the querelle in Renaissance dialogues, treatises, and plays, as well as in the satiric literature of the seventeenth century. Then, as we look at works from even later periods, we will ask the question, what elements of the querelle endure? How does rhetoric evolve to address them?
What stock characters emerge? A key idea to consider: especially during the early modern manifestation of the *querelle*, it became considered something of a literary game, yet it was not always treated as such. We will be interested in examining the nuances of this literary tradition as it segues from popular culture game to serious social critique.

Questions to consider along the way: What are some origins of the *querelle* that permeate much western philosophical and theological thought? During what periods do elements of the *querelle*, or at least the sentiments that lie behind it, seem especially extreme and why? During what periods do we see elements of the *querelle* in a less acerbic light? How do attitudes and beliefs pertaining to issues raised in the *querelle* change as we move forward through literary history? How different or similar are attitudes today in comparison with those that we see represented in literature in earlier periods?

In general, the senior seminar is meant to be something of a capstone course for your studies in English. To that end, you will be expected to review and exercise the wide variety of approaches to reading and writing about literature that you have learned during your time as an English major. In a theme-driven course such as this one, the major part of the relevance of the course is derived from our combined reading, research, and class discussion. Your participation in class discussions is thus critical; therefore, your presence in class is crucial.

**Policies**

--The English Department statement on plagiarism stipulates that any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—"The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author and representation of them as one's original work" (*Random House Dictionary of the English Language*)—has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of NC for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.

--Hand assignments in on time. If you're having problems, let me know. Papers more than a week late without a university-approved excuse will not be accepted. If you miss an exam, and you have a university-approved excuse, you may make up that exam. You will have no more than one week to do so, and the make-up exam will be different from the one given during class. In-class assignments and group work cannot be made up.

--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.

--Be prepared for class. You'll get a lot more out of class discussions if you are participating in them, and I'll notice if you do not seem prepared to participate.

**Requirements**

--Three exams 45% (15% each)
--Three Response writings 15% (5% each)
--One 7-10 page research paper 20%
--One research report with annotated bibliography 10%
--One presentation 10% Total: 100%

The exams will cover the units of the semester; however, there will be interplay between these units of study in our discussions and in the test questions.

The response writings will be concerned with the three specific units.
The paper topic will be chosen from the assigned texts and issues related to them. You will be expected to select a topic and begin research early on. The paper will be 7-10 pages long. You will use at least 3-5 outside sources to support your arguments, and they should consist of scholarly books, journal articles, and Internet sources of well-known scholarly repute. (You may not cite Wikipedia.) You will use MLA Parenthetical Style, with a Works Cited page, for documentation. Around midterm, you will have a preliminary research report with an annotated bibliography due to show the progress that you have made regarding your research project. Do not worry that we haven’t covered the topic that interests you in class—this portion of our study is meant to be independent exploration of a topic that may be completely new to you. It is my hope that your independent study will augment for you what is eventually covered in class and will broaden the scope of the course as a whole for you. You, in turn, will share with the class what you have learned during your research near the end of the semester.

The research report and annotated bibliography will cover the research that you do for your research paper and presentation. The report will address the topic, why you chose the topic, and the avenues of research that you chose to explore. The annotated bibliography will consist of bibliographic citations of at least five sources with your notes on each work that describe the document, summarize why it may be useful to your project, and include possible quotations that you might use in the paper.

The presentation will be a 7-10 minute oral report over your research project, due near the end of the semester. After conducting your research, discussing your findings with me, and writing your paper, you will be able to present to the class what you have learned. The goal is to provide, via your and your fellow students’ reports, both a “big picture” look at the subjects we have covered over the course of the semester, as well as introduce specialized information that you have focused on during your own independent reading.

Tentative Schedule
Note: Readings may be shifted around during the semester to accommodate class discussion.

Unit One: Medieval Roots of the Querelle

T. Aug. 24—Introduction to the course.
Homework: Read excerpts from Romance of the Rose (on E-Reserve, etc.) and, in Selected Writings, read “The God of Love’s Letter” (15) and Blumenfeld-Kosinski’s “Christine de Pizan and the Misogynistic Tradition” (297)

Th. Aug. 26—Discuss the “Querelle de la Rose,” as it came to be called. See also handout on early sources of querelle. In class, read “from The Debate on the Romance of the Rose”(41).
Homework: Read “from The Book of the City of Ladies” (116) and from E-reserves, King and Rabil, “The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe.” Bring to class a list of two or three ways that you see issues discussed in these readings still prevalent in contemporary contexts, literary or otherwise.

T. Aug. 31—Discuss Pizan and the context of “The Other Voice.”
Homework: In Western Lit., read Tertullian (1847), Chrysostom (1849), and Theophrastus (1850). Also read Boccaccio (1600).

Th. Sept. 2—Discuss the medieval statements on women; then begin Boccaccio.
Homework: In Western Lit., “The Wife of Bath’s Prologue and Tale” (1731).
Begin Response Writing 1.
T. Sept. 7—Finish Boccaccio; begin “Wife of Bath…”

Th. Sept. 9—Catch-up day. **Response Writing 1 is due.**

T. Sept. 14—Review for Exam One

Th. Sept. 16—Exam One.
**Homework:** In *Western Lit.*, read Intro. to Renaissance Period (1883), and Petrarch (1894)

**Unit Two: The Early Modern Querelle**

T. Sept. 21—Renaissance Overview, Petrarch and Women poets handouts.
**Homework:** In *Western Lit.*, begin reading Ariosto’s *Orlando Furioso* (1962).

Th. Sept. 23—Continue Petrarch and Women poets.
**Homework:** Finish reading Ariosto.

T. Sept. 28—Discuss Ariosto and the resonances to the *Romance of the Rose* in *Orlando*.
**Homework:** Read Marguerite de Navarre’s *Heptameron* excerpts in *Western Lit.* (2101)—think about them in comparison to Boccaccio.

Th. Sept. 30—Finish discussion of *Orlando*; begin discussion *Heptameron*.
**Homework:** Start examples of early modern polemics—read Andreini and Antoniano, as well as Marinella and Fonte in E-reserves.

T. Oct. 5—Finish *Heptameron*. Begin discussing Italian examples of early modern polemics in the *querelle*.
**Homework:** Read English examples of early modern polemics: *Schoolhouse for Women, Mulierum Paean,* and *Jane Anger, Her protection*… in E-reserves. See also *Hic Mulier* and *Haec Vir* via EEBO. Bring to class a list of two or three ways that you see the *querelle* gaining complexity as we move forward in literary history and two or three ways that it remains the same.

Th. Oct. 7—Finish discussing Italian early modern polemics; begin English ones.
**Homework:** Read *Much Ado about Nothing*.

**Homework:** Finish reading any of the English polemics that you need to.

**Homework:** Begin preliminary research for Research Reports and Annotated Bibliographies.

**Homework:** Read *Merchant of Venice*.

Th. Oct. 21—Begin *Merchant*. **Begin Response Writing 2.**
**Homework:** Be working on research reports with annotated bibliographies and Response Writing 2.
T. Oct. 26—Finish Merchant.
Homework: Be working on research reports with annotated bibliographies and Response Writing 2.

Th. Oct. 28—Catch-up day; review for Exam Two. Response Writing 2 is due.

T. Nov. 2—Exam Two. Research Reports and Annotated Bibliographies are due.
Homework: Begin reading Austen’s Pride and Prejudice and Wollstonecraft handout.

Unit Three: “Modern” Views and Revisions of the Querelle

Th. Nov. 4—Discuss “modern” takes on the querelle. In light of Wollstonecraft’s “The Effects of Discrimination against Women,” consider where a work of the late 18th century, Pride and Prejudice, might fit into the on-going debate.
Homework: Finish reading Pride and Prejudice. Read Bridget Jones’ Diary.

T. Nov. 9—Finish discussing Pride and Prejudice and consider what Bridget Jones’ Diary suggests about a similar story set in our contemporary period. What has happened to Austen’s precocious heroine? Her hero? What aspects of feminism have been co-opted and derided?
Homework: From E-reserves, read Gilman’s “The Yellow Wallpaper.”

Th. Nov. 11—Discuss “The Yellow Wallpaper.” Consider the historical context and how Gilman couches aspects of the querelle (if we can still call it that?) in fiction. (Give out handouts from modern and contemporary critics.)
Homework: Read “modern” polemics from handouts. From E-Reserves, read Hemingway, and from handout, read Chopin’s “The Story of an Hour.”

T. Nov. 16—Discuss “modern” polemics, along with Hemingway and Chopin.
Homework: Read Esquivel’s Like Water for Chocolate.

Th. Nov. 18—Begin discussion of Like Water for Chocolate. Sign up for Oral Presentations.
Homework: Catch up on any reading that you have missed. Put final touches on research papers. Begin planning oral presentations.

T. Nov. 23 and Th. Nov. 25—Thanksgiving Break

T. Nov. 30—Conclude discussion of Like Water for Chocolate.
Homework: Catch up on any reading that you have missed. Put final touches on research papers. Begin planning oral presentations.


T. Dec. 7—Oral presentations

Th. Dec. 9—Oral presentations. Review for Exam Three

Final Exam (Exam Three): Mon., Dec. 13, 2:45-4:45.