

English 4803.01
Spring, 2008
MW 11:00-11:50
141 Oliphant
laura-stevens@utulsa.edu

Prof. Stevens
Office: 341 Zink
631-2859
Office Hours: MWF
10-10:50 & by appt.

Women and Writing in the British Atlantic World before 1800

The colonization of the Americas thrust women – European, African, and Native American – into situations, experiences, and roles for which there was little precedent. It provided writers of many literatures and languages with subject-matter ranging from the marvelous to the terrifying, and it presented a dramatically enlarged geographic arena for the circulation of texts and ideas to audiences placed in positions of dialogue with and spectation on each other. In this course will consider one aspect of these highly significant changes, as we examine the role of women in the transatlantic literary culture of Britain and its colonies before 1800. We will study women as both authors and objects of writing, focusing on the ways in which transatlantic contact altered textual treatments of women. Units of study will include the following: female travel writers; depictions of Indian and African women; women and captivity, women and religious controversy, colonialism and masculine conduct, women and revolution, feminine virtue and the new American nation. As we call attention to women authors and depictions of women, we also will ask how images of women catalyzed transatlantic conversations about matters ranging from theology to politics, including the foundation of the United States

Requirements and Course Grade:

Your final grade will include seven separate grades, of varying weight:

Attendance: 10%
Class Participation: 10%
Class Presentation: 5%
Response Papers: 20%
Mid-term examination: 10%
Final examination: 20%
Final Paper: 25%

Attendance and Class participation: It is mandatory that you attend class, that you arrive prepared to discuss the material assigned for each day, and that you participate actively in class discussion. For your attendance grade, I will begin by giving you each 100 points, and then deducting 10 points for every unexcused absence. In terms of the final semester grade, this means that for every unexcused absence you will lose almost one point on a 100-point scale. If you have more than a very few unexcused absences you also cannot expect a high grade for your class participation. I will deduct 3 points for every day you are late to class, because late arrivals disrupt the entire class. For some classes I may distribute informal discussion questions or

worksheets beforehand. Your written responses to these worksheets and questions will be included in your class participation grade.

I will excuse absences only for the following reasons:

1. Serious Illness (with a doctor's notes)
-please note: doctors appointments for non-urgent reasons do not count here. Please schedule all appointments around class time.
2. Family emergencies
3. Religious holidays
4. Required participation in university athletic or academic events (with a note from your coach, the team's academic advisor, or the dean)
5. Hazardous weather conditions

Your class participation grade necessarily will be subjective. It will reflect my opinion of how valuable your contributions in class discussion have been to your and your classmates' education. I will consider the quality as well as the quantity of your contributions, and I will weigh your willingness to listen to fellow classmates as well as your willingness to speak.

Late Work: I will deduct a third of a letter grade for every day that a paper is late. I may not have time to provide comments on late work. Students with unexcused absences will not have the option of making up quizzes, and a grade of zero will be averaged into their final grade.

Class Presentation: Once during the term you will give a 10-minute presentation on the reading assignment for that day. You should do advanced preparation for this presentation, including research into the author, the genre, and/or the cultural events relating to the production of this text. Ideally, you also will do some close reading of the text, asking your classmates some questions that will get discussion started. Your grade for this presentation will be based on an evaluation of your preparedness and organization, the clarity of the presentation, and its usefulness to your classmates.

Please email me the day before your presentation to let me know what you will discuss. If another person is presenting on the same day as you, it is your responsibility to coordinate your presentations with each other, making sure that you are not duplicating material.

Examinations: The Mid-Term exam will involve a mix of essay questions, straightforward factual questions, and detailed quotation identifications (that is, I present you with a quotation, you identify the text from which it comes and explain its larger significance.) The final exam will be a take-home, open-book exam comprised entirely of essay questions. I will give you more information about both exams as the semester progresses. If you attend class regularly, take careful notes, and keep up with the reading, these tests should be easy.

Pop Quizzes: In order to motivate you to keep up with the reading, and to reward students who do keep up with the reading, I may hold pop quizzes during the term. These quizzes will be brief, approximately 15 minutes long, and they will ask basic questions about the content of your reading assignment. You will be allowed to drop your lowest score, and the average of the remaining quizzes will be part of your final exam grade. If you are attending class, taking notes,

and keeping up with the reading, these quizzes will be very easy, and they will enhance your final grade.

Response Papers: During the semester you will write 6 response papers of 2-3 pages (500-900 words) on the course readings. These papers should be typed and double-spaced. You will bring them to class to use as a basis for discussion, and you will turn these papers in to me at the end of class. I will divide you in half alphabetically, so that you will each turn in one response paper every other week, starting the second week of class. These response papers should not be summaries of the reading. They should ask questions and make speculations about the course readings, telling me what you found interesting and why. I will comment on and grade these papers, and at the end of the term I will average the highest five of these grades to factor into your final semester grade. For those of you who have taken classes with me before please note that I will grade these papers more rigorously than I have in the past, because I want to use this occasion to prepare you to write your final paper.

Final Paper: The most important component of your semester grade will be your final paper. This paper should be 10-12 pages (2000-3000 words) long, double-spaced and typed. It should perform a close reading of one or two texts from the syllabus and incorporate one (perhaps two) secondary scholarly article(s) or book(s). The paper should engage critically with both the primary literary and secondary scholarly texts. I will set some intermediate deadlines during the term for a paper proposal and a bibliography, in order to encourage you to work ahead on this project. You may also consider choosing to work with a text in **special collections**. If you choose this option, I may be willing to exempt you from reading a secondary literary source. I will set some intermediate deadlines during the term for a paper proposal and a bibliography, in order to encourage you to work ahead on this project. You may also consider choosing to work with a text in special collections. If you choose this option, I may be willing to exempt you from reading a secondary literary source.

The most important component of your semester grade will be your final paper. This paper should be 10-12 pages (2500-3600 words) long, double-spaced and typed. It should perform a close reading of one or two texts from the syllabus and incorporate one (perhaps two) secondary scholarly article(s) or book(s). The paper should engage critically with both the primary literary and secondary scholarly texts. I will set some intermediate deadlines during the term for a paper proposal and a bibliography, in order to encourage you to work ahead on this project. You may also consider choosing to work with a text in special collections. If you choose this option, I may be willing to exempt you from reading a secondary literary source. I will set some intermediate deadlines during the term for a paper proposal and a bibliography, in order to encourage you to work ahead on this project.

Special Needs:

Students with disabilities should contact the Center for Student Academic Support to self-identify their needs in order to facilitate their rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Center is located in Holmes Student Center Room 59. All students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with and take advantage of services provided by the Center for Student Academic Support such as tutoring, academic counseling, and developing study skills. The

Center provides confidential consultations to any student with academic concerns as well as to students with disabilities.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity:

I expect all students in this class to adhere to the standards of academic integrity as defined in the University of Tulsa's Student Handbook. If I find any evidence that a student has cheated on an examination or plagiarized a paper, I will fail the particular assignment immediately. I will then forward the case to my department Chair and college Dean for further disciplinary action. Most likely I will give the student a failing grade for the semester and recommend suspension from the university.

The handbook of the Modern Language Association defines plagiarism as follows: "Derived from the Latin word *plagiarius* ("kidnapper"), plagiarism refers to a form of cheating that has been defined as the false assumption of authorship: the wrongful act of taking the product of another person's mind, and presenting it as one's own (Alexander Lindey, *Plagiarism and Originality* [New York: Harper, 1952]2). To use another person's ideas or expressions in your writing without acknowledging the source is to plagiarize" (Joseph Gibaldi, *MLA Handbook*, 4th ed., [New York: MLA, 1995]26).

It often is difficult to determine where the line is between being influenced by a text or person, and taking words or ideas from that text or person. Confusion can arise easily when one is doing extensive research or collaborating with other people. If you have any questions about whether or not you should give credit to a source in your work, I suggest that you always cite that source to be safe. Please also see me if you are uncertain about whether or how to cite a course, or consult the *Modern Language Association Handbook*.

Please note that as part of a general effort to combat plagiarism I will be submitting randomly selected papers from all of my classes to a plagiarism detection service. I also will be using this service to screen any paper that I suspect is plagiarized.

Finally, while not technically a form of plagiarism I do consider it a breach of academic integrity for a student to submit the same paper for credit in more than one class. I will penalize students who dual-submit their work as I see fit.

Office Hours, and Contacting Me:

I will be available to meet with students from 10:00 to 10:50 on Mondays and Wednesdays. If my office hours conflict with your schedule I will be happy to make an appointment with you at another time.

The best way to contact me outside of office hours is through email, which I try to check daily. My email address is laura-stevens@utulsa.edu. My mailbox is in the main office of the English department, 365 Zink Hall. You may also leave me voice mail or call my office at 631-2859, but if you are calling me over a holiday keep in mind that these messages will be erased automatically after 3 days.

Course Texts:

- Daniel Defoe, *Moll Flanders* (Oxford, 1971) 0-19-283403-7
Frank Felsenstein, *English Trader, Indian Maid: Representing Gender, Race, and Slavery in the New World: An Inkle and Yarico Reader* (Hopkins, 1999) 978-0801861062
Myra Jehlen and Michael Warner, eds., *The English Literatures of Colonial America* (Routledge, 1997)
Leonora Sansay, *Secret History and Laura*, ed. Michael Drexler (Broadview, 2007) 978-1-55111-346-3
Unca Eliza Winkfield, *The Female American*, ed. Michelle Burnham (Broadview, 2000) 978-1551112480

Reading and assignment schedule

Please note that this schedule may be subject to revision

J&W= Jehlen and Warner anthology

Week 1**M 1/14 Introduction**

W 1/16 Jehlen and Warner, General Introduction, xvii-xviii, Chapter 1 Introduction, 3-6
Amerigo Vespucci, "Letter to Pier Soderini" J&W pp.17-28

F 1/18 J&W, Chapter 2 Introduction, 39-41

George Best, from *A True Discourse*, J&W 54-58

William Lightfoot, from *The Complaint of England*, J&W 63-64

Sir Walter Raleigh, from *The Discovery of the Large, Rich, and Bewtiful Empire of Guiana*, J&W 91-94

Week 2

Response Paper 1, A-M

M 1/21 Martin Luther King Jr. Day no class

W 1/23 John Smith, from *The Generall Historie of Virginia* (1624) hand-out

F 1/25 Anne Bradstreet, "To My Dear Children," W&J, 322-25

"Prologue," "The Author to her Book," and "Before the Birth of one of her Children,"
W&J, 548-562

Sign up for Class Presentations

Week 3

Response Paper 1, N-Z

M 1/28 The Antinomian controversy, W&J, 429-43

W 1/30 Mary Rowlandson, W&J, 349-62 + handout of editor's preface from EEBO

F 2/1 Mary Rowlandson, W&J, 362-82

Week 4

Response Paper 2, A-M

M 2/4 Behn, *Widdow Ranter*, Acts 1 and 2

W 2/6 Behn, *Widdow Ranter*, Acts 3 and 4
F 2/8 Behn, *Widdow Ranter*, Act 5

Week 5

Response Paper 2, N-Z
M 2/11 Behn, *Oroonoko*, first half
W 2/13 Behn, *Oroonoko*, second half
F 2/15 Behn, *Oroonoko*

Week 6

Response Paper 3, A-M
M 2/18 Sarah Knight, Journal, W&J, 415-28
W 2/20 funeral sermon (hand-out)
F 2/22 No class

Week 7

Response Paper 3, N-Z
M 2/25 **Mid-Term Examination**
W 2/27 *Moll Flanders*, introduction and 1-85
F 2/29 *Moll Flanders*, 86-171

Week 8

Response Paper 4, A-M
M 3/3 *Moll Flanders*, 172-258
W 3/5 *Moll Flanders*, 259-end
F 3/7 Felsenstein, introduction through p. 80

Week 9

Response Paper 4, N-Z
M 3/10 Felsenstein, 81-94
W 3/12 Felsenstein, 234-46
F 3/14 Felsenstein, 252-77

Week 10

Spring Break, March 17-21

Week 11

Response Paper 5, A-M
M 3/24 Elizabeth Ashbridge, W&J, 659-667
W 3/36 no class
F 3/28 no class

Week 12

Response Paper 5, N-Z
M 3/31 *Female American*
W 4/2 *Female American*

F 4/4 *Female American*

Final paper proposal due in class

Week 13

Response Paper 6, A-M

M 4/7 Petition of Esther Smith to Archbishop of Canterbury, hand-out

W 4/9 Phillis Wheatley, poems in W&J, 1076-80

F 4/11 **Revolution and Women**

“The Sentiments of an American Woman,” W&J, 843-44

Milcah Martha Moore, “The Female Patriots” W&J, 1072

Week 14

Response Paper 6, N-Z

M 4/14 Thomas Paine, “An Occasional Letter on the Female Sex,” W&J, 868-74

Abigail Adams, letter to John Adams, 1776, W&J, 852-53

W 4/16 Judith Sargent Murray, “On the Equality of the Sexes,” W&J, 874-79

Excerpt from Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, hand-out

F 4/18 Sansay, Editor’s introductory material and *The Secret History*, pp. 59-121

Works cited list for final paper due in class

Week 15

M 4/21 Sansay, *The Secret History*, pp. 82-121

If you would like me to read and comment on the rough draft of your final paper please turn it in to me by today.

No office hours today

W 4/23 Sansay, *The Secret History*, pp. 121-end

F 4/25 Sansay, *Laura*, pp. 155-190

Week 16

M 4/28 Sansay, *Laura*, pp. 190-end

Last Day of Classes

T 4/29 **Final Paper due 4:00 pm, in my mailbox, 365 Zink Hall**

Your final examination will be distributed over email on Thursday, May 1, and will be due back to me on Monday, May 5, at 12:00 noon, in my mailbox, 365 Zink.