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Office Hours:
M/TH 1:30-2:30pm
and by appointment

English 38573-01: Gender in the American Renaissance
M/TH 4:10-5:25pm | Room C100 HN

In this course we'll explore gender and identity in a selection of 19th Century American novels, essays, and poetry. This course aims to question the stability of gender at its intersections with sex, race, and class in both urban and rural spaces, examining where gender and identity are stretched, tested, and redefined in literature. Although we cannot cover all representations of masculinity and femininity in the American Renaissance, we will begin by asking what was at stake for authors and their narrators to claim "I"/eye/aye, and thereby not only locate but also assert their identities, citizenship, and humanity through literature. Through the lens of contemporary theory, we will interrogate American masculinities. We will also examine definitions of "woman" in a period known for the Cult of "True" Womanhood and "The Woman Question" but where we also find frontiers for female heroines and "female husbands."

Required Texts

Charlotte Temple by Susanna Rowson {Norton}
Hope Leslie by Catharine Maria Sedgwick {Penguin}
The Last of the Mohicans by James Fenimore Cooper {24th ed., Penguin}
Moby-Dick by Herman Melville {Norton}
Leaves of Grass by Walt Whitman {1855 edition}*
Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave & Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl {Modern Library Classics}
Ruth Hall by Fanny Fern {Rutgers Univ Press}
Woman in the Nineteenth Century by Margaret Fuller {Norton}*

*All texts except for those starred are available at Shakespeare & Co.

Course Requirements

15% Class participation (attendance, contributions to discussions)
20% Blog posts and comments (3 posts, 6 comments)
25% Midterm paper (5-7 pages)
40% Final research paper (10-12 pages)

Attendance Policy

Attendance is mandatory. If you have missed class, you have missed important material and discussion. If you miss four (4) or more class meetings, you will likely fail the course. Come to class with a short passage you would like to discuss or a well-formed question about the reading. I encourage open but *respectful* discussion; thus, derogatory comments, including, but not limited to, racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, etc., will not be tolerated both in class and on the class blog.

Academic Integrity

The college officially states: “Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The College is committed to enforcing the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedures.” My motto: No replication without representation. If you plagiarize, you will fail the course.

Statement of Accommodation

In compliance with the American Disability Act of 1990 (ADA) and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Hunter College is committed to ensuring educational parity and accommodations for all students with documented disabilities and/or medical conditions. It is recommended that all students with documented disabilities (Emotional, Medical, Physical and/or Learning) consult the Office of Access ABILITY located in Room E1124 to secure necessary academic accommodations. For further information and assistance please call (212- 772-4857)/TTY (212- 650- 3230). Please contact me by email or in person outside of class if you require accommodation.

Office Hours

My office hours and email address are stated above. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask me. I prefer to schedule meetings in advance and I will try to make myself available to meet at other times on Mondays and Thursdays if my office hours conflict with your class schedule. If you find yourself in a position that requires asking for an extension on a deadline, deadlines can sometimes be made flexible, though an extension is not guaranteed.

~ Schedule of Readings ~ [Subject to Change]

Aug 27: Syllabus & Beauvoir

Aug 31: Butler, *Gender Trouble* [Chapter 1]

Sep 3: Rowson, *Charlotte Temple*

[Sep 7: No Class] **First Blog Post Due**

Sep 10: *Charlotte Temple*
Baym, *Woman's Fiction* [excerpt] & “Melodramas of the Best Manhood”

[Sep 14: No Class]

Sep 17: Sedgwick, *Hope Leslie*

****Sep 20: Second Blog Post Due****

Sep 21: *Hope Leslie*
Wittig, “One is Not Born a Woman”

Sep 24: *Hope Leslie*
Legler, "Ecofeminist Literary Criticism"

Sep 28: Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*

Oct 1: *Mohicans*
Lloyd, "Hawk-Eye and the Crisis of American Masculinity"

Oct 5: *Mohicans*
Bordo, *The Male Body* [excerpt]
Tompkins, "No Apologies for the Iroquois"

Oct 8: Melville, *Moby-Dick*
****Midterm Paper Due****

[Oct 12: No Class]

Oct 15: *Moby-Dick*

Oct 19: *Moby-Dick*

Oct 22: *Moby-Dick*

****Oct 25: Third Blog Post Due****

Oct 26: Emerson, "The Poet" & *Nature* [excerpt]

Oct 29: "The Poet"

Nov 2: Whitman, "Song of Myself"

Nov 5: "Song of Myself"

Nov 9: Douglass, *Narrative*

Nov 12: Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*

Nov 16: *Incidents*
hooks, "Black Women: Shaping Feminist Theory"

Nov 19: *Incidents*
Rubin, "Traffic in Women"

****Nov 22: Email title and list of 2-3 sources for final paper****

Nov 23: Fern, *Ruth Hall*

[Nov 26: Thanksgiving Break]

Nov 30: *Ruth Hall*

Dec 3: Fuller, *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*
****Printed rough draft of introductory paragraph due in class****

Dec 7: *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*
Rich, "Compulsory Heterosexuality"

Dec 10: Levonian, *Rebellious Bird*
Blanton and Cook, *They Fought Like Demons* [excerpt]
Nicolazzo, "'Female Husbands' in the 19th Century"
Jenners, *Vanity Fair*

****Final Paper due Dec 17****

Blog Post Prompts & Comments

20% of your grade will be determined by your three (3) blog posts and six (6) comments on peers' posts. In the first week of class I will invite you to the blog (<https://genderintheamericanwilderness.wordpress.com>) and help you set up a WordPress account, which is free. Do NOT pay for your WordPress account. Please come to me with any questions. The blog will be public, so be conscientious as you write your posts. Don't include any personal information, don't post explicit content, and refrain from using profane language.

Each blog post must be 300-600 words and each comment must be 100+ words in order to count toward the total three (3) blog posts and six (6) comments. You may post additional comments but it is not required. Each post has a prompt and a deadline. Late work will be given half credit. After each deadline, you are responsible for commenting on two (2) of your peers' posts, preferably before the next class meeting. This is the *recommended* order for your blog posts (you may submit a post by each deadline in any order you choose, and prompts are flexible):

Blog Post 1 (Due Sep 7): What does it mean to be "become" a woman or a man? Write about your thoughts on Beauvoir and Butler (e.g. gender roles, performance theory, nature vs. nurture)

Blog Post 2 (Due Sep 20): Do some research and report back on one Native American tribe's gender roles and/or customs. A list of examples will be posted on BB.

Blog Post 3 (Due Oct 25): Go on a nature walk for one hour (at minimum), with all technology turned off. You decide what constitutes "nature." Try to draw from the Emerson readings as you write about your experience and observations.

Midterm & Final Papers

Your midterm (5-7 pages, due Oct 8) and final (10-12 pages, due Dec 17) papers can be written using MLA or Chicago Style formatting. To avoid plagiarism, I recommend you also cite any works consulted. Your final paper should draw from 2-3 secondary sources. A title and list of 2-3 sources for your final paper will be due to me via email by midnight on Nov 22. A rough draft of the introductory paragraph to your paper will be due to me in class (must be printed out) on Dec 3. We will discuss writing prompts for the midterm paper in class after we begin discussing *Hope Leslie* and *The Last of the Mohicans* (your paper should draw from one or both of these texts). The final paper will be research-based and should be on a topic of your own choosing. Potential research and thesis questions will be discussed individually during my office hours.

I highly recommend you meet with me during my office hours (or schedule an appointment) in late November or early December to discuss your final paper.