

## FYS 003: The Fiction of Gender

fall 2018 M/W 12:30-1:45

Professor Beth Younger

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office hours: M 2:00-3:30 T/TH 1:00-2:00 TH 3:30-5:00

### **Course Description & Goals**

This FYS will explore the construction of gender(s) in fiction. We will examine and discuss the roles and representations of female protagonists (and a few male) as well as the other characters in their lives. We will also discuss, among other topics, how race, sexuality, class, and violence are depicted (and how they intersect with gender) in these novels and stories. Though the emphasis will be on close readings of and thoughtful engagement with the primary works, we will also read critical essays to complicate our discussions of the texts.

**Goals:** Our collective goals in this course will be to understand how gender (masculinity, femininity, gender-queerness) functions in fiction. How do different authors seem to grapple with gender and power? How do our own cultural perspectives impact our reading? How do the cultural contexts (setting, era, POV) related to each text impact our interpretations? Are there some texts where gender doesn't matter?

By the end of this course you should have developed a nuanced approach to the analysis of literature and gender, as well as awareness of gender in literary history.

### **Required Course Materials**

*The Stepford Wives*, Ira Levin

*Kindred*, Octavia Butler

*Lord of the Flies*, William Golding

*Cruddy*, Lynda Barry

*Pocket Style Manual*, Diana Hacker (required)

course packet (available at Copy Cat)

. . . each one of these texts is required for this course—you should bring the text under discussion to class each day that we discuss it. You may read these as e-texts, but only on a reading device such as a kindle. No phone reading is allowed. Also, please bring something to write on and something to write with each day.

### **Participation**

First Year Seminars are designed to help facilitate your successful transition to college level study, and each student is an important component of the learning experience. Participation includes doing all of the assigned reading and writing, but reading the material is just the first step. Please use your voice to ask questions, make points, and discuss your perceptions and ideas. Dialogue and discussion are required and are integral aspects of the course.

### Attendance and other course policies

Attendance and promptness are expected. It is important that you understand that I DO NOT distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. I allow two absences without penalty; if you are absent more than twice, whatever the reason, I reserve the right to lower your course grade by one letter grade per absence. **A total of five absences over the semester automatically result in your failure of the course.** If you are absent, check with a classmate for any materials you missed-do not email or call me and ask what we covered.

**NOTE:** The use of cell phones for texting, checking FB, or any purpose is rude and disruptive and **will not be tolerated** (unless otherwise stated). Unauthorized use will negatively affect your course grade, and you may be asked to leave and will be marked absent. No laptops allowed unless office of disability services mandates it.

### Course Requirements and Grading

Two essays will be assigned during the semester. These writings are designed to challenge you in your analytical and critical writing. In these papers you will be asked to engage with the texts in this course in a variety of ways, including doing research.

There will be a **final exam**. This exam will be your opportunity to demonstrate your engagement with the course materials and with your experience of this FYS. We will discuss this exam and the requirements for fulfilling this assignment in class.

Note: I will provide an assignment sheet for each assignment. All assignments must be completed in order to pass the course. Also, late assignments will be penalized one full letter grade for each calendar day of lateness. There will be no exceptions.

### Grade Distribution

participation, in class writing	daily	20%
close readings	see schedule	20%
Papers (10% each)	TBA	20%
mid-term exam	TBA	20%
final	Dec. 13	20%

### Plagiarism

Plagiarism can be defined as the presentation of another's work as your own, whether by intention or by accident. Failure to acknowledge and cite a source is plagiarism. So is using a paper you've written for another class, or having a friend substantially edit your paper. And most definitely downloading a paper from the Internet is plagiarism. **Plagiarism is a serious academic (and legal) offense and will result in your failure of this course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the University.** As a matter of college policy, all incidents of plagiarism are reported to the Dean of A & S and to the dean of the student's college (if not A & S).