
HE 374
Topics in Gender & Sexuality in Literature
Syllabus

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT DIVERSITY STATEMENT

The English Department strives to provide a safe, respectful learning environment for all students.

Our students can rely on us to sustain a generative space for creativity, rhetorical and civic deliberation, scholarly inquiry, and an openness to new ideas. We oppose harassment or bullying of any sort, particularly that based on race, gender, gender identity, religion, national origin, geographic background, neurological make up (neurodiversity), political and ideological perspectives, LGBTQ+ status, immigration status, social and economic status, veteran status, age or disability.

CLASS DIVERSITY STATEMENT Created by the class; see Appendix A

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Gender and Sexuality Studies began as Women's Studies, which was one of the many outcomes of the Second Wave Feminist Movement of the 1970s and 80s. Like Gender and Sexuality Studies, Women's Studies is interdisciplinary, but courses were primarily taught by faculty in either English or Sociology. The theoretical texts we will be reading this semester reflect this disciplinary bent. Most of the faculty, students, and topics of study in early Women's Studies programs were limited by being White, middleclass, women. In the 2000s, some Women's Studies Departments renamed themselves Gender and Sexuality Studies in order to better reflect Women's Studies' growing interest in exploring Queer Theory, Masculinity Studies, Intersectionality, race, and class. Women's Studies Programs are feminist at their hearts; Gender and Sexuality Studies Programs are not, and in fact, might even reject feminism for its original focus on White middleclass women.

This course will replicate the history of the development of Gender and Sexuality Studies in both the theory and literature we will be reading. Sociologist Nancy Chodorow's *The Reproduction of Mothering* and Toril Moi's *Sexual/Textual Politics* are classics of Second Wave Feminism. Chodorow's work is foundational for the work that is being done currently (e.g., Kate Manne's *The Logic of Misogyny*—although Manne does not appear to realize this). Moi's history of feminist literary criticism will help us understand the development of the field. While you will be expected to understand both of these books and the theoretical positions they present, **you are not expected to agree with them** (although you might, and that's okay too). Indeed, our job as readers is to read critically, and we will be doing that as we read them slowly over the course of the semester.

The literature we will be reading also represents some classic texts in the field. We will start with 19th Century poetry by men and women in order to ask: **how is gender**

The literature we will be reading also represents some classic texts in the field. We will start with 19th Century poetry by men and women in order to ask: **how is gender and sexuality represented and, I will argue, instilled in the reader? What values are these poems transmitting, preserving, or contesting? Are these values still present today?** The novels and the play we will be reading are also standards of Women's and Gender Studies, with the exception of Octavia Butler's *Kindred*, which I think deserves more scholarly attention than it has received. When we read Moi's book we will find out why these books are such popular choices (and maybe why Butler is overlooked.) There are 9 classes where there is a reading assignment TBD. This is in order to allow your interests to be reflected in readings you select as a class.

We will be reading some theory and some literature for most classes—this practice of switching between 2 topics is called **interleaving**. It is a pedagogical practice designed to increase learning by moving knowledge from the short term to the long term memory because you must frequently retrieve what you have previously learned. It is the retrieval process that leads to learning. That is why Reading Checkzing yourself on material is an effective way to study and why reviewing your notes is not.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES: Created by the class; see Appendix B

PROMISES

This course promises to help you:

- Read and write critically about gender and sexuality in literature and in your experience
- Support your claims with evidence from the text and/or your experience
- Understand literary criticism and theory around gender and sexuality, including the foundations of feminist literary theory, and apply it to the literature we read

This course will fulfill its promises by asking you to:

- Participate in class & in the design of the course
- Work cooperatively with small groups and partners
- Complete and think about the assigned reading **prior** to class
- Ask questions about the readings and concepts
- Support your ideas about literature and theory with textual examples
- Write, rewrite, and reflect on your writing
- Respond to your partner's writing about literature—and work together to figure out how to improve everyone's work

REQUIRED TEXTS in order of use in class and formatted as you should in the "Works Cited" section of your essays (but you should alphabetize your entries)

Chodorow, Nancy. *The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender*. University of California Press, 1978.

Woolf, Virginia. *Orlando: A Biography*. Mariner Books [note: your copy may have a different publisher and publication date—use the information in the book from which you take your quotations], (1928) 1973.

Moi, Toril. *Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory*. Routledge, 1988.

Winterson, Jeanette. *The Passion*. Vintage International, 1989.

Bechdel, Alison. *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic*. Mariner, 2007.

Butler, Octavia. *Kindred*. Beacon, 1979.

Distributed in Class:

Rawls, Anne Warfield and Waverly Duck. "Do you eat Cats and Dogs?" Student Observations of Racism in Their Everyday Lives" in *Tacit Racism*. University of Chicago Press, 2020. 162-199.

Byron, Lord (George Gordon). "She Walks in Beauty" (1814). *Poetry Foundation*, Poetry Foundation, 2021. <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/43844/she-walks-in-beauty>. Accessed 4 August 2021.

Tennyson, Alfred. "The Lady of Shalott" (1842). *Poetry Foundation*, Poetry Foundation, 2021. <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/45360/the-lady-of-shalott-1842>. Accessed 4 August 2021.

Poe, Edgar Allen. "Annabelle Lee" (1849). *Poetry Foundation*, Poetry Foundation, 2021. <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/44885/annabel-lee>. Accessed 4 August 2021.

Rosetti, Christina. "Goblin Market" (1862). *Poetry Foundation*, Poetry Foundation, 2021. <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/44996/goblin-market>. Accessed 4 August 2021.

Churchill, *Top Girls*. Methuen, 1982.

Available in Google Classroom:

Moslehi, M and N. Niazi. "A Study of Gender Performativity in Virginia Woolf's Orlando: A Mocking Biography." *Surabaya*, vol. 18, Issue 1, June 2016, pp. 1-7.

LaMott, Anne. "Shitty First Drafts" in *Bird by Bird*. Anchor, 1995.

Setka, Stella. "Phantasmic Reincarnation: Igbo Cosmology in Octavia Butler's *Kindred*." *MELUS: Multi-Ethnic Literature of the U.S.* Vol 41, No 1, Spring 2016.

ASSIGNMENTS

Grading Scale

A 93 – 100

A- 90 – 92

B+ 87 – 89

B 83 – 86

B- 80 – 82

C+ 77 – 79

C 73 – 76

C- 70 – 72

D+ 67 – 69

D 60 – 66

F below 60

1. Two drafts of 3 Papers

Papers are due at the beginning of class. Late papers will receive be reduced by one letter grade every 24 hours (e.g., an A paper due on Friday turned in on Monday would receive a C).

Paper Due Dates

Paper #1: Apply a concept from Chodorow to either *Orlando* or one of the poems we read during the first three weeks of class; support your claims with evidence from both texts—20%

1st Draft: 10/4 Final Draft: 10/8

Paper #2: Apply a concept described by Moi to either *The Passion* or *Fun Home*; support your claims with evidence from both texts—20%

1st Draft: 11/8 Final Draft: 11/12

Paper #3: An essay based on your journal entries and addressed to a specific audience (e.g., USNA leadership (the Supe, Dant, Company Officer, Provost, a faculty member); someone you know well (e.g., parents, sibling(s), roommate, significant other) to be titled some version of “Gender and Sexuality at USNA.” What have you learned about gender and sexuality as a result of all of things you have read, discussed, and observed this semester? Use specific examples from texts and your observations to support your claims—10%

1st Draft: 12/6 Final Draft: 12/10

- Papers should be submitted via Google Classroom by the end of the class.
- If you will be unable to hand in your paper on the assigned date, make arrangements to hand it in earlier.
- Unless you obtain written permission from me prior to the due date, late papers will be marked down a full letter grade for each 24 hour period they are late beginning with immediately after the start of class (e.g., a paper handed in at the end of the class in which it is due will receive a full letter grade reduction, a paper due on Friday that is turned in on Monday will receive 3 letter grades reduction).
- Expect that you will have problems with your computer. Back up your files. Keep hard copies of drafts.
- Contact the instructor if you do not understand the assignment or run into any other sort of difficulty.
- Papers must be written in MLA style. See *The Longman Handbook* or *The Little Seagull Handbook* for guidance.
- Final drafts must be typed, double-spaced (no extra spaces between paragraphs), in Times New Roman 12-point font with 1” margins
- Number the pages
- Your name and the due date should be in the upper left-hand corner
- Do not use a coversheet
- Do not put Works Cited on a separate sheet
- All final drafts must have a title that is NOT the name of the assignment

Rewrites: You may submit rewrite papers 1 or 2 one time each for a new grade. If you wish to rewrite a paper you must follow these steps:

1. Think about the substantial changes you would like to make to the paper.

2. Have a conference with the instructor in which you outline your proposed changes.
3. Understand that the rewritten paper must be substantially altered to be considered a rewrite (fixing errors marked by the instructor does not constitute a rewrite).
4. Include a copy of the original paper with the instructor's comments when you submit a rewrite.
5. Include a 1-2 page reflection paper on the revision process: what did you do differently and why?
6. Realize that the rewritten paper will not necessarily receive a higher grade; following the instructor's advice will earn at most a "B." "A" papers require that you go beyond that advice on your own.

Rewrites will only be accepted if you have had a conference with the instructor about the rewrite. The highest grade of the two (original and rewrite) will be recorded. Rewritten papers are due 2 weeks after papers have been returned to the class.

THE WRITING CENTER

Take advantage of the free individual consultancy available at the Writing Center on the first floor of Nimitz Library. We will learn more about how the Writing Center can help you in this class and all of your other classes, too.

2. Three open-book exams

Exams will consist of short answers and essays. Exams will be written on laptops and submitted via Google Classroom. The exams will be open-book and open notes. You will be allowed to use the internet and to ask for help. The exam must be your own work. References and quotations are expected and must be cited in MLA style.

Exam Dates

Exam #1: On Chodorow—5%	9/27
Exam #2: On Moi—5%	11/1
Final Exam: Cumulative—5%	TBA

3. 15 Journal Entries

Journal Entries: Observations about gender and sexuality in your daily life
15 journal entries—15% (pass/fail) Most Wednesdays

Journal entries are short (about half a page) personal reflections on your observations about gender and sexuality. The assignment is taken from a chapter in Rawls and Duck's *Tacit Racism* (handed out on the first day of class), which you should read to get a better idea of how the journals will work. They are very informal. You are encouraged to jot things down throughout the week. The entries might be inspired by things you experience or witness during the week or things you remember from the past. They might be inspired by what we are reading. We will sometimes share entries in class, but you are always free

not to share if you so desire. The journal entries will be used as the raw material for your final papers. **Late journal entries** will be accepted by the next class for ½ credit.

4. 10 Reading Checks (closed book)

There will be a short (one or two questions) check on the reading for the week
10 Reading Checks—10% (pass/fail) Many Fridays.

Reading checks are a way to give you credit for all of the reading you will be doing for class, to make sure you understand the theoretical concepts and are not getting lost in the literature so that we can catch that before it has consequences in papers or exams, to give you practice writing about the theory and literature so that you will be successful on the papers and exams, and to give you an opportunity to retrieve what you have learning during the week so that it will move from short term to long term memory.

5. 3 Peer Reviews

In class on the day when first drafts are due you will complete a peer review of one of your classmate's papers.
3 Peer Reviews—3% (pass/fail)

Peer Reviews of a classmate's first draft provides them with feedback that will help them improve the paper and should give you ideas for improving your own paper.
Note: you can always quote one another!

6. 5 Responses to instructor feedback on papers and exams

5 responses—5% Due the class after papers and exams are returned to the class

7. 2 responses to critical articles (one on *The Passion* and one on *Fun Home*) posted in Google Classroom

2 responses—2% (pass/fail) Due on the day the articles will be discussed

There are three critical articles about each novel posted in Google Classroom; choose one of them to write about. In order to pass, a response must demonstrate a complete and thorough understanding of the entire article. Plan to summarize the argument and give your opinion about some aspect of the essay. The goal of this assignment is to give you a model for applying theory to literature and perhaps give you a source to use in your own papers, which can be a response to one of the articles (either because you disagree or because you want to build on it).

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

PARTICIPATION: Participation in class is expected. Reading assignments are discussed in order to prepare for papers. There are many ways to participate: asking questions, taking part in small and large group discussions, and listening actively. Failure to participate in class will have some effect on your ability to perform the required assignments and in this way will indirectly affect your grade.

POLICIES

Expectations for midshipmen and the instructor will be determined by consensus during the first week of class. The instructor reserves the right to override consensus in the

unlikely case that expectations would prevent the fulfillment of the course promises. USNA policies (such as no eating in class) will be enforced.

See Appendix C for Our Class's Policies for Midshipmen and the instructor

ACADEMIC HONESTY

The Honor Concept written by Midshipmen can be abbreviated as:

“We don't lie. We don't cheat. We don't steal.”

Plagiarism is a violation of all 3 of these rules that Midshipmen have written for themselves.

See Appendix F for Our Class's Definition of Plagiarism

ADDRESSING THE INSTRUCTOR

Since Professor (b) (6) has a PhD, it is appropriate to address her as either “**Professor (b) (6)**” or “**Dr. (b) (6)**.” Professor (b) (6) is also a Dean, so it is also correct to address her as Dean (b) (6) if you want to be fancy. All of these forms of address are correct, and she has no preference. This is generally true for all civilian faculty members. When in doubt, ask faculty members how they would like to be addressed. **DO NOT** address female civilian faculty members as Miss, Ms., or Mrs. This is generally taken as an insult.

NOTE: Please ask Professor (b) (6) to explain if you would like to know more about the topic of faculty address or institutional structure—it is one of many aspects of college life that you are expected to know but might not be told. Part of the job of this class is to explain these things as they arise. Do not hesitate to ask Professor (b) (6) to explain any of the mysteries of the faculty or institution.

CONTACTING THE INSTRUCTOR

Please contact the instructor as soon as you suspect that you are having difficulty with anything in class. Please contact the instructor if you would like to discuss ideas you have for a paper. Please contact the instructor if you would like to rewrite a paper. You may make an appointment by email: (b) (6)@usna.edu

Note from Professor (b) (6) Email is the best way to reach me. I check email regularly on weekdays 0900-1600. I do not check email regularly evenings or weekends. If you have a question or concern on during an evening or weekend, do not expect an immediate response.

CLASS CANCELCATION

In the event that class is canceled unexpectedly due to inclement weather or any other reason, we will continue to follow the syllabus as written with regard to due dates for readings, exercises, and papers. Assignments are due on the assigned dates regardless of canceled classes. Keep up with the reading. Check your email for a communication from the instructor.

SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS—Subject to change

DATE	In Class Activity	READING DUE	ASSIGNMENT DUE
Week 1		PART I: 19th Century: Establishing Attitudes toward Gender and Sexuality	
8/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Land Acknowledgement ▪ Introduction & names ▪ Google Classroom tour ▪ Learning Objectives—The Game of 35 ▪ Class creates ground rules for discussion ▪ Journals and final paper ▪ What is feminism? ▪ Hand out reading for Wednesday 	Note: There are a lot of start up activities this week. We may not complete everything as scheduled, especially if we need to take more time for discussion at any point. There is enough flexibility in the schedule to allow us to push activities back as needed. We will keep up with the reading schedule, but there are also quite a few days when the reading is TBD that we can use to explore new topics or catch up.	
8/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discuss Journal Entries, Final Paper, and Rawls & Duck ▪ Syllabus Scavenger Hunt ▪ “Theories of Gender” (10 min) (in Google Classroom under “Gender and Sexuality Resources”) ▪ Class creates: “Expectations for Students and Instructor” ▪ Genderbread Person (in Google Classroom under “Gender and Sexuality Resources”) 	Rawls, Anne Warfield and Waverly Duck. “Do you eat Cats and Dogs?” Student Observations of Racism in Their Everyday Lives” in <i>Tacit Racism</i> . This chapter describes what we are doing with our journals (except we will focus on gender and sexuality rather than (or as well as) on race).	Journal Entries #1
8/27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Class creates diversity statement ▪ Gender and sexuality vocabulary ▪ Stonewall video (in Google Classroom 	Chodorow (read about 8 pages each day (including weekends) to keep up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ vii-viii—first and last paragraphs—and 3-13 	Reading Check #1

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> under “Gender and Sexuality Resources”) ▪ Sammy Nour Younes TED Talk (6 min) (in Google Classroom under “Gender and Sexuality Resources”) 		
Week 2			
8/30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harvard Implicit Bias Test • Coventry Patmore’s “The Angel in the House” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chodorow 13-39 ▪ Byron, “She Walks in Beauty” ▪ Tennyson, “The Lady of Shallot 	

9/1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discuss journals ▪ Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood ▪ Emily Quinn’s TED Talk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chodorow 40-54 ▪ The Lady of Shallot” cont. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Journal Entries #2
9/3	WEB DeBois: Double Consciousness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chodorow 57-73 ▪ Poe, “Annabel Lee” 	Reading Check #2
Week 3			
TUES 9/7		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chodorow 73-95 ▪ Rosetti, “Goblin Market” 	
9/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Paper #1 assigned (Draft Due Oct 4) ▪ Background on <i>Orlando</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chodorow 95-110 ▪ <i>Orlando</i> vii-64—Intro & Ch 1 (Note: for all the novels, read about 33 pages a day—including weekends—to keep up) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Journal Entries #3
9/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Paper grading rubric ▪ Class Statement of Academic Honesty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chodorow 111-129 ▪ <i>Orlando</i> 65-118—Ch 2 	Reading Check #3
Week 4			
9/13		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chodorow 130-154 ▪ <i>Orlando</i> 119-226—Ch 3 & 4 	
9/15		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chodorow 154-170 ▪ <i>Orlando</i> 227-262—Ch 5 	Journal Entries #4

9/17		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chodorow 173-185 ▪ <i>Orlando</i> 263—329—Ch 6 	Reading Check #4
DATE Week 5	In Class Activity	READING DUE	ASSIGNMENT DUE
9/20		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chodorow 185-209 ▪ Moslehi and Niazi. “A Study of Gender Performativity in Virginia Woolf’s <i>Orlando: A Mocking Biography</i>” in Google Classroom—go to “Classwork” and the topic “Virginia Woolf” 	
9/22		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chodorow 211-219 ▪ <i>Orlando</i> criticism TBD 	Journal Entries #5
9/24	Review		Reading Check #5
Week 6			
9/27	Exam 1		
9/29		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Moi</i> xiii-xv, 1-8 ▪ TBD 	
10/1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Moi</i> 8-18 ▪ TBD 	
Week 7			
DATE	In Class Activity	READING DUE	ASSIGNMENT DUE
10/4	Draft #1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Moi</i> 21-41 ▪ TBD 	
10/6		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Moi</i> 42-55 ▪ TBD 	Journal Entries #6
10/8	Hire an editor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Moi</i> 55-69 ▪ <i>The Passion</i> 1-45—Ch 1 	Paper #1 Due
Week 8			
10/11	No Class—Federal Holiday		

10/13		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Moi 70-88 <i>The Passion</i> 47-129—Ch 2-3	Journal Entries #7
10/15		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Moi 91-101 ▪ <i>The Passion</i> 131-160—Ch 4 	Reading Check #6
Week 9			
10/18		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Moi 102-119 ▪ 1 critical article selected from those posted to Google Classroom on <i>The Passion</i> 	Response to one critical article (in Google Classroom) on <i>The Passion</i>
10/20		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Moi 119-126 ▪ <i>Fun Home</i> 1-54—Ch 1-2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Journal Entries #8
10/22		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Moi 127-139 ▪ <i>Fun Home</i> 55-120—Ch 3-4 	Reading Check #7
Week 10			
10/25		Moi 139-161 <i>Fun Home</i> 121-232—Ch 5-7	
10/27		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Moi 161-173 ▪ Critical article selected from those posted to Google Classroom on <i>Fun Home</i> 	Response to one critical article (in Google Classroom) on <i>Fun Home</i>
			Journal Entries #9
10/29	Review for exam Pick the next readings		Reading Check #8
DATE Week 11	In Class Activity	READING DUE	ASSIGNMENT DUE
11/1	Exam 2		
11/3		TBD	Journal Entries #10
11/5		TBD	
Week 12			

11/8		TBD	Draft of Paper #2
11/10		TBD	Journal Entries #11
11/12		TBD	Paper #2 Due
Week 13			
11/15		<i>Kindred</i> 9-107—Prologue-The Fall	
11/17		<i>Kindred</i> 108-188—The Fight	Journal Entries #12
11/19		<i>Kindred</i> 189-264—The Storm-Epilogue	Reading Check #9
Week 14			
11/22		<i>Kindred</i> critical article (in Google Classroom): Stella Setka, "Phantasmic Reincarnation: Igbo Cosmology in Octavia Butler's <i>Kindred</i> ."	Journal Entries #13
11/24	Thursday class schedule		
11/26	NO CLASS-- Thanksgiving		
Week 15			
11/29	"Top Girls"—in class (historical presentations)		
12/1	"Top Girls"—in class		Journal Entries #14
12/3	"Top Girls"—in class		Reading Check #10
DATE	In Class Activity	READING DUE	ASSIGNMENT DUE
Week 16			
12/6	"Top Girls"—in class		Draft of Paper #3
12/8	"Top Girls"—in class		Journal Entries #15 (a reflection on writing the final paper)
12/10	Hire an editor Review		Paper #3 Due
		Exam TBA	