

I imagine that I speak for a constituency, living and dead, giving utterance to energy, insight, words flowing from many lives. I have always desired that my poems work for others, be useful.

What I mean by useful is simply that readers will find poems that speak to and for them, will take those poems into their lives and say them to each other and put them up on the bathroom wall and remember bits and pieces in stressful or quiet moments. That the poems may give voice to something in the experience of a life has been my intention. To find ourselves spoken for in art gives dignity to our pain, our anger, our lust, our losses. We can hear what we hope for and what we most fear, in the small release of cadenced utterance. We have few rituals that function for us in the ordinary chaos of our lives.

--Marge Piercy (1936-)

I want to suggest that there is a[n] . . . essential experience that you owe yourselves, one . . . which finally depends on you, in all your interactions with yourself and your world. This is the experience of *taking responsibility toward yourselves* . . .

Responsibility to yourself means refusing to let others do your thinking, talking, and naming for you; it means learning to respect and use your own brains and instincts; hence, grappling with hard work . . . [It] means resisting the forces in society which say women should be nice, play safe, have low professional expectations, drown in love and forget about work, live through others, and stay in the places assigned to us. It means that we insist on a life of meaningful work, insist that work be as meaningful as love and friendship in our lives . . . The difference between a life lived actively, and a life of passive drifting and dispersal of energies, is an immense difference. Once we begin to feel committed to our lives, responsible to ourselves, we can never again be satisfied with the old, passive way.

Adrienne Rich (1929-)

The work of art that I do not make, none other will ever make it. Simone Weil (1909-43)



School of Arts & Science
English Department
The Female Literary Imagination
English 262-01 &02
Winter 2003

Course Outline

1. Instructor Information

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|-------------------|---|
| (a) Instructor: | Moira Walker |
| (b) Office hours: | M/W 1:30-2:30 p.m.; T/Th 10:30-11:30 a.m. |
| (c) Location: | Paul 235 |
| (d) Telephone: | 370-3330 |

2. Intended Learning Outcomes

Please see the end of this outline for this section, an administration requirement.

3. Required Materials

(a) Texts

Gilbert, Sandra, M., & Susan Gubar, Eds. *The Norton Anthology of Literature by Women*. 2nd Ed. NY: W.W.Norton & Co., 1996.

Joyce, James. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. NY: Dover, 1994.

Walker, Alice. *The Color Purple*. NY: Pocket Books, 1982

(b) Other

A good dictionary, for example, the *Canadian Gage Dictionary* or the *Canadian Oxford Dictionary*.

4. Course Content

During this course, we will read selected pieces of literature by female writers (one exception: James Joyce) of varying nationality, ethnicity, language group, economic class, sexual preference, and religious creed. We will discuss the material in class, and you will write about it informally in a journal and formally in two essays and one test. In addition, you will recite a sonnet or part of a poem of your choosing from our anthology, and you will keep a free-writing journal.

The purposes of the course are to increase your appreciation of literature as a valuable and crucial form of human expression, and to extend your understanding of yourself, others, and our society through the study of a novel, a play, short stories, and poems. In extending your understanding of yourself by finding pieces of literature that “speak to and for” you, I trust that you will also enhance your voice or sense of self.

5. Basis of Student Assessment (Weighting)

(a) Assignments

In-class exercise	5
Essay #1	20
Essay #2	30
Journals—Free writing plus course	3 + 7
	10

(b) Quizzes

5

(c) Exams: Final test during the examination period

30

Class Participation: Reading literature gives us an opportunity to think. In addition to exploring your thoughts on paper in your journal, I encourage you to learn to speak aloud in class whenever you have questions, observations, or insights into the course material. By voicing your thoughts, you will allow others to benefit from your viewpoint. This may encourage others to value their own perspective, which may resemble yours; to give them the courage to speak; or to generate another appraisal of the work. Keep in mind that literature is complex. This richness can be better understood and appreciated if we allow multiple voices to be heard.

The act of speaking and the act of listening are both important skills that I hope you will develop, strengthen, and regularly exercise in this class. Keep in mind that silence can be a form of oppression; encourage one another to speak.

6. Grading System

The following percentage conversion to letter grade will be used:

A+ =95-100	B- =70-74	I =See Calendar
A =90-94	C+ =65-69	AUD =Audit
A- =85-98	C =60-64	W =Official withdrawal
B+ =80-84	D =50-59	
B =75-79	F =0-49	

2. Intended Learning Outcomes

When reading literature, students will consider meaning, make and support inferences, and evaluate the works. Students will

- *read a variety of genres, including poetry, short fiction, essay and novel;
- *read women's literature from different periods;
- *read literature by women of various nationalities, ethnicities, socio-economic groups and sexual orientations;
- *read works written by, among many others, such influential authors as Woolf, Chopin, Millay, Rich, Atwood, and A. Walker.

When discussing literature, students will be develop and communicate responses and interpretations using a variety of critical methods and resources. Students will

- *acknowledge the socio-historical context of the authors;
- *acknowledge dominant, recurring themes in women's writing;
- *apply concepts of feminist theories to the works;
- *compare and contrast various works and authors.

When writing about literature, students will be expected to explain, support, and illustrate their interpretations of the works in essays and a final exam. Students will

- *use relevant textual evidence;
- *document sources using current MLA conventions.

To assist your studies at Camosun, the college offers a number of services, workshops, and centres. Do make use of them!

Computer Labs – Ewing, 1st floor (See Rm. 102 & 110 for time tables)

Counselling – Dawson 202

Learning Skills Centre – Dawson 202

Library : Please acquire a library card as soon as possible.

Writing Centre – Dawson 207

See the College Calendar, the Registrar's Office, or the College web site at <http://www.camosun.bc.ca> for further details.

Academic Conduct Policy

It is your responsibility to become familiar with the content of the Academic Conduct Policy. The policy is available in each School Administration Office, Registration, and on the College web site in the Policy Section.