

English 2109-02: Women's Literature

Gender and rage

Spring 2021 * Online class

Dr. Leah Haught

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Virtual Office Hours: T: 11-12 and 2-3; Th: 3-5; or online by appointment

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Course Description

In this class, we will read literature by women that explores both the potentialities and the limitations associated with women's rage. We will engage texts from a variety of genres and time periods that question the relationships between gender and the perception of specific emotions as empowering or, alternatively, as disenfranchising or even dangerous. Women have long been taught not to express dissatisfaction for the sake of their families and their communities, but at what cost? What happens when women reject the characterization of their anger as ugly, shameful, and/or destructive? How might harnessing the force of women's collective rage change history?

Fair warning: many of the texts we will read deal with the harsh realities of misogyny, which can be difficult to read about, as it includes many forms of violence and abuse. If you need to take a break while reading, that is perfectly okay, as is talking to someone—me, a UWG counselor, or trusted friend—about why you find a particular topic especially difficult to process. Please see the “UWG Cares” section below for more information about the services available to you as a member of the UWG community.

Be advised that this is a reading heavy course, which is reflective of its status as a Core C.2 course and as a requirement for all English majors. If you cannot commit to the reading schedule outlined below for whatever reason, you might want to consider taking this course another semester. A minimum grade of “C” in ENGL 1102 is a required pre-requisite for this course.

Required Texts and Instructional Resources

This course is delivered entirely online on CourseDen. *This course cannot be taken exclusively on your phone.* Chrome is the best browser for being able to “see” everything correctly.

Texts:

Alderman, Naomi. *The Power*. Hachette Book Group, 2016.
Brontë, Emily. *Wuthering Heights*. 1847. Penguin Classics, 2003.
Gurba, Myriam. *Mean*. Coffee House Press, 2017.
Morrison, Toni. *The Bluest Eye*. 1970. Vintage International, 2007.
Rhys, Jean. *Wide Sargasso Sea*. 1966. Norton, 2016.

All books are available in the UWG bookstore. If you opt to use online or other editions of these materials, it is your responsibility to make sure you know what sections of your text correspond to the reading assignments listed below.

Supplementary readings due will be available via CourseDen or online

You will also need to view the following movies, which is on reserve in the library and can be rented from the streaming services listed after each title:

The Babadook. Directed by Jennifer Kent, performances by Essie Davis, Noah Wiseman, and Daniel Henshall, Screen Australia and Causeway Films, 2014. [Showtime.com or channels with subscription; rentable via Prime Video for 2.99]
Captain Marvel. Directed by Anna Boden and Ryan Fleck, performances by Brie Larson, Samuel L. Jackson, and Ben Mendelsohn, Walt Disney Pictures and Marvel Studios, 2019. [Disney Plus with subscription; rentable for 2.99 on Prime Video]

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to:

1. Use a selection of literature by women to identify and engage with social and cultural themes in literary texts, both verbally and in writing;
2. Demonstrate reading and interpretation skills such as previewing, close reading, rhetorical analysis, annotating, summarizing, journaling, and deep listening, via discussion and various modes of writing;
3. Develop the ability to discuss the importance of literature to their lives, environments, and relationships to history, via discussion and various modes of writing.
4. Practice active reading by formulating meaningful questions, interrogating their own affinities with and resistance to texts they read, and identifying gaps in knowledge they encounter when reading, both verbally and in writing.

Assignments

Fuller descriptions of all of your formal assignments and study guides for your exams will be posted to CourseDen.

- *Participation* (20%): you are expected to not only do the assigned readings, but also to be prepared to discuss said readings. This does not mean that you have to have everything “figured out” ahead of time; questions and clarifications are perfectly reasonable ways to contribute to class discussions, though you need to make an effort to share your opinions and insights too if you want higher than a “C” in this component of your grade. To that end, you should take notes while reading and during digital exchanges with your peers. These exchanges will include small group discussions on CourseDen as well as larger forums on Slack, the first component of which will always be due on Fridays at noon, with follow up posts happening over the next few days. I will post your participation grade twice: around midterm and at the end of the semester. [L.O. 1-4]
- *Reading Journal* (20%): at multiple points during the semester, you’ll work on honing your close reading and critical thinking skills in short, written responses to what we are reading. You will be evaluated on the basis of the quality of your work in these short assignments, but not on the basis of polish or style specifically. These are due by midnight on the dates listed below. [L.O. 2-3]
- *Syllabus Pitch* (20%): working in groups, you will design a unit you would add to our syllabus if your group were responsible for teaching this class. You will then pitch your unit to your peers by way of a fifteen-minute formal presentation with slides, which you will record on Zoom. [L.O. 1, 3 and 4]
- *Problem Paper* (20%): drawing on your skills developed throughout the semester as a whole, you will produce a polished, 3 to 4-page paper that uses your close reading skills to offer an argument for a possible interpretation of a central problem in one of the texts we read for class. [L.O. 1-4]
- *Exams* (2 at 10% each): writing intensive exams covering the texts and concepts we discuss throughout the semester. You will help me design these exams. [L.O. 1 and 2]

Grading and Revision Policies

Grades are based on student performance on each assignment. Simply turning in every assignment does not guarantee that you will receive the grade you want on those assignments, nor does earning a “good” grade on one assignment guarantee that you will earn a similar grade on the next assignment. The grading scale and standards I use are detailed in the “Grading Scale and Guidelines for Formal Assignments” document on CourseDen. Generally speaking, however, they follow a two-point scale in which a 98 is an A+, a 96 an A+/A, a 94 an A, a 92 an A/A-, a 90 an A-, and so on.

I do not offer extra credit for this class. I do accept revisions of journal entries *if you “meet” with me* to discuss your plans for revision *within a week* of me handing the graded paper back to you. You should come to this meeting with your *revision plan/goals typed up or written out*. We will settle on a due date for your revision during our meeting. Revised papers do not necessarily earn higher grades, but I do guarantee that your grade will not drop in any way should you decide to attempt a revision. If you are revising a paper that was penalized for plagiarism, your old grade and your new grade will be averaged to determine the final grade that you will receive. You are welcome

to revise late work, but the late penalties associated with the first assignment are also applicable to your revision.

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

Each week, all of your readings and participation activities are due by noon on Friday. The due dates for formal assignments are listed individually on the schedule below. While you are welcome to read ahead as your schedule allows, do remember that you cannot expect your peers to have read beyond what is assigned in a given week and plan your participation accordingly. In other words, this is not an entirely self-paced class. I will release “discussion videos” to help you start thinking through your reading assignments and prompts for weekly tasks by noon on Fridays at the latest as well. All readings labeled “e-reserve” can be found in the CourseDen module for the corresponding week.

When	What We Are Focusing On	What is Due
Week 1 Jan. 11-15	Introductions	Read: excerpts from Traister, <i>Good and Mad</i> ; (e-reserve); excerpts from Cooper, <i>Eloquent Rage</i> (e-reserve); excerpts from Chemaly, <i>Rage Becomes Her</i> (e-reserve) Write/do: Slack exercise; Introductory Discussion post on CourseDen
Week 2 Jan. 18-22	Visualizing Women’s Rage	Watch: <i>The Babadook</i> and <i>Captain Marvel</i> Write/do: Weekly Discussion Post #1 and Slack work (don’t forget to do follow up steps after the initial posts on these; they have rolling deadlines) Reading Journal #1 is due by midnight on 1/24
Week 3 Jan. 25-29	The More Things Change, the More They Stay the Same	Read: Wollstonecraft, excerpts from <i>A Vindication</i> (e-reserve); Truth, “Ain’t I a Woman?” (e-reserve); Cady Stanton, “Address to the New York State Legislature” (e-reserve); Solanas, “ The Scum Manifesto ,”; Lorde, “ The Uses of Anger ” Write/do: Discussion Post #2; Slack work
Week 4 Feb. 1-4	Voices from a “Distant” Past: Marital and Religious Misogyny	Read: Marie de France, “Yonec” and “Guigemar” (e-reserve); Landon, “Revenge” (e-reserve); excerpts from <i>The Book of Margery Kempe</i> (e-reserve); Lanyer, “Eve’s Apology in Defense of Women” (e-reserve); Speght, <i>A Muzzle for Melastomus</i> (e-reserve); Piatt, “The Coming of Eve” (e-reserve) Write/do: Discussion Post #3; Slack work Journal Entry #2 is due by midnight on 2/7
Week 5 Feb. 8-12	Violent Passions	Read: Brontë, <i>Wuthering Heights</i> , volume 1, chapters 1-12 Write/do: Discussion Post #4; Slack work
Week 6 Feb. 15-19	Unsociability	Read: Brontë, <i>Wuthering Heights</i> , volume 1, chapters 13-14 and volume 2, chapters 1-11; nominate passages for exam Write/do: Discussion Post #5; Slack work

		Journal Entry #3 is due by midnight on 2/21
Week 7 Feb. 22-26	Peace? Online exam review TBD	Read: finish Brontë, <i>Wuthering Heights</i> ; study for exam Write/do: Slack work (no discussion posts this week) Exam 1 is due by 5pm on 2/26
Week 8 Mar. 1-5	Caught Between Patriarchal Systems: The Caribbean Version of Colonialism	Read: Rhys, <i>Wide Sargasso Sea</i> , part one and part two, through break on page 114 Write/do: Discussion Post #6; Slack work Journal Entry #4 is due by midnight on 3/14
Week 9 Mar. 8-12	Misogyny and racism move North	Read: finish Rhys, <i>Wide Sargasso Sea</i> ; Morrison, <i>The Bluest Eye</i> , Foreword and pp. 3-58 Write/do: Discussion Post #7; Slack work
Week 10 Mar. 15-19	No class: spring break	
Week 11 Mar. 22-26	Inferiority learned	Read: finish Morrison, <i>The Bluest Eye</i> Write/do: Discussion Post #8; Slack work Journal Entry #5 is due by midnight on 3/27
Week 12 Mar. 25- Apr. 2	Claiming Herstory *** <i>Last day to withdraw with a "W" is tomorrow</i> ***	Read: Gurba, <i>Mean</i> Write/do: Discussion Post #9; Slack work
Week 13 Apr. 5-9	Imagining Empowered Futures	Read: Read: Alderman, <i>The Power</i> , pp. 3-141 Write/do: Discussion Post #10; Slack work; tell me your group's pitch text Journal Entry #6 is due by midnight on 4/11
Week 14 Apr. 12-16	When Women Rule the World	Read: Alderman, <i>The Power</i> , pp. 145-305 Write/do: Discussion Post #11; Slack work; work on pitches
Week 15 Apr. 19-23	Women Clap Back	Read: finish Alderman, <i>The Power</i> ; watch/listen: Morrisette, " You Oughta Know "; Dixie Chicks, " Goodbye Earl "; Beyoncé, " Formation "; Lizzo, " Truth Hurts "; nominate passages for exam Write/do: Slack work (no discussion posts this week); finish Syllabus Pitches and study for exam
Week 16 Apr. 26-30	Wrapping Up	Syllabus Pitches are due by midnight on 4/27 Write/do: online course evaluations

	Exam #2 is by 5pm on 4/30
May 7	Problem paper is due by noon today

Course Policies and Expectations of Students

Deadlines and Submitting Assignments

We are living in the midst of a global pandemic, which likely means that some weeks will be tougher than others for all of us. It is okay to not be okay sometimes. That said, please do your best to stay on top of your reading and discussion posts; the farther you fall behind, the harder it is to catch up, and for the discussion posts to work fully as an educational tool for your group as a whole, everyone’s initial posts need to be timely.

All of your work is due on the days and times indicated by the above schedule. You will submit your work electronically via CourseDen (or email if there happens to be server trouble). Your grade will drop by two grade scales (four points) for every day that it is late, including weekends, and I will not accept work that is over a week late. If you are going to be absent the day that something is due, it remains your responsibility to make sure that your work is turned in on time. Failure to do so will result in your grade dropping. If you are having trouble with an assignment, talk to me *well ahead* of that assignment’s due date; I do not grant last minute extensions for assignments nor can I be of much help the night before an assignment is due. I am, however, happy to do everything in my power to help you produce work that you are proud of, including granting extensions that are requested in a reasonable timeframe ahead of that assignment’s due date.

It is your responsibility to regularly back up your work and to ensure that the submitted product is formatted correctly. “My computer ate my file” and “I thought I submitted that file” are not accepted excuses for late work, so I strongly suggest you save your work to a USB drive regularly, back your work up on Google Drive or Dropbox, and double check that *all* of your submissions to CourseDen go through as planned. If you have questions or concerns about CourseDen, you should contact the Distance Learning office at <http://uwgonline.westga.edu/>.

Academic Honesty

The act of plagiarism—claiming someone else’s ideas, language, images, or other original materials as your own without giving full credit to your source—is a serious offense. As members of an academic community, it is important that we engage in responsible and honest communication with one another. Plagiarism, whether accidental or intentional, will result in a failing grade for the assignment in question and will, as a result, negatively impact your overall grade. Repeat offenders will fail the course and might be subjected to additional action by the University.

If you are unclear about how to cite a source, ask me *before* you turn your work in. Sources you should consult before talking to me include:

- The English department’s website:
<http://www.westga.edu/%7Eengdept/Plagiarism/index.html>
- The Writing Center’s site: <https://www.westga.edu/academics/coah/writing>
- The research and citation section of Purdue’s online writing lab:
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html

Submitting someone else's work as your own, resubmitting your own work done for another class, or collaborating with peers on individual assignments are also forms of academic dishonesty that will result in failing grades for the assignment.

Classroom Etiquette

Since everyone is expected to participate in class, it is important that you all feel comfortable doing so. Some of the content we will be discussing involves topics or perspectives with which you might not agree or feel wholly comfortable, and that is okay. Differing viewpoints are welcome in class discussions; however, disrespectful comments against specific individuals or groups will not be tolerated under any circumstances. In the event that such a statement is made, the speaker will not get credit for that day's participation work.

Additional Support

I am happy to meet with you outside of class to discuss readings, your progress on specific assignments, or any other questions/concerns you might have about what is going on in my class or your life in general. I will be in my office during the office hours listed at the top of this syllabus. On the occasion that I need to reschedule office hours, you will be given as much advanced notice about these changes as possible. If you are unable to come to office hours, let me know and we'll figure out another time to meet that is convenient for us both. I am also happy to answer specific questions over email and will do so as quickly as I can. That said, please don't panic if you don't hear from me right away, especially if you send your email at, say, midnight. If, however, I haven't responded in 36 hours, feel free to send a follow up email.

The University Writing Center is another excellent resource that I encourage you to take advantage of as all writing benefits from multiple sets of eyes; indeed, professional writers workshop their pieces all of the time. You may go to the Writing Center at any stage in your writing process for any class. For more information or to make an appointment, call 678-839-6513, visit TLC 1201, or email them at writing@westga.edu. The Center for Academic Success (CAS) provides many programs, including peer tutoring for Core classes, to help all students succeed academically. For more information or to make an appointment, call 678-839-6280, visit UCC 200, or email them at cas@westga.edu.

University Policies

Student Rights/Responsibilities

Please carefully review the following Common Language for all university course syllabi at http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common_Language_for_Course_Syllabi.pdf. It contains important material pertaining to university policies and responsibilities. Because these statements are updated as federal, state, university and accreditation standards change, you should review the information each semester.

Accessibility Services

UWG adheres to the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), which requires that accommodations be made to make programs accessible for people with disabilities. If you are a student with a disability, please make sure to register at the Accessibility Services Office and provide me with a copy of your Accommodation Request as soon as possible. The Accessibility Services Office is located at 123

Row Hall. You may call them at 678-839-6428 or visit their website at <http://www.westga.edu/counseling/4486.php>.

UWG Cares

College can sometimes feel stressful. Please know that everyone at UWG is committed to supporting you to the best of our abilities; we've been in your shoes. If at any point during the semester you or someone you know starts to feel overwhelmed, I'd encourage you to call the Counseling Center (it's free and anything you discuss can remain confidential) at 678-839-6428 or visit them in Row Hall 123 from 8-5, Mon-Fri. If you need to contact a patient's advocate, call 678-839-0641 or 678-839-5338 (also confidential). For basic health concerns, call Health Services at 678-839-6452.

If you need me to help you find a particular support service or walk with you to an office, I am happy to do that; you need to know, however, that ***I am legally obligated to report any incident of sexual assault*** as a violation of Title IX (please see the following site for more information about Title IX and your reporting options: <https://www.westga.edu/hr/title-nine.php>).

If you are worried about someone who does not seem to want to ask for help, visit <http://www.westga.edu/uwgcares/> to file an anonymous report on that person. In case of emergency, call the UWG police at 678-839-6000. Don't be afraid to call national help lines, like the national suicide prevention lifeline at 800-273-8255 or the national sexual assault hotline at 800-656-4673 if need be, either.