

Women and Writing: 19th, 20th, and 21st-century Women's Autobiography

Section # 100 | Time: MWF 8:35-9:30am | Room: Ellis 014

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Introduction

Welcome to English 3060J – Women and Writing: 19th, 20th, and 21st Century Women's Autobiography. This particular course will focus on the intersection of autobiography and history, viewed especially through the lens of women's autobiography spanning three centuries. Together we will explore subjects and pose questions (specifically *What can we learn about history through reading women's autobiography?*) regarding the conventions of autobiography as a genre, the evaluation of history through subjective lenses, and the significance of writing through multiple time periods. Course readings include, but are not limited to, texts by Laura Ingalls Wilder, Anne Frank, and women's slave narratives.

Required Materials

Norman R. Yetman (Editor), *When I Was a Slave: Memoirs from the Slave Narrative Collection*. ISBN 978-0486420707

Laura Ingalls Wilder, *Pioneer Girl: The Annotated Autobiography*. ISBN 978-0984504176

Anne Frank, *The Diary of a Young Girl: The Definitive Edition* (translator Susan Massotty). ISBN 978-0307594006

Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic*. ISBN 978-0618871711

Kate Zambreno, *Heroines*. ISBN 978-1584351146

Any homework or projects submitted online must be Microsoft Word compatible, in .doc or .docx format. Word can be purchased for a reduced cost through the Bobcat Depot in Baker Center. Additionally, be sure to save your work often, on a flash drive **and** through an online storage system such as OU's Box (<http://box.ohio.edu>), Dropbox, or Google Drive. It's likely that, at some point in your academic career, you will lose a flash drive or your computer will crash; it's best to have back-ups of your coursework just in case. Additionally, keep all of your returned coursework throughout the semester, and keep it together in one place (such as a folder or binder).

Coursework

Major Projects

Project 1: Historical Literacy Narrative (5-7 pages)

Project 2: Close Reading (6-8 pages) **or** Classmate Biography (7-10 pages)

Project 3: Research Essay (8-10 pages)

Project 4: Academic Book Review (6-8 pages)

Minor assignments include weekly reading responses, project proposals, and in-class writing exercises.

To help improve your writing, each major project will consist of both a peer-reviewed draft *and* a final draft with a cover letter explaining or justifying your revisions. To get credit for major projects, you will need to complete the following steps of the process *on time* and to the best of your abilities:

- **Draft for peer review:** Should be of sufficient quality to show others, rather than an incomplete rough draft.
- **Peer Review sheet:** Respond to your peer's drafts by completing a formal, written peer review sheet. I will assess these sheets as part of the assignment's criteria for completion.
- **Final draft and cover letter:** Your final draft should be a *revised* essay that you turn in to me for feedback. This should include a cover letter; staple this on top of both the essay and the Peer Review sheet.

Contract Grading

English courses are often too focused on grades rather than learning. In this course, however, I want to help you focus on and improve your writing, rather than have you work for a grade. Instead of assigning individual grades to major or minor writing assignments, the use of a Grading Contract shifts the focus toward learning and progress. The comments I provide on your projects are intended to improve your writing, rather than justify a grade, and the Grading Contract should ease student anxiety—it puts **you** in charge of your success.

Weekly Reading Responses

You will be responsible for a number of weekly responses to course readings. These typically involve **summarizing, contextualizing, and responding** to the text at hand. A few responses throughout the semester will be tailored, depending on the course reading and current project.

Feedback

My style of commenting is *formative*, which means I will ask questions, identify areas for further development, and challenge/provoke your thinking rather than simply tell you what I want you to “correct” or “fix” in your writing. I want to help you grow as a writer, not encourage you to conform to what you think *I* want.

I will address global issues (thoughtfulness, comprehensiveness, and content) more often than I will address local (spelling, grammar, and punctuation) ones, so be very sure to *proofread* your assignments before turning them in. The idea behind this method of evaluating writing is that, with time and attention, your self-editing skills will improve as you comb through your own texts with these problems and patterns in mind. Coupled with a better understanding of your own writing and revision processes, you will grow more capable and confident when navigating various writing situations.

Course Outcomes

Students in this class should:

- Enter the conversations and communities of writers, developing an awareness of reading and writing as an active production of meaning in conversations through texts.
- Be introduced to research as an ongoing process of knowledge production through conversation.
- Analyze and use *genre* (here: women's autobiography) to examine and discover generic features, relating those features to rhetorical practices in specific writing communities.
- Reflect on writing technologies through discussion of the ways writing is always mediated by these technologies.
- Practice Process, Reflection, and Revision by re-thinking at various points in the writing process in order to revise texts.
- Explore identity in writing by determining how authors negotiate (and perform) identity and difference.

Blackboard (Bb)

Be sure to check Blackboard *and* your OU e-mail account for project assignment sheets, any tailored reading responses, announcements, course readings, and other important course materials. You can also use Bb to collect and collaborate with/e-mail other students. We will use Bb often, so familiarize yourself with the site.

Course Policies

- **E-mail:** I use e-mail to communicate important information about the class. You are responsible for checking your school account **daily**.
- **Community Writing:** Our class will function as a community of writers, which means your peers will often read and critique your work. Please only submit work you are comfortable sharing.
- **Typed work:** All out-of-class work must be typed and properly formatted.
- **Complete drafts:** Peer review drafts must be complete and ready for classmates' feedback on the assigned dates in order to receive credit.
- **Late Assignments:** I **will not** accept late assignments.
- **Class Culture:** Everyone in our class, myself included, must remain civil and courteous at all times. We will often have the opportunity to share our opinions and beliefs, **but no racist, sexist, heterosexist, ableist, or any other negative communication harmful to an individual or group will be tolerated**. Whether something is offensive or not will be determined by the people whom it might offend and/or their advocates.

Attendance Policy

Attendance at all classes is expected. Missing more than two class sessions will adversely affect your grade, and missing a peer review day, without advance notice, will count as not one but two absences. (See Grading Contract for more specifics.)

Technology Policy

When necessary, laptop computers and tablets will be allowed for use in the classroom. Cell phones must be put away and silent for the duration of class—I don't want to see or hear them.

Plagiarism

Cheating, whether by fraud (claiming another's ideas or work as your own) or fabrication (making up or falsifying information), will result in a course grade of F and possibly a report to the OU Office of Community Standards. You are at all times responsible for handling sources ethically by acknowledging the author and source of directly borrowed ideas and language in your writing.

Academic Dishonesty: Plagiarism is defined by the Ohio University Student handbook as a Code A offense (10); this means:

[a] student found to have violated any of the following regulations will be subject to a maximum sanction of expulsion, or any sanction not less than a reprimand. . . . Plagiarism involves the presentation of some other person's work as if it were the work of the presenter. A faculty member has the authority to grant a failing grade . . . as well as referring the case to the director of judiciaries.

Academic Misconduct Information: <http://www.ohio.edu/communitystandards/academic/students.cfm>

Please, if you are not sure how to avoid plagiarizing, either see me or a Writing Center tutor.

Student Writing Center (SWC)

When writing your papers, you should consider taking advantage of the Student Writing Center (SWC). Regardless of your writing ability, you will benefit from discussing your paper and your ideas with a trained

Writing Center tutor.

The SWC is located in Alden Library on the 2nd floor, and provides free scheduled and walk-in face-to-face appointments, as well as online appointments. Tutors can assist with any stage of the writing process, from understanding the assignment to looking at a near-completed draft. You can get help with developing your thesis or main idea, organizing or developing your content, working through tricky grammatical issues, or any other writing concerns. Visit <http://www.ohio.edu/writing/> to learn more.

Classroom Accessibility

Let me know as soon as possible if you need an accommodation to work successfully in this class. This classroom strives for full accessibility, and it is not necessary for you to have an official accommodation letter from Disability Services to request changes to the classroom that will better serve your needs as a student, although you are encouraged to explore the possible supports they can offer if you are a student with a disability or learning difference. If you *do* have a letter from Disability Services, please let me know. I encourage everyone to suggest any improvements for our learning environment.

Self-Advocacy

Self-advocates do not wait for someone else to speak for them; instead, they identify problems in the classroom environment and engage productively with the other members of the classroom to solve those problems. Actively work with the instructor to identify barriers to your full participation in the classroom.

**Your continued enrollment in this course constitutes your acceptance and understanding of the policies outlined in this syllabus and all attached OU or English Department policies, and your commitment to adhere to all policies and employ your best efforts to accomplishing course objectives and outcomes.

ENG 3060J: Tentative Schedule, MWF Spring 2015

(Assignments & dates are subject to change.)

(Bb = Blackboard | WIWS = *When I Was a Slave*)

Week	Date	Objective(s)	Reading (Due before class)	Assignments (Due before class)
1	8/24	Intro to course; group syllabus review; Q&A	N/A	N/A
	8/26	Introduce Project 1; begin 19 th century readings	Syllabus; Mary Anderson & Mary Armstrong (WIWS); Dirk, "Navigating Genres" (Bb)	Writing assignment: What do you imagine about the relationship between women and writing?
	8/28		Julia Brown & Millie Evans (WIWS); Smitherman, "God Don't Never Change" (Bb)	N/A
2	8/31	Conference sign-up	Mrs. M.S. Fayman & Delia Garlic (WIWS)	Synthesized response (on Anderson & Armstrong or Brown & Evans) due
	9/2		Mary Ella Grandberry & Sarah Gudger (WIWS)	N/A
	9/4		Fannie Moore & Delicia Patterson (WIWS)	Project 1 proposal due
3	9/7	Labor Day – NO CLASS	☺	☺
	9/9	In-class conferences	N/A	N/A
	9/11	In-class conferences	N/A	N/A
4	9/14		Mary Reynolds, Harriet Robinson, Rosa Starke, Rose Williams (WIWS)	Synthesized response (on Grandberry & Gudger or Moore & Patterson) due
	9/16		Biss, "No Man's Land" (Bb)	N/A
	9/18	Project 1 peer review	N/A	Project 1 due for peer review
5	9/21	Introduce Project 2	Ingalls Wilder p. 1-56; Levine, "Reading 'The Case Against Babies'" (Bb)	Project 1 due for instructor
	9/23		Ingalls Wilder 58-97	N/A
	9/25		Ingalls Wilder p. 98-147	N/A
6	9/28		Ingalls Wilder p. 148-199; Foster, "Reading 'Georgia O'Keefe'" (Bb)	Intralingual translation (Wilder) due
	9/30		Ingalls Wilder p. 200-225	Project 2 autobiographical drafts & text proposals due
	10/2	Reading Day – NO CLASS	☺	☺
7	10/5		Ingalls Wilder p. 226-272; Abildskov, "Reading 'Street Haunting'" (Bb)	Project 1 revisions due (on Box); Wilder response due
	10/7		Ingalls Wilder p. 274-329	N/A
	10/9	TBD	TBD	TBD
8	10/12	Begin 20 th century readings	Frank Foreword-p.48; Bunkers, "What Do Women REALLY Mean?" (Bb)	Frank response due
	10/14		Frank p. 49-95	N/A
	10/16	Peer review	N/A	Project 2 due for peer review
9	10/19	Introduce Projects 3 & 4	Frank p. 95-186	Project 2 due for instructor
	10/21		Frank p. 186-231	Diary response to Frank due

	10/23		Finish Frank	Project 3 Abstract due
10	10/26	Begin 21 st century Readings	Bechdel p. 1-77	Condensed Frank response due
	10/28		Bechdel p. 78-155	N/A
	10/30		Finish Bechdel	N/A
11	11/2		Zambreno p. 78-155	Project 2 revisions due (on Box); Condensed Bechdel response due
	11/4		Zambreno p. 57-108	N/A
	11/6		Zambreno p. 108-161	N/A
12	11/9		Zambreno p. 165-225; Floyd (Bb)	Zambreno response due
	11/11	Veterans' Day – NO CLASS	☺	☺
	11/13	Project 3 peer review	N/A	Project 3 Due for Peer Review
13	11/16		Zambreno p. 225-284	N/A
	11/18		Finish Zambreno	N/A
	11/20		Book review sample	Condensed Zambreno response due
14	11/23	In-class work day	N/A	Project 3 due for instructor (by end of period)
	11/25	Thanksgiving Break – NO CLASS	☺	☺
	11/27	Thanksgiving Break – NO CLASS	☺	☺
15	11/30	In-class work day + conferences	N/A	N/A
	12/2	In-class work day + conferences	N/A	N/A
	12/4	Peer review	N/A	Project 4 due for peer review
Exam				Project 4 due for instructor (on Box)
