

# All of Blue Beard's Wives:

*Writing About Retellings of Blue Beard*  
**ENC 1145: Topics for Composition**



**Instructor:** Lindsey Scott

**Email:** scottl1@ufl.edu

**Pronouns:** she/her

**Course Meeting Time/Location:** MWF Period 8, TUR 2350

**Office:** TUR 4337

**Office Hours:** Wednesday 1:50-2:50

## **Course Description:**

A locked room—a dark secret—a curious young woman. A blend of coming-of-age and spine-tingling horror, the tale of Blue Beard and his wives is an old one, older even than the French folk tale most familiar to modern readers. Even now, the story persists in classics of gothic literature and current YA fiction alike. So, why is it that we continue to tell this story? And why have so many women taken up their pens to reimagine the story?

In this class, we will investigate reinterpretations of the Blue Beard story across three centuries and two continents. Our course will examine the ways that women from different eras and their fictional heroines navigate structures of patriarchal power and violence, dynamics of solidarity and competition between women, as well as their own agency. We will consider how contemporary features of women's lives influence each authors' retelling of the story. Likewise, the similarities and differences will point us to the details that have invariably stayed the same. We will also look closely at how race, class, and gender intersect to influence the characters' experiences and inform the authors' approaches to the story.

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Our class will consider iterations of the story through various forms including short fiction, comics, novels, and film as well as encounter a range of genres and literary traditions. Students will practice reading, writing, and thinking critically about these texts while building argumentative and creative writing skills.

### Course Objectives:

*By the end of the course you will...*

- Recognize significant historical and ideological factors that influence the adaptational choices present in a retelling of a story.
- Identify how these specific retellings embody and at times respond to past and current iterations of feminist thought.
- Advance a specific, original argument about retellings defended with evidence gleaned from closely reading and analyzing a text's formal and thematic content.
- Interact with texts in unexpected ways through creative forms of writing and communication.

### *Gen-Ed Learning Objectives:*

This course confers General Education credit for either Composition (C) or Humanities (H).

This course also fulfills 6,000 of the university's 24,000-word writing requirement (WR).

- Composition courses provide instruction in the methods and conventions of standard written English (grammar, punctuation, usage), as well as the techniques that produce effective texts. Composition courses are writing intensive. They require multiple drafts submitted to your instructor for feedback before final submission.
- Course content should include multiple forms of effective writing, different writing styles, approaches and formats, and methods to adapt writing to different audiences, purposes and contexts. Students should learn to organize complex arguments in writing using thesis statements, claims and evidence, and to analyze writing for errors in logic.
- The University Writing Requirement (WR) ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. To receive Writing Requirement credit, a student must receive a grade of C or higher and a satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course. **This means that written assignments must meet minimum word requirements totaling 6000 words.**

### *Gen-Ed Learning Outcomes:*

At the end of this course, students will be expected to have achieved the following learning outcomes in content, communication and critical thinking:

- Content: Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories and methodologies used within the academic discipline.
- Communication: Students communicate knowledge, ideas and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the discipline. Students will participate in class discussions throughout the semester to reflect on assigned readings.

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- **Critical Thinking:** Students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline-specific methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems.

### *Course Policies:*

1. You must complete all assignments to receive credit for this course.

2. *Canvas and Email*

Be sure to check Canvas often for announcements, assignments, readings, and updates to the schedule. When emailing me, please allow at least 24 hours for a response.

3. *Classroom community and respect*

Participation with classmates is a crucial part of success in this class. Students interact in small group discussions and provide constructive feedback about their peers' writing during the peer reviews.

For this reason, I ask that you approach each of your classmates with compassion and respect, keeping in mind that their lived experiences may differ greatly from yours. We will engage with classmates and texts from diverse cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds. Our classroom will provide a place to encounter and interact with diverse perspectives. I ask that you be open to this opportunity.

UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty:

<https://titleix.ufl.edu/about/title-ix-rights/>

4. *Accessibility*

For this to be an inclusive space, it is important that all students are able to access class content and course materials. If you have access needs—disability-related or otherwise—that will improve your engagement in the course, please reach out, and I will do my best to accommodate them.

Additionally, the University of Florida complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students with disabilities requesting accommodation should contact the Students with Disabilities Office, Reid Hall. That office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Visit <https://drc.dso.ufl.edu/> for more information.

5. *Inclusivity*

To affirm and respect the identities of students in the classroom and beyond, I will do my best to refer to you by the name and/or pronouns you tell me. Please contact me at any time during the semester if you wish to be referred by a name and/or pronouns other than what is listed in the student directory or that you have included in the syllabus acknowledgment form.

6. *Sustainability*

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Whenever possible, I will use paper-sparing electronic media to distribute our course materials. Consider purchasing electronic editions of assigned texts when they are available, or used copies of print texts. If you do not elect to keep your print books, consider sharing them with others after the semester ends. (For example, you could donate them to the Alachua County Friends of the Library annual book sale.)

### 7. *Late Papers and Assignments*

All assignments are due by the deadline listed on Canvas. If you find yourself needing an extension due to extenuating circumstances covered under university guidelines, please reach out to me **BEFORE** the assignment is due so we can discuss it. A late paper or assignment will receive a five point deduction for each day it is late. I understand that emergencies and extenuating circumstances can occur, so please communicate with me your issues or concerns.

### 8. *Attendance*

Attendance is mandatory and will be taken daily. You will receive a lowered course grade after six 50-minute absences (or equivalent). Double-period classes count as 2 absences. Like all lecture-discussion courses, this one needs you! Use your allotted absences wisely (for emergencies, major illness) as you would for any job. You will fail the course if you accrue six 50-minute absences. Absences will be excused only in accordance with UF policy. Acceptable reasons include illness, religious holidays, military obligation, and those absences covered by UF's twelve-day rule (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>).

### 9. *Personal Hurricane Policy*

Like it or not, unexpected and unwelcome weather events roll through Florida and disrupt our lives on occasion. Likewise, we can't always anticipate the events that befall us in any given semester. For this reason, it is my policy to acknowledge a "personal hurricane" once a semester for each student with no questions asked. If unexpected circumstances affect your ability to attend class or meet a deadline, simply inform me about a "personal hurricane," and we can work together to address any missed assignments.

### 10. *Plagiarism*

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the Student Honor Code. The Honor Code prohibits plagiarism and defines it as follows:

Plagiarism. A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

1. Quoting oral or written materials including but not limited to those found on the internet, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.
2. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student.

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University of Florida students are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the entire Student Honor Code, which can be found at <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/students/student-conduct-code/>.

Important Tip: You should never copy and paste something from the Internet without providing the exact location from which it came.

### 11. *Recording Policy*

Class lectures may only be recorded for purposes defined by House Bill 233/Section 1004.097. A class lecture does not include academic exercises involving student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

A recording of a class lecture may not be published without the consent of the lecturer. Publish is defined as sharing, transmitting, circulating, distributing, or providing access to a Recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. A recording, or transcript of the recording, is considered to be published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper or leaflet. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

### 12. *Paper Maintenance Responsibilities*

Students are responsible for maintaining copies of all work submitted in this course and retaining all returned, graded work until the semester is over. Should the need arise for a resubmission of papers or a review of graded papers, it is the student's responsibility to have and to make available this material.

### 13. *Grade Appeals*

In 1000- and 2000-level courses, students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Carla Blount, Program Assistant, in the Department office (4008 TUR). Please contact Ms. Blount at [cblount@ufl.edu](mailto:cblount@ufl.edu) Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.

### 14. For information on UF Grading policies, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

### 15. *Mode of Submission*

All papers will be submitted as MS Word (.doc, .docx) documents to Canvas. Final drafts should be polished and presented in a professional manner. Papers without other formatting guidelines must be in 12-point Times New Roman or Calibri font, double-spaced with 1-inch margins and pages numbered unless otherwise instructed.

### *16. Course Evaluations*

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <http://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

Please fill these out! They are invaluable to me as an instructor when designing each semester's reading and assignments.

## **Resources**

### **Writing Studio**

The University Writing Studio is located in Turlington 2215 (currently having online-only appointments) and is available to all UF students. Free appointments can be made up to twice a week. See <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> to learn more.

### **Students in Distress**

For guidance during distressing situations, please contact U Matter We Care or the Dean of Students Office. They can help students navigate resources and academic procedures for personal, medical, and academic issues.

U Matter We Care: <http://umatter.ufl.edu>, [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu), 352-294-2273 (CARE)

Dean of Students: <https://dso.ufl.edu/>, 202 Peabody Hall, (352) 392-1261

Please note: I am a mandatory reporter of any known instances of sexual violence, sexual harassment, domestic and intimate partner violence, stalking, gender-based discrimination, discrimination against pregnant and parenting students, and gender-based bullying and hazing. Outside of these issues, I will always talk with you confidentially about the things you are facing.

## **Assignments Descriptions:**

### ***Perusall Annotations, 250 words/submission, 5 submissions – 100 points***

We will be using the software, Perusall, to create comments or annotations about a particular passage, image, or scene of a text. You will be asked to **create 5 annotations per assignment**. Each annotation should include a **50 word comment/analysis**. In total, you should have **5 annotations at 50 words each and totaling 250 words for the entire assignment**. I'm asking you to point to five specific things you are noticing and why they draw your attention. Through Perusall you will have the opportunity to see how your peers are responding to the same short text. Two of your annotations may be in response to another classmate's comment, but the other three should be your own observations.

### ***Talkback, 300 word/submission, 2 submissions – 100 points***

Throughout the semester, students will complete two short 'talkbacks'. Talkbacks do not have to advance a formal argument but should respond to and analyze an element of the text that interests you or respond to the reflection question.

### ***Close Reading Essay (750-1000 words) – 150 points***

With evidence from a short (roughly 1 page) passage from one of the texts we have discussed, students will analyze the passage and advance an argument about the work.

### ***Creative Assignments***

Creative assignments are designed to allow you to engage "outside the box" with our texts. These projects will allow students to use alternative forms and practice different kinds of writing.

CA #1: *Jane Eyre* AITA **500-600 words – 100 points**

CA #2: Past Wife Regression **500-600 words – 100 points**

CA #3: The Unessay + Maker Statement **350-450 words – 100 points**

### ***Paper Pitches (250-350 words) – 50 points***

Leading up to your final essay, you will informally 'pitch' your paper topic to the class. With one page (250 words) of notes, you will have three minutes to talk through your ideas in a supportive environment and field 1-2 questions.

### ***Evidence Dossier (300-400 words) – 50 points***

You will compile a document of quotations/scenes from your primary text that will support your interpretation. Contextualize how and why these quotes are significant with brief annotations. \*Note: quotes do not count toward the word count for this assignment. The word count will be fulfilled by your informal comments/notes.

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**Final Essay (1500-2000 words) – 200 points**

Building on the skills you have honed this semester, you will advance your own argument about one of the texts from our class. You should have a specific, arguable thesis and support from your own analysis as well as five scholarly sources.

**Participation and Class Work – 50 points**

This accounts for the work you do in class and may include contributing to discussions, participating in group annotations, answering end-of-class survey questions, etc.

**Required Materials:**

As much as possible, I will provide links for any materials in the public domain. Likewise, all supplemental and scholarly reading will be made available on canvas.

**Texts**

Charlotte Bronte, *Jane Eyre*  
 Jean Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea*  
 Nalo Hopkinson, "The Glass Bottle Trick" \*  
 Alutiiq story, "Girl Who Married the Moon"  
 Angela Carter, "The Bloody Chamber" \*  
 Emily Carroll, "A Lady's Hands are Cold"  
 Shirley Jackson, "The Honeymoon of Mrs. Smith I & II"  
 Silvia Moreno-Garcia, *Mexican Gothic*

**Films**

*Rebecca* (Dir. Hitchcock)  
*Crimson Peak* (Dir. del Toro)

**Supplemental Readings**

Diana Wallace, Introduction to *Female Gothic Histories: Gender, History and the Gothic*\*

\*available online through canvas site and/or freely available online



## Schedule of Readings and Assignments:

This schedule may be subject to change – refer to Canvas for the most up to date schedule.

<b>Week 1</b>	<b>Module #1:</b> Introduction to Blue Beard, Imitation and Adaptation	
<b>Mon. 1/9</b>	Course Introduction: Overview of syllabus and course policies	
<b>Wed. 1/11</b>	Telling and Retellings What is the Bluebeard story?  Angela Carter’s translation of “La Barbe bleue”	
<b>Fri. 1/13</b>	Skills Workshop: Ways of reading activity and extra credit opportunity	
<b>Week 2</b>	<b>Module #2:</b> The Female Gothic	
<b>Mon. 1/16</b>	No class: University Holiday	
<b>Wed. 1/18</b>	What is the female gothic?  Introduce: Talkbacks and Annotation assignments  Readings: Introduction, <i>Female Gothic Histories: Gender, History and the Gothic</i>	
<b>Fri. 1/20</b>	Discussion of <i>Jane Eyre</i>  Readings: <i>Jane Eyre</i> chs. 1-6	<b>Due: Annotation #1</b>
<b>Week 3</b>		

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<b>Mon. 1/23</b>	Putting our text in context: the Victorian era  Introduce Creative Assignment #1  Readings: <i>Jane Eyre</i> chs. 7-13	
<b>Wed. 1/25</b>	Discussion of <i>Jane Eyre</i>  Readings: <i>Jane Eyre</i> chs. 14-19	<b>Due: Talkback #1</b>
<b>Fri. 1/27</b>	Skills: Elements of Analysis  Readings: <i>Jane Eyre</i> chs. 20-25	
<b>Week 4</b>		
<b>Mon. 1/30</b>	Discussion of <i>Jane Eyre</i>  Readings: <i>Jane Eyre</i> chs. 26-32	
<b>Wed. 2/1</b>	Skills/or continued discussion  Readings: <i>Jane Eyre</i> chs. 33-38	
<b>Fri. 2/3</b>	Writing Workshop	<b>Due: Creative Assignment #1</b>
<b>Week 5</b>	<b>Module #3: The 'Other' Women</b>	

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<b>Mon. 2/6</b>	Intro to colonialism Adaptation and Literary Response  Readings: <i>Wide Sargasso Sea</i> pgs.	
<b>Wed. 2/8</b>	Discussion of <i>Wide Sargasso Sea</i>  Readings: <i>Wide Sargasso Sea</i> pgs.	<b>Due: Annotation #2</b>
<b>Fri. 2/10</b>	Skills Workshop  Readings: <i>Wide Sargasso Sea</i> pgs.	
<b>Week 6</b>		
<b>Mon. 2/13</b>	Discussion of <i>Wide Sargasso Sea</i>  Readings: <i>Wide Sargasso Sea</i> pgs.	
<b>Wed. 2/15</b>	Skills Workshop  Readings: <i>Wide Sargasso Sea</i> pgs.	<b>Due: Annotation #3</b>
<b>Fri. 2/17</b>	Discussion of <i>Wide Sargasso Sea</i>  Readings: <i>Wide Sargasso Sea</i> pgs.	
<b>Week 7</b>	<b>Module #4:</b> Non-European Literary Traditions	

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<b>Mon. 2/20</b>	Postcolonialism and Caribbean folklore  Introduce: Close Reading Essay  Explore: Natalie Clare, " <a href="#">Exploring Caribbean Folklore</a> "	
<b>Wed. 2/22</b>	Discussion of "The Glass Bottle Trick"  Readings: "The Glass Bottle Trick"	<b>Due: Talkback #2</b>
<b>Fri. 2/24</b>	Indigenous storytelling - finding a common thread  Discussion Of "Girl Who Married the Moon"  Watch: "Girl Who Married the Moon"	
<b>Week 8</b>	<b>Module #5: Girls, Gays, and the Male Gaze</b>	
<b>Mon. 2/27</b>	Film Adaptation and Hitchcock  Skills Workshop: Intro to analyzing visual texts/film	
<b>Wed. 3/1</b>	<i>Rebecca</i> Discussion  Watch: <i>Rebecca</i> (1940)	<b>Due: Annotation #4</b>
<b>Fri. 3/3</b>	Skills Workshop: Peer Review	
<b>Week 9</b>		
<b>Mon. 3/6</b>	Discussion of <i>Rebecca</i> (continued)	
<b>Wed. 3/8</b>	Skills workshop/continued discussion	

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<b>Fri. 3/10</b>	Writing Workshop	<b>Due: Close Reading Essay</b>
<b>Week 10</b>	<b>Spring Break!</b> Have fun (but don't marry any murderers)	
<b>Mon. 3/14</b>		<b>XX</b>
<b>Wed. 3/16</b>		<b>XX</b>
<b>Fri. 3/17</b>		<b>XX</b>
<b>Week 11</b>	<b>Module #6:</b> Feminist Revision?	
<b>Mon. 3/20</b>	Feminist Theory and Blue Beard in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries  Introduce: Creative Assignment #2  Readings: "The Bloody Chamber"	
<b>Wed. 3/22</b>	Discussion of "The Bloody Chamber"  Readings: "The Bloody Chamber"	<b>Due: Annotation #5</b>
<b>Fri. 3/24</b>	Discussion: "The Lady's Hands are Cold"  Readings: "The Lady's Hands are Cold"	
<b>Week 12</b>		

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<b>Mon. 3/27</b>	Discussion: "The Honeymoon of Mrs. Smith"  Introduce: Final Paper Assignment  Readings: "The Honeymoon of Mrs. Smith I & II"	
<b>Wed. 3/29</b>	Continued discussion	
<b>Fri. 3/31</b>	Writing workshop	<b>Due: Creative Assignment # 2</b>
<b>Week 13</b>	<b>Module #7: Colonialism and the Gothic</b>	
<b>Mon. 4/3</b>	The legacy of colonialism and Young Adult novels  Readings: <i>Mexican Gothic</i> chs. 1-5	
<b>Wed. 4/5</b>	Discussion: <i>Mexican Gothic</i>  Readings: <i>Mexican Gothic</i> chs. 6-10	
<b>Fri. 4/7</b>	Skills workshop/Continued discussion  Readings: <i>Mexican Gothic</i> chs. 11-15	<b>Due: Evidence Dossier</b>
<b>Week 14</b>		
<b>Mon. 4/10</b>	Discussion: <i>Mexican Gothic</i>  Introduce: Creative Assignment #3  Readings: <i>Mexican Gothic</i> chs. 16-21	

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<b>Wed. 4/12</b>	Skills Workshop/Continued Discussion  Readings: <i>Mexican Gothic</i> chs.22-27	
<b>Fri. 4/14</b>	Paper Pitches!	<b>Due: Paper Pitch</b>
<b>Week 15</b>		
<b>Mon. 4/17</b>	Horror Adaptations  Watch: <i>Crimson Peak</i>	
<b>Wed. 4/19</b>	Discussion of <i>Crimson Peak</i>	
<b>Fri. 4/21</b>	Skills Workshop: Peer Review	
<b>Week 16</b>		
<b>Mon. 4/24</b>	Writing Workshop	
<b>Wed. 4/26</b>	Creative Assignment Presentations	<b>Due: Creative Assignment #3</b>

**Final Paper is due 5/03**

### Grading Scale And Rubric:

A	4.0	94-100	940-1000		C	2.0	74-76	740-769
A-	3.67	90-93	900-939		C-	1.67	70-73	700-739
B+	3.33	87-89	870-899		D+	1.33	67-69	670-699
B	3.0	84-86	840-869		D	1.0	64-66	640-669
B-	2.67	80-83	800-839		D-	0.67	60-63	600-639
C+	2.33	77-79	770-799		E	0.00	0-59	0-599

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A	4.0	94-100	Shows an exceptional level of thoughtful engagement with the text(s), complex, creative, and well-reasoned arguments, and a clear prose style. The paper uses several logical examples to fully develop a persuasive thesis and is organized in such a way that invites the reader to follow along. The prose is clear and interesting, and there are no errors in formatting, grammar, syntax, or spelling.
A-	3.67	90-93	
B+	3.33	87-89	Needs more attention to one or two of these areas: sophistication and nuance of arguments (a more arguable thesis statement, use of more evidence or analysis, qualification of arguments, etc.), prose style/formatting (sentence structure, diction, clarity), or organization (paragraph construction, flow of ideas).
B	3.00	84-86	
B-	2.67	80-83	
C+	2.33	77-79	Needs to push further in order to go beyond a surface-level interpretation. Needs more textual evidence and analysis to support them. The overall argument might not be clearly or convincingly articulated. A 'C' paper also needs improvement in clarity of prose and/or organization.
C	2.0	74-76	
C-	1.67	70-73	
D+	1.33	67-69	Indicates a superficial engagement with the text, and inattention to argument, prose style, and mechanics. The paper uses few or no examples, and the argument is unclear and unpersuasive. The organization is difficult to follow. The prose is unclear, and there are major errors in formatting, grammar, syntax, or spelling that impede comprehension.
D	1.00	64-66	
D-	0.67	60-63	
E	0.00	0-59	Shows little understanding of the assignment, is turned in extremely late, and/ or shows extreme problems with argument and grammar. Or, you may have committed any one of the following failing errors: failure to meet the word count, plagiarism, or failure to address the prompt.