**Literature by Women**

LITT 2140:01 (W2)

TR 2:30-4:20 B010

Richard Stockton College of New Jersey

Fall 2010

Dr. Deborah Gussman

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**Text:** The Norton Anthology of Literature by Women, Volumes I and II, 3rd Ed. (2007), Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, eds.

**Course Description and Objectives**

This course examines literature written by women, in English, from the Middle Ages to the present. The course will explore women’s literature in relation to literary and historical contexts, and will also consider women’s literature as a separate tradition. The course is designed to help you to appreciate women’s achievements as literary artists, as well as to build a critical vocabulary for discussing literary texts, and to strengthen your skills in writing and critical analysis. This course meets the Literature Program’s “literary interpretation” course requirement.

**How to succeed in this class**

Simple. Complete all of the reading and writing assignments by the date due. Come to every class, on time, and pay attention. Participate meaningfully in class discussion. Check Blackboard regularly for course updates. Communicate with me as soon as possible if you are experiencing difficulty with reading or writing assignments, or the class in general. Do this outside of class, preferably during my office hours, or by email.

**Course Requirements**

Attendance and participation: You are expected to attend class having completed the assigned reading and/or writing, and to be prepared to discuss the texts and your own work. I am serious about this: reading, writing about, and discussing literature is the point of this class. If you are frequently unprepared, late, or miss more than 4 classes, you will find it difficult to earn a satisfactory final grade.

For obvious reasons, please silence cell phones and do not text message, check email, listen to music, or surf the web during class.

Writing assignments and exams: You will write three 4-page papers (typed) on topics distributed in class. In addition, you will be responsible for completing a number of informal in-class writing assignments. I will occasionally give an unannounced quiz during the first part of class. Quizzes cannot be made up, but I will drop the lowest quiz grade. There will also be a midterm and a final exam.

Essay Submission: Essays are to be turned in on Blackboard on the date specified on the syllabus. *Other grading policies*:

§ Grades will be lowered by 5 pts. for each day late, unless prior arrangements have been made with me.  
§ All assignments are required and must be completed in order to earn a satisfactory grade for the course.  
§ In accordance with the College’s policy, I do not give incomplete grades unless there are extremely serious circumstances, and then, only by prior arrangement.

**Evaluation**  
Grades are calculated as follows: 30% — 3 essays  
25% — midterm exam  
30 % — final exam  
15% — informal writing assignments and quizzes

Poor attendance and lack of class participation may alter the final grade.

**Grading Scale:**

100-93: A 82.9-80: B- 69.9-67: D+

92.9-90: A- 79.9-77: C+ 66.9-63: D

89.9-87: B+ 76.9-73: C 62.9-60: D-

86.9-83: B 72.9-70: C- 59.9 & below: F

**Academic Honesty**: The Literature program expects students to maintain the highest standard of academic honesty. You should make yourself aware of Richard Stockton College’s Academic Honesty Policy, which can be found in the Student Handbook (intraweb.stockton.edu/eyos/page.cfm?siteID=67&pageID=2#10). You should also make yourself familiar with the penalties for violations of the policy and your rights as a student.

Please be aware that plagiarism (one form of academic dishonesty) includes, but may not be limited to: using all or part of a source, either directly or in paraphrase, either intentionally or unintentionally, whether that source is published, or online, or taken from a fellow or former student, *without properly acknowledging that source.*

If you are found to have represented the work or ideas of others as your own, intentionally, or unintentionally, you will face serious consequences, as follows:

1. If this is the first time the student has been found to have plagiarized, he/she will receive an "F" for that paper or assignment and/or the course.  
2. For second offenses of plagiarism, the student will receive an F for the course.  
3. Whenever possible, a student who is found to have plagiarized a paper or assignment, in full or in part, should meet with the professor of the class for which the paper is written in order to review and discuss the suspect work.

Additionally, in accordance with Stockton College policy, Literature faculty will report all instances of plagiarism to the Provost of Academic Affairs. Students may be subject to discipline by the college, such as being placed on academic probation or expelled. If you have a question specific to a paper you are working on, please bring it to my attention.

**Class Schedule (subject to revision – check Blackboard regularly)**

**PLEASE BRING YOUR TEXTBOOK TO EVERY CLASS (be sure you have the right volume!)**

**September**

*Section I: Non-fiction Prose*

T 9/7 Introduction to course  
What is women’s literature? (in class writing) Read: Queen Elizabeth I, “Speech to the Troops at Tilbury” (VI, 67); Sojourner Truth, “Ain’t I a Woman” (VI 510) (also posted on BB)

TH 9/9 Virginia Woolf, “Professions for Women,” (VII, 244-47); “A Room of One’s Own” (VII, 237-244)

T 9/14 Harriet Jacobs, from Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl (VI, 618-629); ; Maya Angelou, from I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings, (VII, 926-930); Alice Walker, “In Search of Our Mother’s Gardens,” (VII 1295-1302)

\*\*Deadline to drop a course with a 100% refund

TH 9/16 Margery Kempe, all (VI, 45-59); Mary Astell, from “A Serious Proposal to the Ladies” (VI, 263-266); Alice James, “The Diary” (VI 1230-1237). **Assign Self-writing**

T 9/21 Mary Wollstonecraft, “A Vindication of the Rights of Woman” (VI, 370-390) **(Self writing due).**

TH 9/23 Adrienne Rich, “When We Dead Awaken: Writing as Revision,” (VII, 982-993)

**Assign Essay #1.** Discussion: writing about prose.

*Section II: Fiction*

T 9/28 Zora Neale Hurston, “Sweat” (VII, 349-357); Radcliffe Hall, “Miss Ogilvy Finds Herself” (VII, 188-200)

TH 9/30 Angela Carter, “The Company of Wolves,” (VII, 1221-1227) Leslie Marmon Silko, “Yellow Woman” (VII, 1332-38).

**Essay #1 due on Blackboard, Sunday 10/3 by midnight.**

**October**

T 10/5 Maxine Hong Kingston, “No Name Woman” (VII, 1228-1237)

**Assign Transformations (in class writing assignment)**

**Assign Essay #2**. Discussion: Writing about the short story

TH 10/7 Carson McCullers, The Ballad of the Sad Café (VII, 739-799)

\*\* F 10/8 Deadline to withdraw from a full-term course with a 50% refund

T 10/12 Kate Chopin, The Awakening (VI, Chapters I-XV)

TH 10/14 Kate Chopin, The Awakening (VI, Chapters XVI-XXVIII)

**Essay #2 due on Blackboard, Friday 10/15 by midnight.**

T 10/19 Kate Chopin, The Awakening (VI, Chapters XXIX-XXXIX)

TH 10/21 Nella Larsen, Quicksand (VII, Chapters 1-8) –revise next time so that instead of a midterm this becomes a paper and introduce some secondary readings for both novels, including Hazel Carby’s chapter on intersectionality for Larsen

T 10/26 Preceptorial Advising – no classes , but keep reading: Nella Larsen, Quicksand (VII, Chapters 9-16)

TH 10/28 Nella Larsen, Quicksand (VII, Chapters 17-25)

**November**

T 11/2 **Mid-term Examination**

\*\* W 11/3   Preceptorial Advising - no classes until 3:35PM

*Section III: Poetry*

TH 11/4 Marianne Moore, “Poetry,” (VII, 311-312); Dorothy Parker, “Song of One of the Girls” and from “A Pig’s-Eye View of Literature” (VII, 488-490); May Sarton, “My Sisters, O My Sisters” (VII, 638-641); Carolyn Kizer, from “Pro Femina” (VII, 906-909)

T 11/9 Elizabeth Barrett Browning, “Mother and Poet,” (VI, 555-557); Joanna Baillie, “A Mother to Her Waking Infant” (VI, 401-402); Gwendolyn Brooks, “The Mother” (VII, 781); Sharon Olds, “The Language of the Brag” (VII, 1279); Margaret Atwood, “Spelling,” (VII, 1205). **Assign revisionary mythopoesis exercise.**

**Assign Essay #3**

 TH 11/11 Aemilia Lanyer, “Eve’s Apology in Defense of Women” (VI, 85-87); Anne Finch, Countess of Winchilsea, “Adam Posed” (VI, 247); Frances E.W. Harper, “Vashti,” (VI, 1027-28); Christina Rossetti, “Eve” (VI, 1101-1102); Adah Isaacs Menken, “Judith” (VI, 1152-1153).

T 11/16 Judith Wright, “Eve to her Daughters” (VII, 726-727) ; Dorothy Livesay, “Eve,” (VII, 595); H.D. “Helen,” (VII, 291); Muriel Rukeyser, “Myth” (VII, 653-54) U.A.Fanthorpe, from “Only Here for the Bier” (VII, 936-938); Rita Dove, “I Have Been a Stranger in a Strange Land” (VII, 1391) **Revisionary mythopoesis exercise due.**

TH 11/18 Anne Bradstreet, “The Prologue” (VI 147-148); Aphra Behn, “The Willing Mistress” (VI, 180); Phillis Wheatley, “On Being Brought from Africa to America,” (VI, 359); Emily Dickinson, Poems 307, 439, 445, 620 (VI).

Class discussion: writing about poetry.

T 11/23 Sylvia Plath, “Lady Lazarus” (VII 1062-1063); May Swenson, “Bleeding,” 1830-31; Eavan Boland, “Anorexic” (VII 1290); Lucille Clifton, “To My Last Period” (VII 1122); Joy Harjo, “ When the World As We Knew It Ended” (1382-84); Kim Addonizio, “What do Women Want?” (VII, 1395)

**Essay #3 due on Blackboard by midnight.**

TH 11/25 Thanksgiving holiday – no classes

*Section IV: Drama*

T 11/30 Susan Glaspell, Trifles (VII, 177-186)

Discussion: writing about drama

**December**

TH 12/2 Caryl Churchill, Top Girls (VII, 1136-1165)

T 12/7 Caryl Churchill, Top Girls (VII, 1166-1191)

TH 12/9 Margaret Edson, Wit (VII, 1454-1487)

T 12/14 **Final examination**

TH 12/ 16     Fall term graduating student grades due in the Office of the Registrar 10AM

12/19     Summer and Fall term commencement ceremony