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Fall 2015

ENGL 6007

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University of New Orleans

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ENGL 6007: BECOMING WOMEN
DR. ANNE BOYD RIOUX
FALL 2015
CLASS MEETS in LA 396, T and TH 2:00-3:15
OFFICE: LA 375 PHONE: 280-6484 E-MAIL: aeboyd@uno.edu
OFFICE HOURS: and TH 12:30-2, W 11-2; and by appointment

Description of Course:

This course will explore narratives of women growing up, beginning with the iconic text *Little Women*, by Louisa Alcott, which exerted a tremendous influence on American women writers. We will look at girls who struggle with and conform to gender expectations, queer girls and tomboys, and girls whose race/ethnicity further complicates their gender identity. Above all, we will look at the identities girls adopt and the life choices girls are able to make over the course of the past 150 years. We will also delve into the authors' lives, as they are often intertwined with the texts they wrote about becoming women.

At the end of this course you should be able to:

- analyze female *Bildungsromane* from the perspectives of gender studies, cultural studies, and feminist criticism
- construct effective literary arguments or creative works that build on the themes of the course and the critical work of others
- lead a class discussion on a scholarly article
- present complex ideas in a professional and clear manner with the aid of visual technology
- analyze your own strengths and weaknesses as a thinker/writer

TEXTS:

REQUIRED:

Louisa May Alcott, *Little Women*, Norton Critical; ISBN 0393976149
Constance Fenimore Woolson, *Anne*; Forgotten Books; ISBN 1330003144
Jean Webster, *Daddy Long Legs*; ISBN 0143039067
Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*; ISBN 0061120065
Sylvia Plath, *The Bell Jar*; ISBN 0060837020
Kincaid, Jamaica. *Annie John*; ISBN 0374525102
Sandra Cisneros, *The House on Mango Street*; ISBN 0679734775
Alison Bechdel, *Are You My Mother?* ISBN 0544002237

COURSE WEBSITE:

Our course website is: <https://engl6007becomingwomen.wordpress.com/>

Here you will find information about the readings for each class as well as post your journals before class. Our website is private; therefore, you need to sign up for permission to access it.

1. Go to [Wordpress.com](https://wordpress.com). Click on GET STARTED HERE.
2. Fill in your E-mail address and choose a username or password. ****Please create a name by which I and your classmates can all recognize you**** I suggest using **your first name** plus some numbers or symbols. If you create a name that neither I nor the class can recognize, then it might hinder your ability to participate in class work on the blog.
3. Do not fill in an address for your blog. Instead, look at the right hand column next to the box for Blog Address and click on "Sign Up for Just a User Name."

4. After you fill out this form and submit it, Wordpress will send you an **activation email**. Go to your email account, open the email from Wordpress, and click on the link to activate your account.
5. No go to our class site (<https://engl6007becomingwomen.wordpress.com/>).
6. When you try to enter, you will be notified that this is a private site, and you can request permission to access it. Click on the appropriate link to do so. I will receive an e-mail with your request and will activate you.
7. *Once you are an approved user:* go to the class site and click on "**Follow.**" Enter Your Email according to the instructions.

GRADING:

- Journal (20%)
- Journal Reflection (10%)
- Text Curation (15 %)
- Presentation #1 (10%)
- Presentation#2 (15%)
- Proposal (10%)
- Final Project (20%)

Letter grades correspond to the following numerical scale: A=95, A-=92, A-/B+=90, B+=88, B=85, B-=82, B-/C+=80, C+=78, C=75, C-=72, C-/D+=70, D+=68, D=65, D-=62, F=50.

A grade of "C" indicates competent completion of the assignment. Grades of "A" and "B" indicate varying levels of distinguished performance beyond competency, while grades of "D" and "F" indicate varying levels of failure to address the assignment competently.

ATTENDANCE: Plan to attend every class meeting and come prepared to share your views with us. Tardiness is extremely disruptive to the class and should only occur in an emergency. Problems with attendance will be reflected in your participation grade.

LATE WORK: All assignments are due at the beginning of the class period designated on the syllabus. **No late work will be accepted without making arrangements with me BEFORE the assignment is due.** Only **one** late assignment or make-up exam will be allowed, per student.
 ****All assignments must be completed in order to pass the course.

INCOMPLETES: Only in extraordinary circumstances should you request an incomplete in a course. If it is clear before the drop date that you will not be able to complete the assignments on time, you should drop the course. Incompletes are usually considered only in cases where the student has completed all but the final assignment(s)—exam and/or research paper.

Important Dates*

- Last day to adjust schedule w/out fee 08/18/2015
- Semester Classes Begin 08/19/2015
- Last day to adjust schedule w/fee,
or withdraw with 100% refund 08/25/2015
- Last day to apply for December commencement 09/25/2015
- Final day to drop a course or resign 10/14/2015
- Mid-semester examinations 10/05-10/09/2015
- Final examinations 12/07-12/11/2015
- Commencement..... 12/18/2015

*Note: check Registrar's website for Saturday and A/B sessions, and for items not listed here: <http://www.registrar.uno.edu>

Fall Semester Holidays

Labor Day 09/07/2015
Mid-semester break.....10/15-10/16/2015
Thanksgiving.....11/26-11/27/2015

Repeat Policy

When a student is permitted to repeat a course for credit, the last grade earned shall be the one which determines course acceptability for degree credit. A student who has earned a C or better in a course may not repeat that course unless, (1) the catalog description indicates that the course may be repeated for credit, or (2) the student's Dean gives prior approval for documented extenuating circumstances.

Graduate Policies

Graduate policies often vary from undergraduate policies. To view the applicable policies for graduate students, see the Graduate Student Handbook: <http://www.uno.edu/grad/documents/GraduateStudentHandbook2014.pdf>

Academic Dishonesty Policy

<http://www.uno.edu/student-affairs-enrollment-management/documents/academic-dishonesty-policy-rev2014.pdf>

Safety Awareness Facts and Education

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender is a Civil Rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources here:

<http://www.uno.edu/student-affairs-enrollment-management/>

UNO Counseling Services and UNO Cares

UNO offers care and support for students in any type of distress. Counseling Services assist students in addressing mental health concerns through assessment, short-term counseling, and career testing and counseling. Find out more at <http://www.uno.edu/counseling-services/>. First-year students often have unique concerns, and UNO Cares is designed to address those students succeed. Contact UNO Cares through <http://www.uno.edu/fye/uno-cares.aspx>.

Emergency Procedures

Sign up for emergency notifications via text and/or email at E2Campus Notification: <http://www.uno.edu/ehso/emergency-communications/index.aspx>. All emergency and safety procedures are explained at the Emergency Health and Safety Office: <http://www.uno.edu/ehso/>.

Diversity at UNO

As the most diverse public university in the state, UNO maintains a Diversity Affairs division to support the university's efforts towards creating an environment of healthy respect, tolerance, and appreciation for the people from all walks of life, and the expression of intellectual point of view and personal lifestyle. The Office of Diversity Affairs promotes these values through a wide range of programming and activities. <http://diversity.uno.edu/index.cfm>

Learning and Support Services

Help is within reach in the form of learning support services, including tutoring in writing and math and other supplemental instruction. Visit the Learning Resource Center in LA 334, or learn more at <http://www.uno.edu/lrc/>.

Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity

UNO is an equal opportunity employer. The Human Resource Management department has more information on UNO's compliance with federal and state regulations regarding EEOC in its Policies and Resources website: <http://www.uno.edu/human-resource-management/policies.aspx>

ENGL 6007—BECOMING WOMEN

ASSIGNMENTS

******* See "Guidelines on Sources" at the end for information on how to locate appropriate sources (scholarly) for some of these assignments.**

JOURNALS

Your journal is your own page on our class blog where you can post your responses to our class readings. (You will do this by typing into the “Leave a Comment” Box. Start each entry in your journal with the date.) There can be some personal reflection (as the title “Journal” implies, but keep the focus on our readings and the writing assignments you are doing for class.) You should log onto your page and post before each class (by 11:30 AM). This is your place to record your initial ideas about the texts we will be reading.

This is not a formal writing assignment. You can choose one or more passages that really stood out to you. Identify the passage(s) and explain why they intrigue, agitate, mystify you—or whatever it is they do. Also feel free to record your general reactions to the piece and any more general thoughts you are having about the course material. Your journal is also a great place for brainstorming and gathering ideas that you can use for papers. Aim for at least 250 words per post, but they may be as long as you wish. Journals will be graded on the effort you have put into them. Polished writing is not a requirement, but clarity is important.

You're not done yet! Take two minutes to PROOFREAD before you click “Post Comment.” Make sure your post looks the way you want it to. Also check the accuracy of the quotes you have typed up from the reading and make sure you have included the page number. For example: “It was as if he had bowed and smiled when death stood before him, humble to the last” (119).

The goal of this assignment is twofold: 1) to activate class discussion and 2) help you develop your critical thinking and writing skills. At first, this may seem like a lot of work, but you will see how much it enhances your understanding of the course material (and thus your grade at the end of the course!). Our class will not take the form of a lecture. Instead, we will be discussing our readings. So writing in our journal before class will be the first step towards class discussion.

JOURNAL REFLECTION

For this assignment you will reflect on and analyze the journal writing you have done thus far in the semester. Begin by printing and reading all of your journal entries. As you reread them, take notes, critically reading your entries as if they were written by somebody else (or at the very least, recognizing that they were written by a different you at a different time). Compose a 2-4-page analysis and reflection of your posts. Feel free to quote briefly from your own posts or to refer to specific ideas from the readings we've studied so far. You should consider the following questions, at a minimum, but may also include other reflections of your own choosing:

- What surprised you as you reread your work?
- Do you notice any recurring themes or particular interests in your posts?
- What do you feel you have learned so far this semester?
- What burning questions remain?
- How have your posts changed or evolved?
- What would you like to do differently in future posts?
- What ideas or threads in your posts do you see as worth revisiting, perhaps for your short essay or research paper?

TEXT CURATION

You will choose a novel that was included in the Women's Department of the Cotton Centennial Exposition in New Orleans in 1884. I will be providing a list. This assignment will be coordinated with a project at Tulane to curate an online exhibition of the books, all written by women, collected from all over the United States. Many of these books were coming-of-age stories. Your task will be to read the book and provide a brief description of the book and its author. This may require some research into how the text was received at the time it was published. More information will be provided as the project gets underway this semester.

PRESENTATION #1

You will direct class discussion of one of the critical articles we are reading (in bold on course schedule). Your presentation should include some kind of visual component (at minimum a handout, but also possibility some kind of multimedia element; i.e., PowerPoint, Prezi). Your presentation can include major points of the readings, problems raised by the article, questions about how to interpret the author's argument, how to apply the author's reading to the text we have read, and/or points of connection with other texts we have already read. Your presentation should include specific questions/topics for discussion. I will be doing a sample early in the semester.

PRESENTATION #2

You will do a 7-10-minute presentation based on your project proposal, outlining for the class how you intend to approach your subject, what research you have done, how you intend to enter into the conversation on your subject or contribute a new perspective, what problems you foresee or have already encountered, etc. Again, your presentation should include some kind of visual component to help your audience process your talk (at minimum a handout, but also possibility some kind of multimedia element; i.e., PowerPoint, Prezi).

PROPOSAL

You will write a proposal that will outline the topic you wish to explore in your final project, how you will explore it, which sources (primary and secondary) you will be using, and a discussion of how you intend to use those sources. It should be at least 3 pages long (double-spaced), and a working bibliography in MLA format (see below) must be appended.

FINAL PROJECT

This can be a creative piece or a traditional research paper. See below for a discussion of each option. I am more than happy to discuss with you specific topics that you might explore, preferably something that grows out of your journal entries. You are free to choose either option, regardless of which program you are in.

CREATIVE PIECE

You may create your own coming-of-age narrative, in the form of nonfiction or fiction about yourself or another woman. This should be new work that has grown out of your readings this semester. Aim for 10-13 pages. You should also include an introduction (3-5 pages) for your work that analyzes how and why you made the creative choices you did, in conversation with other coming-of-age narratives and/or writing about the issues that arises in such texts. Here you should cite other writers' work, primary and/or secondary, that inspired you or gave you a model or theoretical framework for what you hoped to accomplish. Your secondary sources may be scholarly or written for a general audience. Include a Works Cited page.

RESEARCH PAPER

This would be a traditional research paper written for a scholarly audience, taking journal articles as your model (although yours would be shorter). Topics may include an in-depth analysis of one of the texts we have read, perhaps in conversation with another text not on the syllabus, or a broader analysis of an issue

related to women's *Bildungsromane*. In either case, your paper should focus on the topics we have discussed this semester. For instance, an analysis of the use of metaphor in *Their Eyes Were Watching God* wouldn't really engage the issues of this class, but an analysis of how that text subverts readers' expectations of the female *Bildungsroman* would.

What makes a compelling research paper? First it should present an argument in conversation with other writers (scholarly sources—see “Guidelines on Sources” below). Then it should develop that argument with substantive, thoughtful analysis of one or more primary texts. The goal here is to contribute something new to the conversation. You need not have thought of something that no one else has thought of before. Perhaps you will simply find a new angle or new evidence to contribute. Think of yourself as responding to the body of criticism (not only one article, as you did with the response paper). You may choose to focus solely on your “core text,” or you may compare/contrast it to another primary text or analyze it in the context of other primary documents (using a New Historicist approach)

Your papers should incorporate scholarly research (see the Guidelines on Sources)—at least four sources—and should be approximately 12-15 pages long. Papers must be double-spaced in 12-point font with 1-inch margins.

Your paper should use the MLA style. **Papers that do not follow the MLA style with adequate accuracy will be marked down half of one letter grade.** I expect your papers to cite sources correctly, to integrate quotes and paraphrases effectively, and to include a Works Cited page in MLA format. You can borrow or purchase the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 7th ed., or you can follow the Purdue OWL online MLA guide: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>.

***Be aware of what exactly **plagiarism** is and how you can avoid it. See the following site on this topic: <http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml>. It is important that you use your sources appropriately and credit all borrowed ideas or language correctly.

GUIDELINES ON SCHOLARLY SOURCES

You will be collecting scholarly sources for your abstracts, annotated bibliographies, responses to an article, presentations, and research papers. "Scholarly sources" are written for an academic audience (not for students) and are articles, chapters, or entire books published in peer-reviewed journals (see a sample listing below) or by university presses or academic presses (examples of the latter include Routledge, Peter Lang, Blackwell, Twayne, G.K. Hall). "Scholarly sources" are also substantive analyses of literary texts and contexts; thus they should be more than 7 pages long and should not be book reviews. You should not use other online sources or websites. You also should not consult *The Explicator*, *Notes and Queries*, or any other such journal. You will notice that these articles are only 2 or 3 pages long and thus not substantive enough to include in your research. In general, you should not consult books that are written for a lay audience (i.e., published by a trade publisher like Scribners, Knopf, or Harper Collins). When in doubt, please consult me. Your sources should also be recent, i.e., published in the last twenty years. You may choose to include an older source if it represents a reading that more current scholars are responding to or if it is a standard source that scholars should be familiar with (i.e., is cited in most recent sources).

How to Find Scholarly Sources

MLA International Bibliography: You should begin your search with this database on the library's website (in Databases). Almost all of the sources you will find in the MLA Bibliography are scholarly and appropriate for this course (with the exception of book reviews and dissertations). Some full-text articles are included (click on "Check LinkSource") to find out—this will often take you to another database, such as JSTOR or Project Muse. (***)Don't start your search with these databases, because their content is quite limited.) "Check LinkSource" will also enable you to search the UNO catalogue for the journal or book. If UNO does not have the source, you may order it through Interlibrary Loan. A link to "Request this Item Through Interlibrary Loan" will take you to the form (already filled out) to submit.

(You will first need to create an ILL account.) It's that easy! And many times ILL will deliver the item to you electronically within a day or two.

Literature Resource Center: This database also includes scholarly articles, but you should be careful when using it, as it also includes many, many non-scholarly sources. If you search for a novel, look in the tab called "Literature Criticism." A few scholarly sources may be included, i.e., articles from scholarly journals (see below). Avoid anything from a "Dictionary" and anything published by Gale or Gale Research (an exception would be the articles reprinted from scholarly journals in the *Nineteenth-Century Literature Criticism* series published by Gale Research), also anything under 5,000 words. All of the other criteria explained here should also be applied.

***When in doubt, consult me.

COURSE SCHEDULE

ENGL 6007 BECOMING WOMEN

Dr. Rioux

Check course website for details and links to articles.

Week	Tuesday	Thursday
1 st 8/20	n/a	Introduction to class
2 nd 8/25-8/27	Articles by Lazzaro-Weiss and Voloshin	Alcott, <i>Little Women</i>
3 rd 9/1-9/3	Alcott, <i>Little Women</i>	Alcott, <i>Little Women</i>
4 th 9/8-9/10	Alcott, <i>Little Women</i> Article Article	Woolson, Anne
5 th 9/15-9/17	Woolson, Anne	Woolson, Anne
6 th 9/22-9/24	Woolson, Anne	Woolson, Anne Article
7 th 9/29-10/1	Webster, <i>Daddy-Long-Legs</i>	Webster, <i>Daddy-Long-Legs</i> Article
8 th 10/6-10/8	Hurston, <i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i>	Hurston, <i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i>
9 th 10/13-10/15	Hurston, <i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i> Article Article	October break NO CLASS
10 th 10/20-10/22	Plath, <i>The Bell Jar</i>	Plath, <i>The Bell Jar</i>
11 th 10/27-10/29	Plath, <i>The Bell Jar</i> Article	Kincaid, <i>Annie John</i>

Week	Tuesday	Thursday
12 th 11/3-11/5	Kincaid, <i>Annie John</i> Article	Cisneros, <i>The House on Mango Street</i>
13 th 11/10-11/12	Cisneros, <i>The House on Mango Street</i> Article	No Class Work on Proposals
14 th 11/17-11/19	Presentations	Presentations
15 th 11/24-11/26	Bechdel, <i>Are You My Mother?</i>	Thanksgiving No Class
16 th 12/1-12/3	Bechdel, <i>Are You My Mother?</i> Article	Final Class