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English 265-03: (19657)
The New Woman in American Literature
Fall 2008

The term “New Woman” has been around since the 1860’s, and it became a popular catchphrase towards the latter half of the nineteenth century in both America and England. Most of those who used and read it understood it to suggest the unprecedented behavior of middle and upper class women who were increasingly college-educated, gainfully employed and who defied other traditional expectations of feminine propriety. In this class, however, we’ll work towards understanding the term in an even broader way, examining the way society defined (and often resisted) the “new” roles of women in all tiers of society. It will also be important for us to remember that, while this time period was an era of great liberation for some women, “new” roles were not always better ones.

Required Texts

(Please note: I prefer you use these editions. Several of them contain additional course readings that will not be included in other editions.)

Cather, Willa. *A Lost Lady*. New York: Vintage Classics.
Chopin, Kate. *The Awakening: A Norton Critical Edition*. New York: W. W. Norton and Co.
Crane, Stephen. *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets (A Story of New York): A Bedford Cultural Reader*. New York: Bedford/St. Martin.
Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. *The Yellow Wallpaper: A Bedford Cultural Reader*. New York: Bedford/St. Martin.
Fetterley, Judith and Marjorie Pryse. *American Women Regionalists: A Norton Anthology*. W&W Norton and Co.
Howells, William Dean, et. al. *The Whole Family*. Durham: Duke UP.
Larsen, Nella. *Quicksand and Passing*. New Brunswick: Rutgers UP.

Assignments

Essay #1 (4-5 pages)	15%
Essay #2 (4-5 pages)	20%
Essay #3 (4-5 pages)	20%
Final Research Essay (8-10 pages)	30%
Presentation	10%
Participation	5%

We will discuss these assignments more fully during the course of the semester. PLEASE NOTE: You cannot receive a passing grade for this course unless you complete all major assignments.

Writing Intensive Requirement

In addition to fulfilling your F4 requirement, this course is also designed to fulfill your F2 Writing Intensive Requirement. Therefore, our class size is smaller, and rather than your taking exams, you will write 4 papers, including a final research paper. Please don't, however, think of this as simply "checking off a box" towards your degree. Rather, I hope you will see this class as an opportunity to refine your skills of written literary analysis, a chance to demystify the process of articulating and developing a thesis about literature and to understand how to move beyond close readings and engage in larger dialogues about the subject matter through research. Of course, the downside, from a professor's perspective at least, is that I cannot gauge your cumulative knowledge of the subject matter at the midpoint and end of the semester. Thus, I will use frequent quizzes to do so (and to be sure you are keeping up with your reading). Revision is a crucial element of the writing process; therefore, anyone who fails to bring a complete rough draft to workshop will lose 10 pts. on the final essay grade.

Participation

This course requires the active and engaged participation of every member of the class. Make sure you read each day's assignment carefully and come to class with questions or comments to bring to the discussion. The success of the class depends upon your willingness to actively engage with the material and discuss it with the rest of the class. Often the most productive questions are ones that work to pinpoint what is difficult about a particular reading.

Attendance Policy

You are expected to be in class every day. Being "present" doesn't just mean physically being in the room; you are to be alert and prepared. Anyone not alert (i.e. sleeping, reading the paper, working a crossword, etc.) will be counted absent, as will anyone clearly not prepared to participate. If you must miss class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed and what, if anything, you need to make up. **More than 3 absences (for any reason other than a school sanctioned event) will adversely affect your grade; i.e. you will lose 1/3 letter grade for each additional absence.** Chronic tardiness will count towards absences. Excessive absences (i.e. more than 6 of the total class days) could result in an "F" for the course.

Assignment Submission Policy

Essays are due at the beginning of class unless otherwise noted. Late papers will be penalized a third of a letter grade per day. Except in the case of documented illness or family emergency, papers more than a week late will receive a failing grade. If you believe you have a legitimate reason for missing a due date, talk to me beforehand to make alternative arrangements. Also,

please note that essays and response papers must be typed, double-spaced with an inch margin, stapled, and adhere to MLA standards in both layout and documentation. See me if you have questions about MLA or need further information.