Bowling Green State University

ScholarWorks@BGSU

Master of Arts in English Plan II Graduate
Projects

English

Spring 5-9-2019

Journey's End: A Final MA Portfolio

Rachel Evans
Bowling Green State University, rcevans@bgsu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/ms_english

Part of the English Language and Literature Commons

Journey's End: A Final MA Portfolio

Rachel C. Evans

rcevans@bgsu.edu

A Final Portfolio

Submitted to the English Department of Bowling Green

State University in partial fulfillment of

the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts in the field of English

May 7th, 2019

Dr. Heather Jordan, First Reader

Ms. Kimberly Spallinger, Second Reader

Table of Contents

Rachel C. Evans

ENG 6910

Dr. Heather Jordan and Ms. Kimberly Spallinger

Analytical Narrative

5/7/18

Passed Through Fire: A Personal Narrative

Writing a cover letter has always felt like telling a story. The contexts and recipients may shift, but the process, the skeleton often remains the same. There is a goal to be reached, a competency to be demonstrated, a beginning, middle, and end to be portrayed. To that end, in sitting down to write this introduction to my final capstone, I figured that it would be beneficial to begin at the beginning.

I very nearly didn't enroll in this program.

In the spring of 2012, I was enrolled in an undergraduate pharmacy program that I didn't like and, frankly, wasn't very good at. I had muscled my way through one semester of the program, thinking that freshman year struggles were normal, and everything would work out in the spring. But it was the spring, and as I sat on a friend's couch, shaking with dread at the thought of going to class on Monday, I realized everything had not worked out. Before I could talk myself out of it, I marched into the registrar's office when they opened the next day and requested the forms needed to withdraw from all but three of my courses. Signatures were given, the understanding that I would not be returning to the school that fall obtained, and I walked back to my room to call my mother. She was disappointed, and I didn't blame her. The program I was in was difficult to gain admission

to, I had worked hard for my place at that school, and it was a shame that it wasn't going to turn into the dream job I had convinced myself I wanted. It was a shame, I agreed with her, but not the kind of shame worth sacrificing one's health for, to feel dread and the claustrophobic sense of entrapment close around your every move and thought.

I ended up going to a local public university and earning a degree in literature, a subject I liked very much and had some talent for. The talent I didn't have was made up for in how compelled I felt to do the work and do it well. I graduated a year early, even if I came in at a bit of a disadvantage, and everything looked like it had worked out. And it had! I was happy and looking forward to a new job, my own apartment, and planning for what was to come next in my academic journey after a few years of work had passed to save money. A year passed, then two, and I felt that dream of a professorship in a subject I loved and was passionate about sharing begin to slip, inch by inch, and yard by yard. It wasn't all at once, and it wasn't on purpose. There was always just something else to do, something else to save for, something that had to be more important than ideas of the future as a successful literature professor and academic that were feeling more intangible by the day.

Sometimes, movie tropes are true. I came home from my job one day and caught a look of my face in a mirror. I looked terrible. Exhausted, yet under stimulated. Over-worked, yet restless. It was a look I recognized, though almost four years had passed since I last saw it. It was the face of someone looking out from behind the bars of a cage, in a place they had found themselves trapped in, even if it was the place they thought they

had wanted to be. After assessing option that would enable me to move towards a new path, I decided to pursue going back to school.

I had spoken about getting my master's degree several times, had looked into BGSU's program in particular as a favorite, and I knew that if I didn't apply then, then I may not have done it at all. There's a strange timeline people in their mid-twenties feel compelled to stick to, if my peers and I are anything to go by, where you feel if you don't achieve a kind of success by a certain age, then you'll stand still for the rest of your life, not in the place you want to be, but the place you've found yourself stuck in. That is not, of course, true. Transitions and changes are possible at any age, and who I am today will be a very different person than who I am next year, next decade, and so on. It is vital, however, that we give ourselves the opportunities to become those new people.

So, I did it. I applied for the M.A. in English with an individualized track since I didn't feel compelled towards teaching or rhetoric and composition and wanted something with a bit more flexibility. I was lucky enough to receive an admission offer and, in the fall of 2016, began my studies anew. Nothing else about my situation had changed, but the knowledge that I was moving forward in a career I wanted reinvigorated my desire to study and learn in a way that often made up for the lack of vigor I felt in my day job. My studies went well, and I began to arm myself with ideas of rhetoric and critical theory that I had heard spoken of in undergraduate work but had never fully grasped, works of Derrida, Saussure, Swales, and others that gave me new insight into the language we use and why we use it the way we do.

Then life, as it makes a habit of doing, happens. An unfortunate series of events, coupled with a more intense bout of seasonal affective disorder than was typical for me, swirled into a perfect storm in the spring of 2018. All at once, as if switching off a light, I felt like I couldn't do the work anymore, much less do it well. It began as a small doubts and snowballed until I felt, with absolute earnestness, that there must have been some mistake in my admission to the program, that I was being allowed to continue studies I hadn't earned a place in, that no one had caught on to what a fraud I was. Looking back, it was all a bit dramatic, but it would feel dishonest to frame it in another way. That was how it felt and even if the reality of the situation was different, it all felt absolutely, intensely, real.

In speaking to friends, family, and peers about how I felt in this time, a little over a year separated from it, I was always surprised to find how normal that kind of imposter syndrome was. Many people felt like the greatest imposters of their profession or study, and that one day someone was going to find them out. The degree of that fear varied, from the joking and jovial to the deadly series. The issue was that no one spoke about it, thinking themselves the lone island in a sea of competence, and if no one spoke about it, then it wouldn't be addressed. I have been fortunate in the people that have passed through my circle, professionally, academically, and personally, that have helped me gain perspective and defenses to such feelings. Without them, I'm not sure if I wouldn't have made a similar march – this one metaphorical in our internet age – to the registrar's office for another withdrawal, this time from a program I very much wanted to be in. It is true, in small and great ways, that we are often our own worst critics.

And so, we are here, at the end, the first mild day of a new spring signaling another shift is imminent. I am glad to say that since my enrollment, my idea of what English scholars do and write on a day-to-day basis has often been challenged and revised by both my instructors and my peers. Prior to this degree program, I was focused on getting to doctoral level work, that if I could just get through what I needed to at the master's level, I could curl up with my books and talk about literature to my heart's content. However, I quickly found that I was one of a few students who come to this degree without prior experience teaching, and that many of my classes were dedicated to the craft of teaching our subject effectively and efficiently. In hindsight, this focus makes sense and has given me many tools I can adapt for the teaching that will be required of me as a doctoral candidate as well as during my professorship. This transition from a more literature-based education to one a teaching one was jarring, but while I have often felt on the backfoot in my education focused classes because of that lack of experience, being surrounded by warm and generous classmates who valued the work we were all doing, regardless of the experiences of the person in question, has helped mitigate much of my anxiety that I will always be just that little bit behind.

At the core of it all, if this story can be said to have a moral, I enrolled in this master's program to return to a track I had almost given up on. In a place of doubt, in a job I was growing to dislike more and more every day, I felt that same sense of dread and entrapment returning to my life that I had felt at nineteen, and rather than let it eat at me, I chose to act.

I hadn't let it win the last time we sparred. I'm glad that I wasn't about to start then.

For I have done the work, and I have done it well.

Description of Projects and Revisions

My first project is a syllabus for an Introduction to Literature course that includes a unit and assignment plan for an end of the semester unit on the process of canonization. It was originally written for Dr. Dickenson's ENG 6090 Teaching of Literature course. While I do not have a teaching focus, it felt important to include a teaching project in my portfolio. In hindsight, I came into this degree with the idea that it was a stepping stone to get to my doctorate program, where I really wanted to be and where my "real work" would begin in earnest. However, I now believe that teaching is as much the real work of academia as study and publication. Including a syllabus and more detailed unit plan that I cared about making and being able to revise it using skills I obtained both in ENG 6090 and more recently in Dr. Hoy's composition instructor workshop, has allowed me to demonstrate my growth not just as a student but as a burgeoning instructor. Even though I do not come from an educational background, I have learned to trust my own instincts regarding what may or may not be effective in classroom practice, as well as acting like a sponge for information from my more knowledgeable and experienced peers.

The revision process for this project required to me put that knowledge to use, and was concerned with adapting it to a more appropriate audience, students and peers rather than an instructor, as well as expanding and trimming where it needs to feel more

complete and more thought out, both in an analytical and pedagogical sense. This project contained some elements that felt more like I had thrown the proverbial spaghetti at the wall and prayed it was going to stick. It was the first major education-focused project I completed, and when I began to revisit it for revision, that showed. I have done my best to eliminate those elements using the experience I have gained designing curricula since this course, especially in Dr. Cheryl Hoy's ENG 6020 course.

My second project my substantive research project completed as the final assignment of ENG 6470, History of Technical Communication. The idea to focus on women's contributions to the field of technical communication to see if and how they had been sidelined throughout its history was born out of a similar anger that fueled my fourth project on performative protest. Written largely as a passion project in which I explored a sector of the course's subject I felt was underrepresented, the process of researching, writing, and revising this project let me dig deep into a niche in the rhetorical situation I found myself in. While I am only a few months separated from the original draft of this piece and unfortunately was not able to obtain instructor feedback, what hindsight I have gained makes it feel like a snapshot taken along my progression as a researcher.

In looking back, with the help of some wonderful feedback, I was able to find the real frame of my paper was strongest when discussing the knowledge capital that comes with our understanding of technology and how we have fallen into a cultural trend of seeing technical knowledge and communication within a gendered light. While I had previously tacked on this idea at the end of the paper in the form of a brief discussion of more recent scholarship, the ideas I found and expounded upon became much more

impactful and meaningful when put at the beginning of the paper, encouraging the reader to see the historical record I had navigated within a more complete context. This project has brought home to me an idea expressed across my entire time in this program – that writing is a process and all writing, no matter how good your first or second or tenth go at it, can be made better and more effective through revision.

My third project was the final critical assignment of ENG 6070, Theory and Methods of Literary Criticism. Since I want to continue my studies towards a doctorate with a focus on literary criticism, it felt appropriate to include a project that also focused on that realm of English study. Returning to Fisher's collection of essays concerned with the lack of progression in modern society brought new insights to the merits of his material and a reaffirmation that maintaining a skeptical view of any person bemoaning the state of modern culture often puts that material in a more accurate perspective. Having the credentials and know-how needed to participate in on-going critical conversations was one of my main motivations for studying English even at the undergraduate level and being able to flex those muscles in revision felts like coming back to a comforting familiar place. In revision, I have attempted to refine and expand upon my own analysis and understanding the theories I was introduced to this this course, especially the linguistic works of Derrida and Saussure and Foucault's ideas on discourse. Hauntology and the cultural concept of ghosts across concepts is a strong interest of mine that I hope to explore in further studies, and it was a joy to revisit here.

My fourth and final project is an analytical essay completed as a final project for Dr. Sue Carter Wood's ENG 6800 seminar, "Convincing Women." The class was concerned

with the rhetorical attitudes and actions of women during the first wave of the Women's

Movement from the mid-1800s up to the ratification of the nineteenth amendment in

1920. My goal in this project was to take two rhetorical performances – the first was

Elizabeth Cady Stanton's "Address Delivered at Seneca Falls" from 1848, the second Nina

Mariah Donovan's "#NastyWoman," first posted on YouTube in December of 2016 – and

compare them for similarities and differences in rhetorical technique. While I went into

writing my original draft convinced that I would see glaring dissonance, much of Donovan

and Stanton's work is far more similar than it is different. In revision, I have added more

detail and nuance to my analysis, re-examining my own interpretation of the rhetorical

tools at work, as well as much needed historical, cultural, and social context for the times

in which both women are speaking and performing. This project has become a touchstone

for me, as it was the first moment in a very long time where I finished it, submitted the

final copy, and thought "Well, maybe I can do this thing." Getting to tinker and polish it

for this portfolio had helped me hold on to that feeling in times of doubt and struggle.

Times of doubt and struggle still come and go, even as I sit here recounting the

past two and a half years of my life. However, here, at the end of the crucible, I think I can

see now that I'm not alone, better than I ever did before starting this program. One of the

joys of being able to get my degree online has been the reinforcement that time and

distance are barriers to communication that are fading rapidly. While in the most literal

sense, my peers and I appear to each other as words on screens, my interactions with all

aspects of this program, from educators to students to staff, have also reinforced in me

the knowledge that I am one of many. In the past, that may have frightened me, but I

think there is a strength to be found in the fact that we are all members of communities, that even if we are on our own journeys, at some point, there will be someone walking the path beside us.

It still feels odd to think of this portfolio as an ending, so I have decided not to. All exits are just an entrance to somewhere else. I am not sure yet where that somewhere else will be, but I am content in the knowledge that I am ready to meet it when I do.

Rachel C. Evans

ENG 6470

Dr. Judith Edminster

Final Seminar Paper

12/14/18

Looking Back to Walk Forward:

Subjugation of Women's Technical Communication from the 17th Century to Today

From the Royal Society of the 17th century to Chrysler's traveling engineers of the mid-20th century, the rhetoric of technical communication has been built upon and sustained by strong gender divides that have left us floundering for ways to identify and amplify women's work. While there have been efforts to recover and rediscover women's work in technical communication since the emergence of the discipline during the Renaissance for study today, finding and engaging with the ideas and systems that often suppressed such efforts is equally important, if we are to understand how women have been and continue to be undervalued in this realm.

This historical undervaluation of women's prowess in technical writing and communication continues to be reflected in how women, their work, and feminist techniques and ideologies are discussed in modern technical scholarship. To best illustrate this, we must examine recent scholarship, as well as past periods in which women were writing, communicating, and using technology alongside their male peers, such as the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and the late 19th to mid-20th centuries. Each of these times has their own stories to tell in how women have often been, at best,

pushed to the sidelines to their own niches of work, and at worst, outright ignored. This systemic trend has culminated in a manipulation of the knowledge economy that reinforces a continual shift of what is considered a woman's place within technical writing as a field and a practice, a shift that is only now, in the past two decades, starting to come to light for questioning.

According to more recent scholarship, what rigidity in perceived and enforced gender roles are needed to enforce this status quo may not be a concept that sits comfortably in the past. Kate White, Suzanne Kesler Rumsey, and Stevens Amidon take this issue head on in "Are We 'There' Yet? The Treatment of Gender and Feminism in Technical, Business, and Workplace Writing Studies." Their study was designed to look at the prevalence of gender and feminism focused writing in technical journals and textbooks in order to gauge what, if any, changes had been made in recent years. Rather than find the changes they may have expected, the authors claimed that they "were stunned to discover that an implicit message seems to be inherent in the published discourse of our field that issues of gender and feminism in the workplace or in our business and technical writing classrooms are a minor concern...this published discourse seems to be doing little to challenge the insidious notion that the workplace is neutral and non-gendered" (White et al. 29). In White and her partners' view the idea that something is non-gendered just means it is male-coded, as we saw with the removal of appeals to emotion back at the dawn of technical communication as a set discipline. Despite interest in these issues of visibility and challenge as shown at conferences and even some scholarship at the time, "analysis shows that women, feminism, and gender

were not issues dealt in any substantive ways within any of the business and technical writing textbooks reviewed" (White et al. 41).

Isabelle Thompson and Elizabeth Overman Smith corroborate White and her team's claims in "Women and Feminism in Technical Communication - An Update." The article is a continuation of a 1997 and a 2000 study that also investigated how women and feminist interests are being addressed in technical communication journals. Rather than show an uptick in interest that could be expected now that feminist theory has gone more mainstream, Thompson and Smith found that "technical communication scholars' interest in feminism and women's issues has declined over the past 15 years, but articles on the topic continue to be published" (Thompson et al. 184). In addition, they also found that the focus of that interest is changing. Where once articles were focused on inclusion, on figuring out which if any aspects of culture focus neither on the male or female, this focus "has changed to a focus on critique with its insistence that all aspects of human existence are contextualized and politicized" (Thompson et al. 184). This makes sense since most of the articles that are trying to put women's technical work into its own context have been published after this study appeared in 2006.

Evidence that meaningful change in how women's technical writing and communication is studied and viewed has yet to fully materialize is also available in the form of more anecdotal scholarship. May Lay Schuster details her move from one of the women technical writers of the 1960s through the discipline's path to academic legitimacy at the university level in her piece "My Career and the 'Rhetoric of' Technical Writing and Communication." An interesting point she makes is the more recent shift in

expectations of activism in scholarship and research, particularly in feminist circles. "This activist stance," she states, "is expected in feminist scholarship as an honoring of and obligation to one's research participants, but it is certainly not alien to technical writing and communication research" (Schuster, 387). This new combination of scholarship and activism is promising, as it has been shown that the studies that tend to do the most work in uncovering and rediscovering work by marginalized groups are those that are aimed at knowledge excavation. Indeed, without such excavation, we may not have rediscovered and been able to study the works of female Renaissance technical writers in their own context.

However, before we continue to advocate for expansion of such scholarship, it is important to keep in mind that our current relationship to technology and communication shapes how we can view the history of the field. Joan Pujol and Marisela Montenegro's "Technology and Feminism: A Strange Couple" largely deals with the "digital gender gap" - a reflection of gender inequality in opportunities within all fields that are affected by technology. They put forth theories that capitalist thinking informs how we view gender positions in conjunction with access to technology. They argue that this gender divide can also be seen in how we commodify everyday items, as well as more abstract concepts like knowledge, the bread and butter of technical communication:

> Network capitalism is organized by knowledge, consumes knowledge, and produces commodities that incorporate knowledge...Managerial, creative and relational skills are valued in the jobs created in the 'knowledge society,' intensifying the penetration of capitalist logic within characteristic human traits...The intensification and expansion of this logic has engendered technical and legal procedures that have objectified

knowledge, culture and affective processes into commodities that effectively circulate in global capital transactions. (Pujol et al. 176)

Within the idea of a knowledge society that functions as a capitalist system, we see the application of human traits, largely gendered, to how we produce and objectify knowledge. While equitable access to technology, if such a thing is even possible given how gender informs and at times defines how technology is used, is a good goal, Pujol and Montenegro argue that it is a not a complete solution to this issue. They state that "furthermore, the focus on access to technology fails to question the production of technology politically and assumes that technology itself is intrinsically neutral and objective" (Pujol et al. 178). This assumption, that there is such thing as technology that is non-gendered and objective, is one that proves unhelpful in the fight for equitable access to opportunities and advancements and recognition with technical fields, including that of technical communication. Rather, it can often be more effective to acknowledge and learn from how we commodify and gender knowledge, its creators, and its participants. To that end, we must investigate the history of women in technical communication to see how this act of commodifying has shifted from the field's inception to the modern day, all with the effect of negating women's voices, work, and at times their very place in the field.

The Middle Ages and the Renaissance were the first eras in which technical writing and communication began to approach something akin to a standard style. Elizabeth Tebeaux's *The Emergence of a Tradition* details this shift within the time range of 1475 to 1640, and there is no shortage of references to her work in later scholarship on the history

of such discourse. Denise Tillery's "The Plain Style in the Seventeenth Century: Gender and the History of Scientific Discourse" builds off Tebeaux's historical overview to view a style in a more gendered light. Using feminist rhetorical theory, Tillery investigates the Royal Society plain style and the men who determined its parameters to conclude that they "constructed scientific discourse as a masculine form of discourse by purging elements that were associated with femininity, such as emotional appeals" (Tillery, 273). This idea of plain style as a masculine aesthetic, with male advocates that sought to erase any feminine influence from its rhetoric, is one of the first instances of gender separation in technical communication and is the foundation that other separations have been built upon.

Tillery elaborates that while "there is no direct 'line of descent' from the Royal Society of the 17th century to modern scientific experts," this first aim at making the ethos of plain style unequivocally male by erasing the emotional, and by extension what was viewed as the feminine, appeals that female writers utilized at the time, signified a shift in the way scientific writing was becoming gendered in such a way as to exclude those who did not adhere to the masculine aesthetic (Tillery, 274). The fact that certain rhetorical devices were actively purged, while others were valorized, sheds light on the ways that scientific authority has been socially constructed" (Tillery, 274). The gendered implications of this construction point not just to issues separating men and women at the time, but larger rhetorical conversations about the power of language in a new medium, one that was seeking to bridge a gap between oral and written information and

traditions. Tillery refers to the anxiety born of this conversation as one of "appropriateness of information" within the scientific context (285).

Beyond the suppression of specific forms of ethos and appeal that were gendered as feminine by the Royal Society during this time, it is also vital to acknowledge how assumptions of writer and audience were also at play, assumptions that, as we will explore later, are still in play. The anxiety of appropriateness of information, one that ensured that "discourse had to be carefully controlled so that neither the rhetor nor the audience was subject to emotional" appeals, created a culture in which all persons involved in scientific knowledge and record, Tillery refers to them as knowers, writers, and audience, were assumed and coded as masculine (Tillery 286). In this way, the male gender and the preferred rhetorical style of the Royal Society texts became inexorably linked, efficiently removing any reference to the feminine in both rhetor and audience and making the idea of a female participant in such discourse difficult to near impossible.

These assumptions bled into not only the thought of the day, but into how we view the past. It is telling that, in the newer age of communication scholarship, there is a call to find such female participants. Despite the gender coding and its lasting effects on our own visions of the birth of technical writing, women were writing in this fields during this time. There have been several attempts in recent scholarship to reclaim and rediscover the work of such women, to bring to light the issues that first made their work so hard to find and legitimize and how they have affected our own interactions with technical communication.

One such attempt is Susan Rauch's "The Accreditation of Hildegard von Bingen as Medieval Female Technical Writer," which details the work of the titular writer within the then burgeoning field of medical-technical writing. Rauch brings up an important point in her analysis - "Because the term 'technical writing' or 'technical writer' did not exist during the Middle Ages, accrediting female medieval scientific and medical writers as technical writers requires the application of modern thought and definition" (Rauch, 393). In her own time, there was no set definition for the work that von Bingen did, as evidenced by the fact that she was largely identified as somewhat of a mystic, a poet, an abbess even, long before her medical writing was brought to wider attention (Raunch, 396). Despite this historical bias, it has been found that her books *Physica* and *Causae Curae* share many characteristics with medical writing conventions that persist to this day, as they are "written in the style of modern-day medical handbooks, resemble current patient history and physicals, outline patient symptoms, causes and effects, preceded by a treatment plan" (Rauch, 396).

Von Bingen is just one example. Her works show that women were working and excelling in technical fields, despite efforts to make their work conform to a gendered standard. It is likely that we, also, have lacked the language and specifics needed to recognize their work for what it was. This lack, an echo of the anxiety of appropriateness that fueled the Royal Society, leaves us at a disadvantage both in acknowledging the works of women and integrating them into our understanding of how technical writing has evolved into the field we recognize today.

These absences may appear small at first glance, but they are keenly felt. Regarding von Bingen and her peers specifically, Rauch claims that "missing from technologically-categorized medieval texts are authors' professional titles of technical writers or communicators, and less so for medieval women technical writers whose works are primarily recognized in the roles of visionaries or mystics" (Rauch 398). In other words, female doctors and scientists weren't afforded the same language of recognition as their male peers, another gatekeeping strategy in the same vein as the Royal Society's rhetorical shifts.

This separation borne of a lack of language is what allows rhetorical shifts like those instigated and sustained by the Royal Society to become successful and to sustain. Again, while they may seem like small things, titles and professions that were lived in even if they were not named, we must remember these shifts were occurring in a time of great fluctuation and invention, in which the assumptions we have about technical writing as a theoretical landscape and a practical field weren't set in stone, yet. What may appear insignificant to us would have large and far-reaching consequences, setting in motion a rhetorical and social machine that sought to dictate the visibility and value of women's place in technical communication and, as we continue into the 19th century and beyond, even their use of such technology.

As a final point on this time period, there has been some recent shifts in scholarship that aim to support the rediscovery of women's technical writing both in this period and beyond. This scholarship has begun to strive for recognition of women's work in traditionally feminine spaces within the realm of technical writing, with the aim of

presenting such work as a source of liberation for women. While this aim is not without support, the urge to proclaim such texts could liberate their writer's, albeit within a space seen as more acceptable than male-coded and dominated ones, may limit our ability to see women's achievements in otherwise male spaces. Marie E. Moeller and Erin A. Frost bring up this point in their study "Food Fights: Cookbook Rhetorics, Monolithic Constructions of Womanhood, and Field Narratives in Technical Communication." Using cookbooks as an example, Moeller and Frost investigate how and why we frame documents within "a space with uniquely visible and impermeable gender stratifications" such as cooking (Moeller et al 8). Representation of womanhood is central to the arguments and challenges that lead to technical communication becoming a male-dominated space in the first place, and to reclassify whole genres as sources of liberation may be problematic at times.

Consider Moller and Frost's choice of phrase when discussing gender in these documents – uniquely visible and impermeable. Was this not also the aim of the Royal Society, to determine and sustain a visibly recognizable style of masculine writing, beyond reproach by the emotional appeals they viewed as central to womanhood? It is vital that technical communication scholars examine how and why they determine what texts count as viable, what authors and styles matter within this or any other time period. As evidenced with the work of von Bilgen and how the plain style we see so readily in the work of the Royal Society of the 17th century was cultivated with an aim of gendered stratification, often we and our subjects are robbed of the necessary language to properly classify a piece of work. Moeller and Frost, while largely critical of doing the scholarly

version of flipping a switch, also support this process, stating "many scholars argued for this field to encompass texts previously considered outside the canon, including cookbooks, as a way to recognize women's contributions to technology (via household technologies) and the field at large" (Moeller et al, 2). By expanding our view of what we consider proper technical communication, we can more readily find and review texts and authors that were silenced by history.

Women's work in technical communication would continue to be scrutinized into the 19th and 20th centuries, though their roles within that work would shift drastically. While limitations placed upon women in the Renaissance may have had the most far reaching and silencing effects, it is during this period that we start to see incidences that feel more immediate and familiar, incidences of woman who, while capable in their fields, were subject to the same moving targets of what was deemed "appropriate" in their communication as women.

Carolyn Skinner's "Incompatible Rhetorical Expectations: Julia W. Carpenter's Medical Society Papers, 1895-1899" attempts to rediscover one such woman. Skinner's article examines three papers that Carpenter, a 19th-century physician, presented before the Cincinnati Academy of Medicine. In her examination, Skinner "reveals how she [Carpenter] experimented with strategies for combining the rhetorical expectations for femininity with those for medical professionalism as she sought to contribute to and intervene in the knowledge-building practices of the Cincinnati medical community" (Skinner, 308). These differing expectations plagued most of Carpenter's career and are prevalent in her writing. The sharp divide between the sexes in this period demanded

contradicting things of Carpenter and her peers, since her performance of gender for her time and her job as a physician were often seen as incompatible. According to Skinner, "women physicians risked being perceived as mannish as a result of their choice of career, they could not rely exclusively on medical rhetorical practices without endangering their respectability as women" (Skinner, 311).

These kinds of incompatible rhetoric are where Skinner pulls her title from, and it calls to attention something that continues to be brought up in scholarship and discussion of women technical communicators. If we view rhetoric as a performance, a way to argue and communicate certain points with a certain audience, one that is assumed to be male or non-gendered, then female physicians must merge that with their additional expected performance of gender. Skinner quotes one of Carpenter's contemporaries in her discussion, a man named Dr. W. Frank Glenn, as he was speaking before the Tennessee State Medical Society in 1985: ''I believe you all will admit, that whenever you see a woman enter the profession, taking the part of man, it lessens that peculiar delicate refinement which naturally is hers and which we so highly respect'' (Skinner, 311). Here we see the double-edged sword Carpenter and her peers faced in their work: adhere too strictly to expectations for a rhetoric built upon male aesthetic, and risk losing credibility as a woman; stray too far towards a style deemed more appropriate for women and risk losing credibility as a doctor. There was no one correct or simple answer as there was for men at the time. This difficulty is like those faced by the first female technical writers, and we can conclude its roots are in those original Royal Society exclusions and rules for rhetoric.

These conflicting expectations and the limitations they created weren't exclusive to the world of the strictly scientific. Sarah Hallenbeck gives another example of how women worked within these constraints in "User Agency, Technical Communication, and the 19th-Century Woman Bicyclist." Hallenbeck examines several user manuals that came out during the booming popularity of bicycles in the 19th century. Many of these manuals were written by independent male writers or the bicycle manufacturers and held assumptions of gender and class that they applied to their user base in their rhetoric. The manual that accompanied bicycles from the Pope Manufacturing Company, for example, "sought to reassure audiences of the extent to which bicycles were in keeping with current social expectations for women," often promoting the machines as a way to spend time in the company of men, and in keeping with "a rubric of femininity that appeared as conventional as possible and that remained tied closely to the middle and upper classes" (Hallenbeck, 294). Their manuals were the tools by which they imparted the attitudes they wanted their bikes to be associated with, not just the user-base, and rarely, if ever, contained any information as to maintenance of the machines. This last omission indicates a clear attitude about the limitations of women's interactions with machines. To Pope Manufacturing, the idea that a woman should know her way around the mechanics of her bike wasn't worth the ink it could be printed on. Again, we see the echo of calls for appropriateness of knowledge, information, and gender performance in how women interacted with technology and technical communication.

The women of the time, however, took to things with a different method. Maria Ward and Frances Willard each penned their own user-created text they felt benefited

women more than manuals like Pope Manufacturing's. Rather than assume that all women who owned bicycles were affluent, leisurely people who were always in the company of a male companion, both women instead wrote with the aim of self-sufficiency, solving problems for women riders that other manuals overlooked. Ward, rather than shunning the idea that women were incapable of riding bikes, "validated skeptics, arguing that their opinions stemmed from women riders' insufficient knowledge and understanding," a shortcoming she went out of her way to solve in her own work (Hallenbeck, 298).

Willard took a similar route, helping women understand the mechanics of their machines, but she touched upon an issue Ward didn't encounter or include in her manual - how self-sufficiency for women would translate into a change in the social nature of the bicycle. Willard went on record, stating, "she had learned to ride 'to help women to a wider world, for I hold that the more interests women and men can have in common, in thought, word, and deed, the happier it will be for the home'," (Hallenbeck, 303). In Willard's mind it was not women who would be fundamentally changed by being technically proficient in communication and use of these machines, but the men who were expected to accompany them. Willard emphasized in her work that "women would learn to ride not to provide men with companionship but to prove to themselves and to the men around them that they could do so" (Hallenbeck, 303).

Throughout this period, attitudes like Willard and Ward's brought to light the issue of women's capability and potential competency in technological communication and use, and the social attitudes born from these issues would have far-reaching

consequences. While Willard makes a point of stating that women obtaining such proficiencies must do it for themselves, to prove to the world around them that they can and will do the same as men, Ward's manual brings up a point that also stems from the Renaissance phenomena that have robbed modern scholarship of the language needed to understand women's roles in the origins of technical writing. Ward does not disagree with the notion that women are bad riders. In fact, she agrees, but only because they have not been afforded the same wealth of information as their male counterparts. Any lack of competence, then, is not a result of women's natural aversion to such realms of knowledge, but the result of the institutions and gender stratifications that have encouraged such a separation. This separation, because it was so deeply ingrained both in the social and technical spheres that encompassed the bicycle boom, then created the demand for women to showcase their competency in riding and mechanical knowledge.

However, even as women were almost solely saddled with the burden of it, this proof of competency in communication and use of technological concepts helped women find a way to break into the new roles and opportunities that the 20th century would bring, carving out niches for themselves in work that had previously been denied to them. These niches often still came with their own pitfalls, as Edward A. Malone details in his article "Chrysler's 'Most Beautiful Engineer': Lucille J. Pieti in the Pillory of Fame." Like Rauch's work on von Bingen and Skinner's work on Carpenter, Malone's piece is largely a case study, meant to examine generalizations about women scientists and engineers between 1940 and 1972 who, rather than *choosing* to go into technical communication

and writing, often found themselves resigned to it. Again, as the clock ticks closer to our modern day, the issues we can find grow closer to home as well.

During World War II, women were put in a position to take advantage of roles and opportunities now available due to a shortage of men at home. When the war ended, however, the prosperity and homecoming that came with it "created a set of conditions that either forced women out of the workforce or resulted in their 'marginalization and underutilization'...In particular, the economic and political climate of postwar America fostered an intense pronatalism: Young women were supposed to be home with children, whether they had them or not or whether they wanted to be there or not" (Malone, 144). Technical writing and editing were the realm of women who still chose to work, and with it came little reward or acknowledgement. Lucille J. Pieti was one such woman. An engineer herself, "Pieti emerged from college with high hopes, only to find herself consigned to one of 'the traditional female ghettos' for scientists and engineers: technical communication" (Malone, 146). Though Pieti would go on to become something akin to a television celebrity, achieving a level of fame and clout most women in her field could only dream of, it is important to remember that she was just one woman of thousands that followed her same career path.

The most interesting idea that comes out of this later period is a shift in who was considered suitable for the work of technical writing and communication. While before we have seen a focus on how men worked to exclude women and feminine-coded rhetoric from the field, between World War II and the 1980s, it was almost exclusively the realm of woman. Malone explores this in his study of Pieti, where he states that "the early

profession—a product of World War II—was dominated by men" however "before the 1980s, in fact, it was common for men with engineering or science degrees to regard this kind of work as 'inferior' to traditional laboratory and field work" (Malone, 151). This regard would then lead women like Pieti and her female peers into this less desirable work, even if they were overqualified and didn't want to be there. In this, we can see a reflection of the incompatible rhetoric of Julia Carpenter's day over half a century earlier. Female scientists, though competent and, on rare occasion, even lauded for their abilities, could not break free from the expectations of being female in a male-dominated field, though now the tables had turned. The gender stratification remained intact even as the specifics of the field of technical communication shifted.

This shift, visible and impermeable, replicates the ideas and results of the Renaissance and the stratification of access to technical information and use of the 19th century. In all cases, it is designed to dictate who is to be where, in relationship to technical communication and use of technology. It is designed to show, in no uncertain terms, the place of women in a technologically based society. Where once women weren't allowed to write, now that was all they were seen capable of, kept far away from the glamor of practical scientific study and work. Much of the shifts and stratification that has surrounded technical communication since its inception has been focused on such roles and making sure that they're kept to.

If we are to follow a simpler version of these ideas, that the personal is political, then it stands to reason that we must begin to see our relationship to technology as also political. For decades and centuries, it has proven to be so. Without this gendered,

political element, without the support for convictions like those that have allowed women to be systematically removed and ignored from technical fields unless proven convenient, we may begin to approach a new form of relationship both with technology and with the field of technical communication. But in order to address this commodification of knowledge, we must first acknowledge it, and that can be difficult when there is such a strong historical precedent for the way things are. As evidenced by the historical record, as well as Joan Pujol and Marisela Montenegro's insights, this commodification and gender-distinction is paired with our understanding of how technological knowledge is generated, verified, and disbursed.

To that end, while steps have been made to both include modern women's technical writing and to rediscover past women, at this time those efforts remain insubstantial to change the culture that surrounds this field. It is not an insurmountable challenge, but to feel that overcoming this deeply entrenched bias will be easy would be to disrespectful to the women who have long been ignored because of it. It is true that we must continue to move forward, but to do at the expense of disregarding how the field of technical writing has been built upon the exclusion of one gender will do little to assist them in rejoining it in the future. We must read, we must learn, and most importantly, we must write, if we are to build a new form of scholarship and practice that is equitable and accessible to people of all genders, and looks, unflinchingly, into its past.

Works Cited

Hallenbeck, Sarah. "User Agency, Technical Communication, and the 19th-Century Woman Bicyclist." *Technical Communication Quarterly*, vol. 21, no. 4, Oct. 2012, pp. 290–306. *EBSCOhost*, doi:10.1080/10572252.2012.686846.

Malone, Edward A. "Chrysler's 'Most Beautiful Engineer': Lucille J. Pieti in the Pillory of Fame." *Technical Communication Quarterly*, vol. 19, no. 2, Apr. 2010, pp. 144–183. *EBSCOhost*, doi:10.1080/10572250903559258.

Moeller, Marie E., and Erin A. Frost. "Food Fights: Cookbook Rhetorics, Monolithic Constructions of Womanhood, and Field Narratives in Technical Communication." *Technical Communication Quarterly*, vol. 25, no. 1, Jan. 2016, pp. 1–11. *EBSCOhost*, doi:10.1080/10572252.2016.1113025.

Pujol, Joan, and Marisela Montenegro. "Technology and Feminism: A Strange Couple." *Revista de Estudios Sociales*, no. 51, Jan. 2015, pp. 173–185. *EBSCOhost*, doi:10.7440/res51.2015.13.

Rauch, Susan. "The Accreditation of Hildegard von Bingen as Medieval Female Technical Writer." *Journal of Technical Writing & Communication*, vol. 42, no. 4, Dec. 2012, pp. 393–411. *EBSCOhost*, ezproxy.bgsu.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=80379661&site=ehost-live&scope=site.

Schuster, Mary Lay. "My Career and the 'Rhetoric of' Technical Writing and Communication." *Journal of Technical Writing & Communication*, vol. 45, no. 4, Oct. 2015, pp. 381–391. *EBSCOhost*, doi:10.1177/0047281615585754.

Skinner, Carolyn. "Incompatible Rhetorical Expectations: Julia W. Carpenter's Medical Society Papers, 1895–1899." *Technical Communication Quarterly*, vol. 21, no. 4, Oct. 2012, pp. 307–324. *EBSCOhost*, doi:10.1080/10572252.2012.686847.

THOMPSON, ISABELLE, and ELIZABETH OVERMAN SMITH. "Women and Feminism in Technical Communication--An Update." *Journal of Technical Writing &*

Communication, vol. 36, no. 2, June 2006, pp. 183–199. *EBSCOhost*, ezproxy.bgsu.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=20917931&site=ehost-live&scope=site.

TILLERY, DENISE. "The Plain Style in the Seventeenth Century: Gender and the History of Scientific Discourse." *Journal of Technical Writing & Communication*, vol. 35, no. 3, Sept. 2005, pp. 273–289. *EBSCOhost*, ezproxy.bgsu.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=17395115&site=ehost-live&scope=site.

White, Kate, et al. "Are We 'There' Yet? The Treatment of Gender and Feminism in Technical, Business, and Workplace Writing Studies." *Journal of Technical Writing & Communication*, vol. 46, no. 1, Jan. 2016, pp. 27–58. *EBSCOhost*, doi:10.1177/0047281615600637.

Rachel C. Evans

ENG 6090

Dr. Phil Dickinson

Final Syllabus & UAP

4/3/2017

<div align="center">Capstone Unit and Assignment Plan – Canonization in ENG 2010</div>

Statement of Learning and Performance Objectives

Situated as the capstone for an introduction to literature course, this unit is designed to introduce students to the concept of the literary canon and how it has shaped what we study in literature through the present time. Having spent the semester learning the who, what, and why of several major forms of literature – fiction, non-fiction, drama, and poetry - students will learn to synthesize the literary tools at their disposal in analyzing both the merits of the canon as a construct, and its weaknesses. Students will not be expected to have a working knowledge of critical theory for this unit. We will be focusing on the humanist theories and methods that have been taught the rest of the semester. This unit will be at the end of the semester and will culminate in a persuasive presentation and paper wherein the student must create and support a canon of their own, using any media and genre form of their choosing, with instructor approval. This assessment will allow the students to put into practice not just their mastery over the reading and understanding of literature, but the discourse and conversation that surrounds it.

Narrative Description of Methods

The classroom activities for this unit will support these outcomes by including brief lectures on a few examples of criticism both for and against the canon, as well as an in-class debate that will mimic the thought process they will engage in for their final projects. These discussions will be guided for the most part, particularly as we go into how the canon and the academic response to it ties into the concept of advocacy in literary response and theory. Student responses to the documents under discussion will also guide our discussion of the canonicity of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, read earlier in the semester. The goal of this unit is to have students put the tools at their disposal when reading literature into practice when discussing it within a persuasive and critical context, as supported by their final presentations and papers. Since this course is required of all English majors with concentrations in literature, the skills needed to recognize and engage with more overarching ideas that affect how and why we study and work as we do will become vital in their continuing education.

Methods/Teaching Philosophy

In this final unit, I have devoted most of my classroom hours to introducing students to the practice of criticism within the context of the literary canon. As stated previously, it is not my expectation that students will have a working knowledge of critical schools and theories as we would expect from our upperclassmen and graduate students. Rather, the goal with these methods is to build on the practices we've developed in class that are designed to move beyond questions of plot they may have focused on in high school. Throughout the semester, we have been focused on identifying and understanding literary terms and tools within selections of fiction, non-fiction, poetry,

and drama, and this unit is designed to allow students to demonstrate how this study has helped them learn not only how to read literature, but how to talk about it. It is my belief that a focus on the development of students' literary and critical vocabularies, thus encouraging them to get away from binary ways of viewing answers as either right or wrong, with no room for further exploration, will be most beneficial both in the course itself, and as they move forward into the higher level courses required for the English major.

Assessment:

The unit will culminate in a persuasive paper and presentation in which the student will establish and defend a canon of their own. In the interests of time, students will be encouraged to narrow their view of media and genre as much as possible, so the project doesn't become too broad and potentially overwhelming. For example, a student wishing to create a canon of "Young Adult Literature" may find themselves with an overabundance of literature to pick from that may lead to weak and superficial support, while a student looking for "romantic Korean dramas of the 2000s" will have a smaller pool to choose from that lends itself to specificity in support. While students will be encouraged to keep their canons to literature if possible, since these topics must be pre-approved by the instructor their choice of media will be left open for special cases. In this assessment, the most important aspect of the project is the student's ability to isolate and support the individual pieces of their chosen canon, and this process will remain much the same across media. This paper will be 5-7 pages in length, must include 5-7 items in the student's chosen canon, and will count towards 20% of the final grade for the

course. The presentation will be roughly 10-15 minutes, including time for a brief question and answer session with their fellow students, and will count towards 15% of the final grade for the course. As a combined effort, this is the heaviest weighted assignment of the course, as it builds upon the expected fluency with concepts and a specific academic and critical lexis that students have been working towards throughout the semester. In that respect, this assessment takes the place of a traditional final exam designed to assess overall competency with all course material. The purpose of the class is to formulate responses to literature using the language of critics, primarily in the humanist vein, and the assessment serves as a place for students to exercise their mastery over not only their understanding of how to read literature, but how to talk about it.

In addition, students will be able to select any of the readings we complete for this capstone unit to fulfill their "leading class discussion" assignment requirements.

Reflection

I wanted to try my hand at making a unit that was focused on the culmination of a semester's work with literature, rather than hyper focus on a specific genre or style. Since my teaching philosophy for this course and unit is focused on the practice of talking about literature and using the tools developed in past classes in that practice, this style of unit seemed like a better fit for me. In revisiting this unit plan for further revision, I found that while I am still determined not to underestimate my students' abilities with difficult material, that my original plan may have been too dense to allow for thorough exploration. In changing the major assessment to one that allows students a bit more

creativity, I wanted to focus more on helping them apply the theories and ideas we're learning to a broader scale, across media, and encouraging them to engage with and contribute to an ongoing academic conversation.

Canonization is a subject that can tend to be very polarizing, especially when the conversation can shift towards reexamining and reclaiming voices that were previously ignored within academic circles. However, it still feels like one that my students deserve to be exposed to, to provide further explanation for why we study what we do and provide space for conversation that they can build upon as they proceed through the major. The preceding weeks of the course are more focused on the "how" of literary study, and a capstone that focuses on applying knowledge with purpose still feels like one worth attempting.

ENG 2010 / Introduction to Literature
Fall 2017
MWF 2:30-3:20 p.m.
MC 457

Professor Rachel Evans
Office: 1235 RT
Office Hours: Thursdays 11:00am-1:00pm, also by appointment
Office Phone: 542-5555
Email: r.evans4@csuohio.edu

Required Texts

The Norton Anthology of Short Fiction, Eighth Edition
William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, Folger Shakespeare Library, 2003
Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*, Fourth Norton Critical Edition, 2003
Additional texts will be distributed via Canvas

Suggested: Edwin J. Barton & Glenda A. Hudson, *A Contemporary Guide to Literary Terms*, Third Edition

Course Description and Objectives

This course is designed as an introduction to the study of literature, as well as to the methodologies and traditions of the practice of interpreting and discussing literary texts. Through the study of poetry, drama, short fiction, and the novel, this course will help you:

- Learn to analyze and interpret literary texts across a wide range of forms and genres
- Write clearly and effectively about literature from an analytical standpoint
- Develop critical, technical, and close reading skills through discussion and writing
- Understand literature as an expression of art and human values
- Be prepared for further study in upper-level English courses

ENG 2010 is a required course for all English majors.

Course Requirements

Reading and Discussion Preparation
Much of the reading assigned in this course can seem daunting given the pace of the semester and can often be difficult to work through prior to discussion. Please

be sure to allocate the time needed to work through the reading prior to class. A lack of preparedness will hinder you from getting the most out of classroom discussions. If there is a piece you are having difficulty with, it is most helpful to make note of your questions and bring them to class for discussion.

While we will touch base on the basics of critical theory, the clear majority of this course will focus on the humanist critical practice of close reading. This requires, as the name would suggest, for you to read closely and carefully. The reading we do in this class is *active*, done for the purpose of analyzing and understanding of the material at hand. This technique is not mutually exclusive from the *passive* enjoyment of literature for its own sake, by any means, but it can seem like it at the start. If you feel you are struggling with the material in the beginning, feel free to reach out to me directly with any concerns you have.

I will occasionally lecture as noted within the course calendar, but the majority of our class time will be dedicated to discussion. I expect you to actively participate in class discussions. This course is designed to help you build a literary vocabulary and acquire the tools to talk about literature. Participation is key to this learning process and I would much rather you ask questions you may think are silly than not ask any questions at all.

Leading Class Discussion (10% of final grade)
Twice over the course of the semester, you will be asked to give a brief presentation on one of the pieces under discussion that will lead off our discussion topics for the day. Signups will be on a first come, first serve basis and will be held the second and eighth week of class.

Two 3-4-page papers (20% of final grade)
Each of these papers are to be at least three pages in length, typed, doubled-spaced and written in 12-point font, and function as a way to expand upon your responses to the class reading, and to showcase your competency with analyzing and writing about literature. Use these papers as a place to explore the questions we will generate in class discussions. Anchor your paper with a question that engages with your selection and answer it using evidence from the text. Be specific! If your question is too broad, you may run the risk of going far too long. Remember that providing support for your position is much more crucial than being "right" or "wrong." There are no make-ups for these papers, and if you do not turn them both in by the stated due date, you will receive a zero for this section.

Both these papers and your response journal are due the last week of class, however these papers may be submitted at an earlier date. The pieces you write about are up to you, but I would recommend waiting at least a few weeks into the

semester before you jump ahead, as we will be covering a lot of the basics of analytical thinking in that time.

Response Journal (25% of final grade)
Over the course of the semester, I ask that you keep a commonplace book of sorts to record your responses to the course material. Once every week of class, write a brief (no more than a page, if possible) entry responding to the material. You will end up with a total of sixteen journal entries. These entries may be relatively informal – I do not ask that you go to the same level of academic formality as your papers – and can be more free form than a typical paper. These journals will be a record of your progress through this course and can be very helpful in maintaining your "toolbox" of analytical tools for later study. A final copy of your journal is due the Wednesday of final exam week. It should be typed, double-spaced and written in 12-point font, with each entry dated accordingly. <u>I ask that you not wait until the last minute to start this project, not only for the sake of your grade in the course, but also your enjoyment of the material.</u> Forcing yourself to remember your responses to each week's worth of material over the course of a few days or weeks can sour those responses and prevent you from fully engaging with the reading. Getting a week or two behind is normal but try to keep it to just that. Please keep in mind that this assignment is the length of the semester for a reason and your work on it should run concurrent with your other assignment obligations.

Final Canonization Paper and Presentation (combined 35% of final grade)
Your final assessment in this course will be a paper and presentation designed to demonstrate your fluency with the concept of the literary canon, the process of canonization, and its effect on how and why we study literature at the college level. In this assignment, you must establish and defend a canon of your own making. Your paper will be 5-7 pages in length and must include 5-7 items to include in your canon. Your presentation must be roughly 10-15 minutes long, with time for questions for your classmates. Since the purpose of this course is to familiarize ourselves with the language needed to discuss literature across genre and media, your canon topic need not be strictly kept to literature. Please keep in mind, however, that you must approve your topic with me before moving forward with your paper and presentation design. Presentation signups will take place following Thanksgiving break.

Final Grading Breakdown

Leading Class Discussion	10% [25 points each]
Short Paper 1	15% [75 points]
Short Paper 2	15% [75 points]
Response Journal	25% [125 points]
Final Canonization Paper	20% [125 points]

Final Canonization Presentation	15% [75 points]	
	100% [500 points]	

Classroom Policies

Attendance
You may accumulate up to three unexcused absences, as per CSU policy. Any unexcused absences after those three will result in my lowering your grade by 5%. If you have any unavoidable obligations that will affect your attendance regularly throughout the semester, please see me the first week so we can discuss your schedule. Excused absences include a verified illness, participation in activities sponsored by the university, jury duty, military service, and religious observance. If you feel your absence should be excused but it does not fit into any of those categories, please arrange a time to meet with me to discuss. An attendance sheet will be passed around each class session for you to sign.

Plagiarism
Plagiarism on any assignment for this course will be dealt with according to university regulations, up to and including a failing grade in the course and dismissal from CSU.

Late Assignments and Make-up Work
All written assignments are to be submitted as hard copy no later than their due date. Your paper grade will drop 5% for each day that passes between the due date and a late submission, to a maximum of 20%. No email attachments will be accepted unless under special arrangement. Make-up work will be discussed and potentially assigned in the class of an excused absence. If you know you will miss an assignment due to an excuse absence, such as needing to switch or make up a presentation date, please be sure to notify me as far in advance as possible.

Classroom etiquette
Literature is subjective, and several times over the course of the semester, our discussions may revolve around conflicting ideas both regarding the material and its context. I ask that all discussions be respectful and polite. I am delighted when students have emotional, strong reactions to the reading, but please be sure to keep that reaction positive when in discussion. Argument and rebuttal have their place in all your assignments, but not at the cost of insulting a classmate. Please be fully present while in class. Obviously disengaged behavior is disrespectful to me and your peers, and counterproductive to your learning. If I feel you are causing a substantial distraction, you will be asked to leave for the

course period and given an unexcused absence.

Grading scale
A: 100-90%   B: 89-80%   C: 79-70%   D: 69-60%   F: 59% & below.

Course Calendar

Please be sure to complete all reading prior to the class period in which they are listed. All texts that are not listed as required for the course will be provided electronically via our Canvas site a week in advance of when they are up for discussion. Daily assignments are subject to change as we proceed through the semester.

Reading/Discussion & Written Assignments

Week 1
M 8/21   Introductory Lecture – Humanists, Barthes, and a note on "Classic Lit"

W 8/23   Gaff, "Disliking Books at an Early Age," Guillory, "The Canon as Cultural Capital"

F 8/25   O'Connor, "The Nature and Aim of Fiction"

Week 2
M 8/28   Collins "Introduction to Poetry," "Selections from 'Beowulf'"

W 8/30   "Selections from 'Beowulf'" cont'd

F 9/1   "My Papa's Waltz" thru "The Unknown Citizen"

Week 3
M 9/4   **No class: Labor Day**

W 9/6   Canvas, "Shakespeare's Sonnets"

F 9/8   Canvas "The Romantics"

Week 4
M 9/11   Canvas "Dickenson, Carroll, and Donne"

W 9/13   Canvas "The Wasteland"

F 9/15   Poetry wrap up/Intro to Short Fiction

Week 5
M 9/18   Ambrose Bierce, "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge"

W 9/20   Edgar Allan Poe, "The Fall of the House of Usher," William Faulkner, "A Rose for Emily.

F 9/22   Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "The Yellow Wallpaper"

Week 6
M 9/25   James Baldwin, "Sonny's Blues"

W 9/27   James Joyce, "The Dead"

F 9/29   Ursula K. Le Guinn, "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas"

Week 7
M 10/2   Midterm Review of Concepts

W 10/4   Open Forum period for any last-minute concerns on papers and journaling progress. This forum will take the form of individual conferences as requested and small group peer review.

F 10/6   **No class: Fall Break**

Week 8
M 10/9   **No class: Fall Break**

W 10/11   Introduction to *Macbeth*/How to Read Shakespeare
                   Short Paper 1 is due no later than 11:59pm via Canvas

F 10/13   *Macbeth*, Act I

Week 9
M 10/16   *Macbeth*, Act I, cont'd

W 10/18   *Macbeth,* Act II

F 10/20   *Macbeth*, Act II, cont'd

Week 10
M 10/23   *Macbeth*, Act III

W 10/25   *Macbeth*, Act III/IV

F 10/27   *Macbeth*, Act IV

Week 11
M 10/30   *Macbeth*, Act V

W 11/1   *Macbeth* wrap up and Introduction to *Heart of Darkness*

F 11/3   *Heart of Darkness*, Part 1

Week 12
M 11/6   *Heart of Darkness,* Part 2

W 11/8   *Heart of Darkness,* Part 3

F 11/10   **No class: Veterans Day**

Week 13
M 11/13   Introduction to Canonization Projects. Gerald Gaff, "The Vanishing Classics and Other Myths: Two Episodes in the Culture War;" David H. Richter, "The Literary Canon and the Curriculum After the Culture Wars," - Canvas
Short Paper 2 is due no later than 11:59pm via Canvas

W 11/15   Intro to Canonization, cont'd. John Guillory, "The Canon as Cultural Capital,"

F 11/17
Old,"   Advocacy in Criticism. Gertrude Himmelfarb, "The New Advocacy and the

Week 14
M 11/20   Canonization in Context – HOD. Chinua Achebe, "An Image of Africa," Wilson Harris, "The Frontier on Which Heart of Darkness Stands,"
<u>All genre/media topics for this final project must be preapproved by me in writing prior to this class period.</u>

W 11/22   **No class: Thanksgiving Break**

F 11/24   **No class: Thanksgiving Break**

Week 15

M 11/27   Discussion and Debate Period – Does *Heart of Darkness* deserve to be included in our current literary canon? If yes, why so? If not, what could potentially replace it?

W 11/29   Discussion Period – Any final thoughts on *Heart of Darkness*/Review of Formatting and Presentation Expectations.

F 12/1   Open Forum period designed for conferences and group peer review of projects thus far.

<u>Week 16</u>

M 12/4   Student Final Project Presentations
Please be aware that your final paper is due the same day as your presentation, at 11:59pm via Canvas.

W 12/6   Student Final Project Presentations

F 12/8   Student Final Project Presentations

<u>Final Exam Week</u>

W 12/13 **Journals are due by 11:59pm via Canvas**

Capstone Canonization Unit Outline:

Class meets on M/W/F between 10am and 11:15am.

Week 13

Monday: Introduction to Canonization Projects/Lecture and Discussion

Reading Due: Gerald Gaff, "The Vanishing Classics and Other Myths: Two Episodes in the Culture War;" David H. Richter, "The Literary Canon and the Curriculum After the Culture Wars," – provided as PDF on Canvas

Reading Assigned: John Guillory, "The Canon as Cultural Capital,"– provided as PDF on Canvas

Main Lecture/Discussion Points:

1. What is the canon?
2. How is the canon formed?
3. What are some general strengths and weaknesses of a canon-based system for determining what is worthy of the title of literature? In your opinion, is this style of classification still relevant to academia today and going forward? Why or why not?

Wednesday: Lecture and Discussion Cont'd

Reading Due: John Guillory, "The Canon as Cultural Capital,"– provided as PDF on Canvas

Reading Assigned: Gertrude Himmelfarb, "The New Advocacy and the Old," – provided as PDF on Canvas

Main Lecture/Discussion Points:

1. How is the canon subject to bias from the broader academic community?
2. Can the construction of a literary canon ever be free from such bias?
3. What is the difference between Classic and Good? Are they mutually exclusive and is there a place for objectivity in canon creation?

Friday: Lecture and Discussion Cont'd

Reading Due: Gertrude Himmelfarb, "The New Advocacy and the Old," – provided as PDF on Canvas/Blackboard

Reading Assigned: Chinua Achebe, "An Image of Africa," Wilson Harris, "The Frontier on Which Heart of Darkness Stands," – provided as PDF on Canvas/Blackboard. Review class notes on *Heart of Darkness* from fiction unit!

Main Lecture/Discussion Points:

1. How do you feel about Himmelfarb's position on criticism and advocacy within the context of the criticisms we discussed last week both for and against the canon?
2. While this class does not provide an in-depth knowledge of critical theory, what is your reaction to how criticism plays into the advocacy and, by extension, into canon creation?
3. Is there a place for Himmelfarb's definition of "truth" in the canon?

Week 14:

Monday: Lecture/Discussion – Heart of Darkness

Reading Due: Chinua Achebe, "An Image of Africa," Wilson Harris, "The Frontier on Which Heart of Darkness Stands," – provided as PDF on Canvas/Blackboard. Review class notes on *Heart of Darkness* from fiction unit! **All genre/media topics for this final project must be preapproved by me in writing prior to this class period.**

Reading Assigned: We will be using next Monday's class time to carry out a debate on the canonicity of *Heart of Darkness*. While I will not be providing a specific prompt beyond "Does this book deserve to be in the literary canon, or should it be removed?" you will want to review your own position prior to class and prepare a few points you feel strongly about. **Remember that providing support for your position is much more crucial than being "right" or "wrong."**

Main Lecture/Discussion Points:

1. Review Achebe's position on the novel and its previously accepted themes within academic circles. As we move into a post-colonial literary world that is thriving on non-white, non-male, non-Western voices both in literature and criticism, is the canon primed for refurbishment?
2. Is this kind of restructuring desirable, or even necessary, as literature continues to be reexamined and previously quieted voices are allowed in the proverbial pulpit?

Wednesday: No Class, Thanksgiving Break

Friday: No Class, Thanksgiving Break

Week 15:

Monday: Discussion/Debate – Heart of Darkness

Discussion Prompt: Discuss the place of *Heart of Darkness* within the literary canon. Using the texts and critics we have discussed as well as our past discussions on the novel, support your position. How has looking at the novel through this lens informed how you are selecting your own additions to your theoretical canons?

Wednesday: Discussion/Debate – Heart of Darkness, continued. Now is the time for any final thoughts you feel would benefit the entire class. We will also have a brief review of formatting and presentation expectations. As with the rest of the course, all papers are expected to adhere to MLA formatting.

Friday: Open forum discussion of the assignment due next week. This period will be dedicated to both small group peer review and individual conferences to go over any last-minute questions for presentations next week. Students will work in small groups of 5-7 to review each other's work thus far and to practice their presentations so they will be more prepared to speak in front of the whole class.

Week 16:

Monday: Student Presentations. Students' final papers are due the same day as the presentation, no later than 11:59pm via Canvas.

Wednesday: Student Presentations

Friday: Student Presentations

Rachel C. Evans

ENG 6070

Dr. Phil Dickinson

Final Critical Analysis

12/9/2016

Capitalism, Condensation, and the Creator: Fisher's *Ghosts* in the Machine

Mark Fisher's collection *Ghosts of My Life* is an exploration of lost futures and the lack of cultural progression within modern society. Fisher uses his ideas about cultural production and hauntology, and their intersection with late capitalism, to attack the common sense notion that all creation results in something new, and that all creation is an inherent sign of progression. Fisher's own apocalyptic vision of the cultural world in which life itself is a dream in the style of Freud's psychoanalytic vision, and a prison reminiscent of Foucault's Panopticon. Fisher's ghosts are his dreams of the past and future, and instead of pushing for constant vigilance and surveillance, Fisher's prison is built upon the ever-present wheels of derivative production made necessary by late capitalism, and their goal of creating the most useful, consumable content, at the expense of the new.

Fisher's concept of hauntology refers to a method of criticism founded on the statement that all production exists in such a way that "nothing enjoys a purely positive existence. Everything that exists is possible only on the basis of a whole series of absences, which precede and surround it" (Fisher, 17-18). Fisher compares it to the linguistic theories of Derrida and Saussure, which are founded upon the notion that a binary

sign/signifier pair's meaning is derived from what it is not, rather than what it is. Likewise, the concept of a ghost is built upon absence that results from a specific set of circumstances and prior presence. Fisher use of this interplay between the concepts of present vs. presence is central to understanding how his ghosts function within the contexts he provides.

Fisher's ghosts act much like Freud's concepts of condensation and displacement within dreams. In her book *Literary Theory,* Mary Klages explains it thus:

> Dreams use two main mechanisms to disguise forbidden wishes: condensation and displacement. *Condensation* is when a whole set of images is packed into a single image or statement, when a complex meaning is condensed into a simpler one. Condensation corresponds to metaphor in language, where one thing is condensed into another…*Displacement* is where the meaning of one image or symbol gets pushed onto something associated with it, which then displaces the original image. (Klages, 64)

For those who may be separated from Fisher's personal experience of the 1970s – his most oft quoted decade – his examples can often twist and tangle like a labyrinth at the Overlook Hotel, but all of them are ghosts, a universal symbol for Fisher's more complex ideas of nostalgia of place and time and the impact that nostalgia has had upon our vision of the future. They invoke an immediate association of space and time at a standstill, with anachronism at its heart. Within Fisher's context, hauntology takes its meaning from this representation of paradoxical disjunction – it is an inability to move forward or beyond a

form which previously inhabited the temporal, physical, or cultural space the ghost form resides in.

One of Fisher's most compelling examples of how hauntology works in late modernity comes from his discussion of music. Within this discussion, Fisher claims that one of the most immediate effects of hauntology is represented by the tactile difference between vinyl and electronic forms of music like MP3 files. Musical hauntology is "suffused with an overwhelming melancholy…preoccupied with the way in which technology materialized memory" (21). Many artists Fisher cites use "crackle" – a sound effect designed to mimic the surface noise made by a vinyl record – in order to instill a sense of displacement within their music, both in the literal, time-jumping sense, and also within this Freudian paradigm of dreams. If ghosts are Fisher's metaphor for his experience of the present and his dreams of the future, this crackle is an agent of displacement, serving as a symbol of a specific time and place and all the associations Fisher and his contemporaries have with it.

It is important to note that this association is not limited to those who may have been alive to experience the authentic sounds of vinyl records, but also affects those who have grown familiar with the medium's quirks through the pervasive use of artificial crackle. Aesthetics touted for their connection to the vintage also factor into Fisher's ideas of how far the effects of hauntology can reach. Dedication to the past, and the honoring of it through mechanics like artificial crackle, represents a disconnection while also trying to mask it, in this case the difference between the analogue age and the digital. "So many hauntological tracks have been about revisiting the physicality of analogue

media in the era of digital ether," he says. "MP3 files remain material, of course, but their materiality is occulted from us" (21). This obsession with the material over the ethereal leads artists and consumers to continue to return to these hauntologically loaded forms, keeping themselves in the loop of nostalgia and immobility.

In his discussion of hauntology's intersection with Freud's theories, Fisher states:

Isn't Freud's thesis – first advanced in *Totem and Taboo* and then related, with a difference, in *Moses and Monotheism*, simply this: patriarchy is a hauntology? The father – whether the obscene Alpha Ape Pere-Jouissance of *Totem and Taboo*, or the severe, forbidding patriarchy of *Moses and Monotheism* – is inherently spectral. (Fisher, 123)

That particular word choice – spectral – is key to developing further understanding of how Fisher plays with Freud's theories in *Ghosts*. Hauntology is built upon the interplay of physical and spectral, both in conception and impact. It requires the absence of something that has been deemed a source of power, something that can invoke emotion and action towards some end. For Fisher, the specter is the future and how it has failed to live up to expectation. Within musical hauntology "there is an implicit acknowledgement that the hopes created by postwar electronica or by the euphoric dance-music of the 1990s have evaporated" (21). This evaporation, though acknowledged, is kept at bay through continuous retrofitting of music, even down to the manufactured record scratches. It signifies a kind of hope that if we as a culture can return to and remain in that pivotal moment, derivative as the creation that requires is, we may make different choices that lead to more perfect futures.

Fisher's discourse is built upon that same binary of original/derivative. For Fisher, it is the new and the bold that are signs of the future and the progression necessary to travel towards it, and while he does not go so far as to call the derivative bad, it is certainly undesirable, and as sour and repugnant as a body of stagnant water. "There's an increasing sense that culture has lost the ability to grasp and articulate the present," he explains. "Or it could be that…there is no present to grasp or articulate any more" (9). Fisher is unable to articulate what his vision of the present and future must look like in order to accommodate his longing for cultural production; he is unable to state what it is. He can only comment on its absence, on his overarching sense of disconnection, overstimulation, and loss in regard to the cultural world at large. While this is frustrating in the sense that it often feels like Fisher offers no resolutions, no way to bust his ghosts that seems plausible and do-able, it makes sense within Fisher's overall thesis that the future is *lost*. In order for something to be lost, it must have been possessed and present at some point in the past.

Within Foucault's theories, "a discourse is the conglomeration of all the kinds of writing, talking, thinking, and acting on or about a certain topic," (Klages, 143) and for Fisher's purposes it is helpful to narrow that topic down to just music, rather than all cultural production. The crackle put in to offer displacement to a listener sits on one side of Fisher's spectrum, while "the ghastly return of industry moguls and the boys next door to mainstream pop" and "the premium put on 'reality' in popular entertainment" (Fisher, 27) sits on the other. Both sides serve a use, but it is this later, ghastly end that we can see Foucault's vision of the Panopticon taking shape.

Discourse creates and informs knowledge, which in its turn creates power, and it can potentially possess the ability to control and influence how a person or other entity acts and thinks. Within the original version of the Panopticon, this is done with mechanisms that impose a threat of punishment for those who are not good, coupled with the reality – or, at least, the impression of the reality – of constant regulation by surveillance through imprisonment in a central tower. Per Klages, "this central tower is the Panopticon, the position from which every prisoner in every cell can constantly be watched…the prisoner's behavior is thus regulated not by guards with guns, but by the prisoner's own awareness," (Klages, 145). Foucault's theories of how this model functions in society are built upon the very real and tangible, but once we start applying this to Fisher, it can become more metaphorical. The power created by the discourse surrounding modern music is the ability of culture to impose an endless back loop of derivative, retro products that are designed to invoke nostalgia, in order to avoid and cover up anxieties about the future, or our lack thereof. The result of this kind of production is the illusion of progress that, in reality, functions as a cultural prison, employing citizens and artists alike in a mission of producing only that that is useful or marketable, much like the Panopticon functions to produce citizens that act good and useful to the power system in charge of it.

Fisher chooses a quote from the Drake song "Tuscan Leather" for his epigraph – "Lately, I've been feeling like Guy Pearce in *Memento*." *Memento* is a film built around a main character that is unable to form new memories, who is forced to revisit his ideas and memories of the past over and over again, to the point where it is unclear both to the

character and the audience what is real and what is imagined. This inability to form new memories ties into Fisher's frustration and melancholy at the prospect of there being nothing new to discover, since nothing new is being generated. This concept incorporates both Freud and Foucault. Within the psychoanalytic view of dreams as expressions of forbidden desires, Fisher's use of ghosts as metaphor for futures and pasts that have been lost stands as a testament to the idea that presence is not absolute or even desirable, and often stands only as a marker of absence and the scars it can leave behind. His vision of the ghastly and apocalyptic state of cultural production mirrors Foucault's Panopticon in that it encourages production of retro-inspired music in order to encourage citizens to avoid and ignore the reality that the future has been lost. This is his strongest and final point, and it ties in into another quote from *Memento* –

"If we can't make memories, we can't heal."

Works Cited

Fisher, Mark. *Ghosts of My Life: Writings on Depression, Hauntology and Lost Futures*.

Winchester, UK: Zero, 2014. Print.

Klages, Mary. *Literary Theory: A Guide for the Perplexed*. London: Continuum, 2006. Print.

Rachel C. Evans

ENG 6800

Dr. Sue Carter Wood

Final Seminar Paper

12/12/2018

The #NastyWomen Born of Seneca Falls:

Rhetoric of Performative Women's Protest in 1848 and 2016

The history of the Women's Movement is a long and complicated one. Now in its Fourth Wave, depending on which scholar you ask, the long fight for women's rights in America rages on. The specific ends of that fight may have changed, but how have our methods and performance of rhetorical protest changed as women in the 160 years since the first Seneca Falls Convention?

To begin to answer that question, I will examine, compare, and contrast two instances of women's protest rhetoric to find how performance and ideas regarding the specifications of that performance have changed from the initial wave of the women's rights movement to today. The first instance is Elizabeth Cady Stanton's "Address Delivered at Seneca Falls," performed in 1848 to open the country first women's rights convention in the titular New York city. The second is Nina Mariah Donovan's "#NastyWoman," first posted on YouTube in December of 2016 and most famously performed by Ashley Judd at the 2017 Women's March on Washington D.C. in protest of the election of Donald Trump.

While these women were born and speak on opposite ends of a century-long gap, there are many outward similarities to their works. Both pieces are meant to be experienced aloud, one as a speech and the other as a poem, and both women utilize similar rhetorical techniques, generating identification with their audience, using amplification to bring attention to the facets of their cause they feel most important, creating dissonance between themselves and their perceived opponents, and appealing to their own specific ethos in order to be seen as credible. It is important to note that Stanton and Donovan are reacting to and speaking in their respective rhetorical situation that pose and seeks to answer some larger query about the space in which their performance exists. By examining both speeches through their rhetorical tools we can trace if and how conventions for women's protest performances have shifted in the time since Stanton and her peers first began speaking publicly in defense of women's rights.

Identification

Elizabeth Cady Stanton's "Address Delivered at Seneca Falls" opened America's first women's rights convention in July of 1848 and was delivered long before Stanton and her peers became the larger than life figures that they appear to us today. Looking back on her lifetime of advocacy for women's rights, it is difficult to imagine Stanton as anything less than what she made herself into. Her audience had no such luxury. Even in a room full of people there to speak and listen to like ideas about where this movement would begin and proceed, Stanton's chief aim is to identify with her audience and through that identification create the beginnings of a community of activists.

From the beginning of her address, Stanton places herself in a position to speak for a population of women that have long existed outside of the public sphere. This population is one that suffers quietly but has been brought out in the wake of the Women's Rights movement because they feel that they must not remain silent. Stanton claims that she should feel less confident than she does, "having never before spoken in public, were I not nerved by a sense of right and duty." This right and duty is the cornerstone of how she connects with her audience, making herself one of them instead of above them. When she refers to women, she rarely singles herself out, preferring to speak in terms of the whole rather than the individual. "Every allusion to the degraded and inferior position occupied by women all over the world has been met by scorn and abuse," she claims, "from the man of highest mental cultivation to the most degraded wretch who staggers in the streets do we meet ridicule." By the numbers, her use of "we" and "us" triple her use of "I." To Stanton, all women exist under the same general circumstances as any other, that of subjugation by way of male governance.

This strategy works because it creates a common experience between Stanton and her audience, which can then become the base for a common feeling and action going forward with their movement. As she begins to close her speech, she states that "so long as your women are slaves you may throw your colleges and churches to the winds." There are several racially charged implications to Stanton's choice of the word 'slavery,' but she does not address them in the rest of her speech, and it makes sense that she doesn't. While we can look upon this peace from a comfortable distance in time, we must remember that Stanton was writing and speaking in a time prior to the American Civil

War, and that the abolition of slavery, not equality, was the focus of the day. This racial divide is present in this language choice, even as Stanton argues for a common sense of womanhood that modern eyes may view as ultimately failing without the intersecting discussion of race. For Stanton, a common woman has no specifics of race or class or creed to separate her from other members of the community. In this dialogue, it is not just Stanton who is at stake, nor even just every woman who attended the convention. It is every woman, everywhere, who suffers under the hands of a common injustice that Stanton becomes the mouthpiece for.

If Stanton builds identification with her audience through placing herself in a position to represent them through life experience, Donovan cultivates it through a process more akin to call and response. This may be a product of her genre of performance, poetry over more formal oration, where the audience has a more participatory role. She bookends her piece with lines designed to encourage her audience to provide a response to her rhetoric, opening with "I'm a Nasty Woman" and closing with "So if you're a nasty woman/say hell yeah." Much like Stanton's address, Donovan works to enrage and encourage her audience to view themselves in her own light. She is inviting us to agree with her, but unlike Stanton she begins with the singular and builds to the communal.

In looking at Donovan's rhetoric it is important to note that the subject, title, and much of the body of "#NastyWoman" is in response to a specific piece of rhetoric by Donald Trump during his presidential campaign. It's a term he once used to refer to Democratic candidate Hillary Rodham Clinton during a presidential debate, one that was

quickly reclaimed by many women rhetors as Donovan does here. Rather than accepting the moniker as a source of shame, Donovan and her peers turned it into a source of pride. This is especially evident in her reference to other historical nasty women. She's claims she's "nasty like Elizabeth, Amelia, Rosa, Eleanor, Condoleezza, Sonia, Malala, Michelle." Ashley Judd also includes the first names Susan and Hillary in her version delivered in January of 2017 with Donovan's permission, allusions to Susan B. Anthony and Hillary Clinton. It is not unreasonable to assume, then, that the Elizabeth to whom Donovan refers is Elizabeth Cady Stanton herself. The explicit inclusion of women of color is another dissenting factor of Donovan's rhetoric. She pulls from a wider, more diverse pool of women than Stanton would have access to – black women in Rosa Parks, Condoleezza Rice, and Michelle Obama, a Latina woman in Sonia Sotomayor, and a Pakistani woman in Malala Yousafzai. It is a hallmark of Donovan's time that such a pool of women exists to pull from, and by aligning herself with women she is confident enough will be recognized on a first name basis, Donovan puts herself and her audience on the proverbial right side of history, creating a link between the historical and successful fight for women to get the vote and herself.

In this way, her use of identification looks to achieve the same end as Stanton's. They are both looking to create a community out of an audience, to generate empathy and unity out of a shared experience. While Stanton calls upon the experience of a lack of power both in law and the home, Donovan calls upon a more recent shared experience, that of being talked over and ridiculed in the name of debunking feminist thought. After speaking to specific economic hardships that women face in America, Donovan proclaims,

"This is not a feminist myth; this is inequality./So we are not here to be debunked./We are here to be respected." It is interesting to note that Donovan doesn't refer to herself and the audience as a unit with as much frequency as Stanton does, and when she does it's in the last third of her piece. It is only after she had laid out the facts as she sees them that she claims solidarity with the audience, naming them Nasty Women along with her. This style makes sense for the context of Donovan's performance, not only as a young woman growing up in the age of the internet, but as one seeking to perform and protest in a time when audiences like Stanton's aren't guaranteed. At events like the Women's March, we get close to the spirit of 1848, of women and people who support them gathered for a common cause, but in the arena of online protest, rhetoric must be bold, enticing, and research before it can seek to ask for solidarity.

Amplification

Stanton utilizes amplification in much the same way she does identification, to make plain the common circumstance of women, to cause them to band together. To a lesser extent, she also utilizes it at the end of her speech to advocate for her position that men and women should be equal:

> One common objection to this movement is, that if the principles of freedom and equality which we advocate were put into practice, it would destroy all harmony in the domestic circle. Here let me ask, how many truly harmonious households have we now? … The only happy households we now see are those in which husband and wife share equally in counsel and

government. There can be no true dignity or independence where there is subordination to the absolute will of another, no happiness without freedom. Let us then have no fears that the movement will disturb what is seldom found. (Stanton)

After a lengthy discussion of the common plight of women as insubordinates under government and family, Stanton chooses to take a moment to call attention to those women who find some respite in their home lives even if they must still be subject to federal law. While it could be said that the majority of Stanton's speech is an act of amplification, this particular moment stands out because it works to show that there is a solution to the problem and situation under discussion. In Stanton's view, rare as they are, these households are valid and sustainable, the opposite of what her detractors claim. It's a statement that brings together many of the more abstract rights Stanton fights for - dignity and happiness within one's life and relationships - and how they reflect rights granted under the law. As Stanton claims, you cannot disturb something that is already so uncommon by demanding it be made standard. This is also a return to her method of drawing upon the common woman as a catch-all for the experience of herself and her audience.

Compare this with "#NastyWoman" and you get a very different picture of the diversity of American women. Donovan concerns herself with topics beyond the plight of the generic woman that Stanton speaks of. In her section about the specific economic plights of women, Donovan singles out several careers and statistics to help her amplify the experiences of women, especially women of color, as well as support her arguments regarding the wage gap. "Remind me that this is only because women usually go into

lower paying fields," she says, "So why did last year's top actresses make less than half of what the top actors did?/Do you realize that the World Cup shelf of the U.S. men's soccer team is as empty as Trump's morals/But the women's team has scored three World Cups,/In 2015, brought in 20 million more dollars in revenue than the men's team,/but is still paid 75% less?" She goes on to ask, "Tell me why the work of a black woman and a Hispanic woman is only worth 63 and 54 percent of a white man's privileged paycheck?" This is a very different take on this rhetorical tool than Stanton's, because where she goes for the general and unifying, Donovan goes for the specific. It's a moment of intersection between race and gender that is largely missing from Stanton's address but feels vital in Donovan's.

Even in unification and community building there is difference of experience, and Donovan doesn't shy away from that. She writes in an age where such statistics are gathered and made publicly available, in an age that has seen not just the emancipation of slaves but can also look back on the work of Ida B. Wells in bringing the truth of lynching in America to light, the Civil Rights Movement, and the creation of advocacy groups like Black Lives Matter. There is no common American woman anymore, and to claim otherwise would have given the rest of her of her rhetoric a feeling of dishonesty by omission. While to Donovan every woman struggles, those struggles are not made equal, and her choice to call attention makes sense for her time, place, and goal. It is not a matter of who is right or wrong - though several white suffragettes from the original Women's Movement, including Stanton, expressed ideas influenced by the racism of the day - but a sign of how our discussions of feminism have changed since Stanton's original address.

For Stanton, her work towards unification is vital because the Movement was still gaining ground. For Donovan, nearly 160 years later, the discussion has shifted to what differences need to be amplified to create a more accurate picture of the state of women's rights in modern America.

Dissonance

One of the more interesting points in Stanton's speech stems from the close of her opening statements. "Moral beings can only judge of others by themselves. The moment they assume a different nature for any of their own kind, they utterly fail...." To Stanton, there is an inherent difference in men and women that stems not just from political places of privilege, but in the foundation of their moral upbringing. While she does bring up women who shun her cause, the greatest threat to her and the women assembled is the male establishment that created and sustains their subjugation. She claims that, "In every country and clime does a man assume the responsibility of marking out the path for her to tread. In every country does he regard her as a being inferior to himself, and one whom he is to guide and control." Here again, we see that use of identification to create a common female experience with Stanton as its representative. The dissonance Stanton attempts to achieve comes not from her pitting herself against other women, but against the institutions of men that claim their own superiority over women. In this also Stanton chooses to speak of more general ideas, a unifying conception of man pitted against her common woman.

This method of taking a complicated and nuanced issue and presenting it as two opposing sides is effective because it creates a much easier to digest Us/Them dichotomy that reinforces Stanton's work in unifying her audience with her cause. Every woman is an Us, every man is a Them, and to Stanton this Them lacks all credibility upon even the merest inspection. This strategy is less about advocating for women and more about pointing out that the differences men claim to have, the dissonance they make for themselves, are more conjecture than proof. She states, "Let us consider … man's superiority, intellectually, morally, physically. Man's intellectual superiority cannot be a question until woman has had a fair trial. When shall we have had our freedom to find out our own sphere, when we shall have had our colleges, our professions, our trades, for a century, a comparison then may be justly instituted." By calling attention how difference between the sexes cannot truly be gauged without a fairer basis for comparison, one which she assumes men oppose on principle, Stanton fills in another corner of her portrait of women as an underclass, with men as overseers.

In comparison, Donovan places herself and by extension her audience in conflict with not just individual persons but institutions as well. In this way she is very similar to Stanton. Though she wrote with the practiced pen of a woman who knew she had to act a very specific way to be taken seriously, Stanton's anger, particularly from her later speeches like "On Divorce," is echoed in Donovan's work. Her strategy to achieve this is almost entirely built upon her varied uses of the word "nasty." One, the definition she reserves for herself and the ideas central to supporting this new wave of the women's movement, can best be described by the last two adjectives she invokes - brave and

proud. The second, the definition applied to institutions and behaviors that work to further aims she doesn't agree with, is best known by its more typical definition - disgusting:

> I'm not as nasty as confederate flags being tattooed across my city;/maybe the south actually is going to rise again/Or maybe it never really fell/Because we're still drowning in vanilla coated power/Slavery has just been reinterpreted into the prison system/Black lives are still in shackles and graves just for being black in front of people who see melanin as animal skin/Tell me of a decade that didn't have traces of white hoods burning up our faith in humanity./I'm not as nasty as a swastika painted on a pride flag/And I didn't know that devils could be resurrected but I feel Hitler in these streets/A mustache traded in for a Toupee/The Nazis renamed The Cabinet. (Donovan)

Much like her allusions to historical figures of the Women's Movement, Donovan calls on specific imagery that she is certain her audience will recognize and draw conclusions from. Like her discussion of diversity in female hardship, much of her words are racially charged, calling up memories of the Confederacy, the Ku Klux Klan, the swastika of the Nazi party and its infamous leader, and the ongoing cultural conversation regarding the disproportionate incarceration of black Americans. Donovan's dissonance also calls attention to the difference in what could be extrapolated from the utterance that inspired it - Donald Trump's statements to Hillary Clinton during their debate - and what she views as the reality of American culture leading up to his election. This excerpt comes directly

after her opening lines, which, in the video of her performance, manages to get laughs and snaps from her audience, "Not as nasty as a man who looks like he bathes in Cheeto dust./Not as nasty a man who is a diss track to America." It signals a change of tone that Donovan then keeps up for the rest of her piece, at times being even more direct, as with "I'm not as nasty as racism, or fraud, or homophobia, sexual assault, transphobia, white supremacy, white privilege, ignorance, or misogyny." Donovan's enemies that she separates herself and her audience from belong to a world that allows themselves to cultivate the same kind of dissonance that Stanton pins on her common man - the cognitive dissonance of an oppressor who claims the oppressed are the real issue. In its most simple terms, this strategy is an effective spin on a classic schoolyard response to name-calling, "I know you are, but what am I?"

Ethos

Both Stanton and Donovan seek to gain credibility with their audience by speaking to them as if assuming a common ground has already been built. Stanton builds credibility with her audience through speaking to them as women and appealing to the more religious and God-given aspect of what rights they deserve, a common tactic in her time and one that would have resonated with her audience. If God is the ultimate authority, one that trumps the fraudulent claims of men she speaks about in her use of dissonance, then a direct appeal has no obligation to abide by man's law. Before she brings in this direct appeal, she uses this source of credibility to further divide her audience in her chosen dichotomy and support her arguments that man's claim to superiority is false. She

states, "Then he [man] says, by way of an excuse for his degradation, 'God made woman more self-denying than man….He is naturally selfish. God made him so.' No, I think not.… God's commands rest upon man as well as woman." This initial appeal for authority works because Stanton also applies to her detractors, not just herself and her audience. Were she to do so, it would potentially leave room for the very men she speaks of to step in with their own arguments and assumptions about woman's place under their interpretation of similar commands. If all people are equally subject to God's commands, then it does not logically follow that any one class of persons may subjugate another.

Stanton continues this appeal by claiming that the true accountability of women should not rest with man, but with God, stating, "Let woman live as she should. Let her feel her accountability to her Maker. Let her know that her spirit is fitted for as high a sphere as mans, and that her soul requires food as pure and exalted as his. Let her live first for God, and she will not make imperfect man an object of reverence and awe." Stanton's authority that demands she speak out, the "sense of right and duty" she references in the very opening of her address, are not the product of man or his government, and while this appeal may seem a bit outdated to our more modern eyes, the effect is unmistakable. It's difficult, essentially impossible in Stanton's day, to argue against or deny.

Donovan's appeal for credibility is not to any single institution, divine or otherwise. It is to fact and history and, in the end, to her audience. Her poem is peppered with allusion, with condemnation of ideas and people she views as working against the common good, specifically Donald Trump and Mike Pence. After one particular reference

to an interview Trump gave stating he thought his daughter was attractive, Donovan pauses before bursting out with, "But yeah!/I'm a nasty woman./A phunky Crusty Bitchy Loud/Nasty woman./Not as nasty as the combo of Trump and Pence being served into my voting booth,/But I'm nasty like the battles women fought to get me in that voting booth." If Stanton's authority is created, something she made in contract with her God and his commands, Donovan's is inherited. Donovan references the debt she owes to Elizabeth Stanton and her peers twice, here in the general sense, and later when she alludes to Stanton specifically. The authority to speak out both in advocacy for herself and in opposition to Trump and vice president Pence isn't something that Donovan creates; it is something she already has. It is an authority that has already been won for her and her audience by previous generations of nasty women who fought so she could stand up and say, "this far but no further."

This difference in appeal is one of the sharpest divides between Stanton and Donovan, and it is one that cannot be bridged because of their separation in time and circumstance. Elizabeth Cady Stanton never lived to see her work grant women the right to vote. It would take a little over seven decades from this address for an amendment granting that right to be adopted. Ninety-six years after that, Nina Donovan published this poem to her YouTube channel. Even after all that time and generations' worth of work, Donovan speaks to the same immediacy Stanton does. For her it is the work itself, on its own merits, goals, and principle, that gives her the means and authority speak as she does. She knows what she is because she has a history of women to see herself in, something Stanton did not, at least in the same breadth of time. It's that knowledge that

makes one of her more subtle bits of wordplay become infused not with the anger she expresses in almost every other line, but with despair: "I know it seems petty to complain about a few extra cents/But it's just the finishing touch on a pile of change I have yet to feel in this country."

Discussion

When I first set out to assess what changes in performative rhetoric I could find in the current wave of the Women's Movement, I thought that I would find more differences. Perhaps it's the desire to view the past from a comfortable distance, lest we become uncomfortable with its closeness that inspires such ideas. Perhaps it's the yearning for validation in our thinking that something, anything, has really changed. But I think a lot of my original ideas were born of an innate frustration that's grown sharper in the past two years, a frustration at still having the same old conversations, and answering the same questions. Over the course of my work with these two pieces, even across differences of place and time and use of language, I found many of the same supporting structures, and only slight differences in what each rhetor's "Big Questions" ended up being.

Stanton's big question that she answers in the course of her address is what is the individual woman's place within the Women's Movement? In Stanton's view, she is confident that since men judge them for saying such a different nature that they can no longer empathize with women, it is up to women themselves to do the work of protest and reform, work that is consecrated by God beyond any opposition by man. She claims that "the most discouraging, the most lamentable aspect our cause wears is the indifference, indeed, the contempt, with which women themselves regard the movement." Even though this speech was performed in 1848, there are echoes of this sentiment in many criticisms of women's movements throughout the last two centuries. While detractors may feel more dramatic in Stanton's context, these women who greet the ideals of Stanton's cause with "the scornful curl of the lip" and "expression of ridicule and disgust," she doesn't let her audience lose sight of the greater and more powerful enemy, the establishments of men that instigate and support their subjugation, and the indifference that allows them to continue that subjugation.

I see a lot of this later point in Donovan's work, in her allusions and calls to history and fact that speak to an anger that Stanton shares in her other works, that inspired her to make this first address in Seneca Falls. Though their pulpits may look very different upon first glance, they utilize the same tools, often with similar implications. Even their differences, particularly those of ethos, seek the same ends. Elizabeth Cady Stanton's appeal to a higher authority rests upon God. Nina Donovan's appeal to a higher authority rests upon Elizabeth Cady Stanton. I didn't expect to find such a direct link between these two women, but I am glad I was able to happen upon it.

It brings us to Donovan's big question that she answers in her poem, one that feels unique to our time and place - what does it mean to be a Nasty Woman? And, to a lesser extent, what is really "nasty" when you get right down to it? This question is the centerpiece of Donovan's whole poem, something she investigates and expounds upon in its telling. She gets closest to pinpointing her meaning near the close of her poem, right before her roll call of history's previous nasty women.

> "I know you forget to examine the reflection of your own privilege/Or you may be afraid of the truth/But I'm not afraid to be honest/I'm not afraid to be nasty/Yeah I'm nasty/like the struggle of women still beating equality into the world,/because our rights have been beaten out of us for too long./And our fight will continue to embody our nastiness."

There is a distinct echo of Stanton here, of the righteous fury and duty she cites as her motivation to speak to what she and her audience are owed. It is a fury that is unafraid, because fear is nothing compared to the desire to fight. Donovan defines the fight and struggle for women's rights as nasty because it is something that cannot thrive on politeness and fair play. Such ideas have gone unreciprocated thus far. It is nasty because it doesn't fold up and hide at the first sign of opposition. It is impolite, and inconvenient, and difficult to swallow, and hard, and dirty, and it has taken so much time already. It is a beating, not a matter of holding out a hand and asking for what's due. Real change, the kind Donovan still waits for at the end of her poem, doesn't come from an appeal to the authority of an oppressor. It comes from the work women and those that

support them are willing to do. It is worth it to note that this is the same conclusion Stanton comes to, and that's the real answer to my own big question.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Nina Mariah Donovan were never on the opposite ends I wanted to believe they were.

They're just two chapters of the same story. Two halves of one conversation.

Works Cited

Donovan, Nina Mariah, director. *#NastyWoman by Nina Mariah (Live at State of the*

Word). *YouTube*, YouTube, 11 Dec. 2016,

www.youtube.com/watch?v=dvN0On85sNQ.

News, LesGrossman, director. *Ashley Judd FULL Speech at "Women's March" In*

Washington DC 'I Am a Nasty Woman.' YouTube, YouTube, 21 Jan. 2017,

www.youtube.com/watch?v=VNXMOxBbt6g.

Stanton, Elizabeth Cady. "Address Delivered at Seneca Falls." *Teaching American*

History, Ashbrook Center at Ashland University, 2006,

teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/address-delivered-at-seneca-

falls/.