

ENC1145

Writing About Visionary Feminist Fictions

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Office: TBD

Office Hours: M 10:45-11:45 a.m. W 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
or by appointment

Fall 2016

Section 3312

MWF Period 3

Norman Hall 0342



Course Description

“Visionary fiction,” adrienne maree brown and Walidah Imarisha write in *Octavia’s Brood: Science Fiction Stories from Social Justice Movements*, “is a term we developed to distinguish science fiction that has relevance toward building new, freer worlds from the mainstream strain of science fiction, which most often reinforces dominant narratives of power. Visionary fiction encompasses all of the fantastic, with the arc always bending toward justice” (4). Visionary fiction can thus be understood as an umbrella term that incorporates science fiction, utopias/dystopias, horror, magical realism, and fantasy works that not only address theories of power/power relations along the fault lines of class, (dis)ability, gender, race, and sexuality, but also engage the fantastical to imagine alternatives to our current dystopian conditions.

In this course, we will look at the visionary fictions produced by U.S. feminist women writers such as James Tiptree Jr., Jewelle Gomez, Octavia Butler, and Ursula K. Le Guin, and examine how these writers’ feminist politics, and social justice orientations inform their alternative vistas of the future. We will then attempt to answer the following questions: What makes these texts feminist? How is the fantastical or the spectacular (re)appropriated by these writers to critique—and look beyond—“real world” systems of oppression? Lastly, what (if any) is the political import of visionary feminist fiction?

To help us answer these questions, we will critically analyze the assigned texts (and their respective authors) in relation to the various sociopolitical and historical moments that these were being animated by, written in, and/or responding to (for instance, the U.S. eugenics movement, the women’s suffrage movement, the 1960s feminist movement, the Civil Rights

Movement, the Black Power Movement, etc.). As such, we'll be reading these novels/short stories chronologically. We will thus start with Charlotte Perkins Gilman's feminist utopian text, *Herland* (1910), and we'll end the course with Rosaura Sanchez's and Beatrice Pita's Latina/o critical dystopian novel, *Lunar Braceros 2125-2148* (2009). In reading these texts chronologically, we will trace the development, evolution, and transformation of U.S. visionary feminist fiction.

Course Goals

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Identify and understand the historical trajectory of feminist science fiction
- Critically analyze texts by situating them within differential historical, cultural, and socio-political moments/contexts
- Use an intersectional feminist framework in your critical readings of literary texts
- Construct sophisticated rhetorical arguments using primary and secondary texts
- Properly cite sources and format essays using MLA conventions
- Develop and hone your researching and writing abilities by actively drafting, editing and revising your work
- Successfully navigate academic/research databases

Required Texts

Herland (1915), Charlotte Perkins Gilman—ISBN-10: 1466318791

The Left Hand of Darkness (1969), Ursula K. Le Guin—ISBN-10: 0441478123

Her Smoke Rose Up Forever (1970s), James Tiptree Jr.—ISBN-10: 1892391201

Dawn (1987), Octavia E. Butler—ISBN-10: 0446676101

The Gilda Stories (1991), Jewelle Gomez—ISBN-10: 0872866742

Lunar Braceros 2125-2148 (2009), Rosaura Sanchez and Beatrice Pita—Kindle Edition

***Please purchase the correct editions of the required texts as I will be assigning your daily readings via page numbers; it is therefore important we have uniform copies of the readings.**

Suggested Texts

MLA Handbook (8th edition), The Modern Language Association of America—ISBN-10: 1603292624

Style: The Basics of Clarity and Grace (4th edition), Joseph Williams and Gregory G. Colomb—ISBN-10: 0205830765

***All other assigned readings will be available on Canvas.**

Course Requirements

| | | |
|--|---|-----------------|
| Blog Responses (Five entries, 2250 word total) | 25% of final grade (50 points each, 250 point total) | TBD |
| Midterm Paper (1500 word total) | 25% of final grade (250 points), | 10/28/16 |
| Final Paper Prospectus (250 word minimum) | 10% of final grade (100 points) | 11/11/16 |
| Final Research Paper (2000 word total) | 30% of final grade (300 points) | 12/12/16 |
| Participation (*including pop quizzes, leading discussion, and other in-class activities) | 10% of final grade (100 points) | N/A |

***You will have a total of thirteen pop quizzes throughout the semester. Out of these thirteen quizzes, the lowest four will be dropped/excluded from your overall participation grade/points.**

***All assignment guidelines and grading rubrics are posted on Canvas.**

Grading Scale

| | | | | | | | |
|----|------|--------|------------|----|------|-------|-----------|
| A | 4.0 | 93-100 | (930-1000) | C | 2.0 | 73-76 | (730-769) |
| A- | 3.67 | 90-92 | (900-929) | C- | 1.67 | 70-72 | (700-729) |
| B+ | 3.33 | 87-89 | (870-899) | D+ | 1.33 | 67-69 | (670-699) |
| B | 3.0 | 83-86 | (830-869) | D | 1.0 | 63-66 | (630-669) |
| B- | 2.67 | 80-820 | (800-829) | D- | 0.67 | 60-62 | (600-629) |
| C+ | 2.33 | 77-79 | (770-799) | E | 0.00 | 0-59 | (0-599) |

You must pass this course with a “C” or better to satisfy the CLAS requirement for Composition (C) and to receive the 6,000-word University Writing Requirement credit (E6). You must turn in all papers/writing assignments totaling a minimum of 6,000 words to receive credit for writing 6,000 words.

NOTE: a grade of “C-” will not confer credit for the University Writing Requirement or the CLAS Composition (C) requirement.

Course Policies and Procedures

Classroom Behavior

Meaningful, constructive, and “difficult” dialogue is encouraged in this course and requires a degree of mutual respect, willingness to listen, and acceptance of differing points of view. Because discussion in this course will oft-times center on and explore issues of personal and social identity (i.e. race, ethnicity, gender, class, and sexuality) respect for individual and alternative ideological stances/viewpoints will be maintained at all times in this class. One’s words and use of language should thus be reasonable and within acceptable bounds of civility and decorum. Since every student is entitled to full participation in class without interruption, all students are expected to come to class prepared and on time, and remain for the full class period.

All cell phones, Smartphones, MP3 players, or other electronic devices that generate sound and/or pictures must be turned off during class.

Late Work

All assignments are due on the assigned time/due date. However, if an emergency situation arises that impedes or affects your ability to complete and submit your work on time, please communicate this to me as early as possible (preferably before the due date). If you fail to notify me of your emergency situation/special circumstances, submit late work without making prior arrangements, or simply fail to submit your assignment, you will receive a score of zero for your work (or lack thereof).

Absence and Tardiness Policies

You are responsible for gathering any notes, handouts, or assignments that you miss due to an absence. Excused absences will only be granted for university-approved reasons (i.e. varsity athletics, etc.) and religious holidays. If you will be missing class for either of these reasons, you must notify me in advance.

As for any other missed classes, I do not differentiate between excused and unexcused absences (this includes absences due to emergency and/or illness). That being said, you may miss FOUR (4) class periods over the course of the semester without negatively impacting your final grade. **For EVERY class missed OVER the permitted FOUR, you will lose 20 points from your final grade.**

Please note that attendance starts on Monday, August 29 after the add/drop period ends.

Please arrive to class on time. Every two tardies (arriving more than ten minutes late or leaving class early) will count as **one unexcused absence**.

***Because this is a discussion-based class, your attendance and active participation are crucial to the overall success of this course!**

Final Grade Appeals

Students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Carla Blount, Department of English Program Assistant (4008 Turlington Hall).

Technology Policy

The use of laptops, tablets, and iPads, is limited to note-taking. If I discover that you're using these devices for other purposes not related to our class/coursework, you will be asked to leave class for the day. This will then result in **one unexcused absence**.

Course Schedule

Week One:

Aug. 22- First day of class (Introduction)

Aug. 24- Introduction to *Octavia's Brood: Science Fiction from Social Justice Movements*
"Cue: Change"

Aug. 26- Introduction to *Future Females, the Next Generation: New Voices and Velocities in Feminist Science Fiction Criticism*

Week Two:

Aug. 29- *Herland* (pgs. 1-38)

Aug. 31- *Herland* (pgs. 39-66)

Sep. 2- *Herland* (pgs. 67-96)

*Chapter from Angelika Bammer's *Partial Visions: Feminism and Utopianism in the 1970s*— "Utopia and/as Ideology: Feminist Utopia in Nineteenth Century America"

Week Three:

Sep. 5- Labor Day (**Class will not meet**)

Sep. 7- *Herland* (97-115)

*Excerpt from Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *Women and Economics*

***Blog response 1 due**

Sep. 9- *The Left Hand of Darkness* (pgs. 1-35)

Week Four:

Sep. 12- *The Left Hand of Darkness* (pgs. 36-66)

Sep. 14- *The Left Hand of Darkness* (pgs. 67-103)

Sep. 16- *The Left Hand of Darkness* (pgs. 104-131)

Week Five:

Sep. 19- *The Left Hand of Darkness* (pgs. 132-173)

Sep. 21- *The Left Hand of Darkness* (pgs. 174-214)

Sep. 23- *The Left Hand of Darkness* (pgs. 215-237)

***Blog response 2 due**

Week Six:

Sep. 26- *The Left Hand of Darkness* (pgs. 238-270)

"Aliens, Androgynes, and Anthropology: Le Guin's Critique of Representation in *The Left Hand of Darkness*"

Sep. 28- *The Left Hand of Darkness* (pgs. 270-299)

Sep. 30- *The Left Hand of Darkness* (pgs. 300-330)

Week Seven:

Oct. 3- “The Screwfly Solution” (in *Her Smoke Rose Up Forever*)

Oct. 5- “The Women Men Don’t See” (in *Her Smoke Rose Up Forever*)

“The Girl Who Was Plugged In” (in *Her Smoke Rose Up Forever*)

Oct. 7- “Afrofuturism, Science Fiction, and the History of the Future”

“The Evening and the Morning and the Night”

Week Eight:

Oct 10: *Dawn* (pgs. 1-44)

Oct. 12: *Dawn* (pgs. 47-83)

Oct. 14- Homecoming (**Class will not meet**)

***Midterm papers due by 9:00 A.M.; you must upload and submit these through Canvas.**

Week Nine:

Oct. 17- *Dawn* (pgs. 84-112)

Oct. 19- *Dawn* (pgs. 115-144)

Oct. 21- *Dawn* (pgs. 145-174)

Week Ten:

Oct. 24- *Dawn* (pgs. 175-212)

Oct. 26- *Dawn* (pgs. 213-248)

Oct. 28- “Dialogic Origins and Alien Identities in Butler’s *Xenogenesis*”

***Blog response 3 due**

Week Eleven:

Oct. 31- *The Gilda Stories* (pgs. 9-51)

Nov. 2- *The Gilda Stories* (pgs. 52-85)

Nov. 4- *The Gilda Stories* (pgs. 86-101)

Week Twelve:

Nov. 7- *The Gilda Stories* (pgs. 102-136)

Nov. 9- *The Gilda Stories* (137-166)

Nov. 11- Veteran's Day (**Class will not meet**)

***Final paper proposal due by 9:00 A.M. through Canvas.**

Week Thirteen:

Nov. 14- *The Gilda Stories* (167-194)

Nov. 16- *The Gilda Stories* (195-231)

***Blog response 4 due**

Nov. 18- *The Gilda Stories* (232-252)

“More than Human: Black Feminisms of the Future in Jewelle Gomez’s *The Gilda Stories*”

Week Fourteen:

Nov. 21- *Lunar Braceros* (pgs. 6-30)

Nov. 23- Thanksgiving break

Nov. 25-Thanksgiving break

Week Fifteen:

Nov. 28- *Lunar Braceros* (pgs. 31-60)

Nov. 30- *Lunar Braceros* (pgs. 61-90)

Dec. 2- *Lunar Braceros* (pgs. 91-120)

***Blog response 5 due**

Week Sixteen:

Dec. 5- Writing/peer review workshop

***You must bring a rough draft of your final paper to class**

Dec. 7- Writing/peer review workshop (Last day of class!)

Dec. 12- *Final papers due by 11:59 P.M.; you must upload and submit these through Canvas.

Statement of Composition (C) and Humanities (H) Credit:

This course can satisfy the General Education requirement for Composition or Humanities. For more information, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/general.education.requirement.aspx>

Statement of Writing Requirement:

This course can provide 6000 words toward fulfillment of the UF requirement for writing. For more information, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/writing.and.math.requirement.aspx>

Statement of Student Disability Services:

The Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office provides information and support regarding accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information, see:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

Statement on Harassment:

UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty. For more about UF policies regarding harassment see: <http://www.hr.ufl.edu/eo/sexharrassment.htm>

Statement on Academic Honesty:

All students must abide by the Student Honor Code. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/student.honor.code.aspx>