**KINGSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE (CUNY)**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH – SPRING 2022**

**ENG 6700-01 (11788): WOMEN IN LITERATURE -– ONLINE**

Professor: Red Washburn, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: Online/ Zoom

Course Hours: Asynchronous/ No Meetings

**Course Description:** The purpose of this course is for you to read and write about gender issues in multi-cultural literature. Special attention will be given to the ways in which race, class, gender, ethnicity, nationality, and sexuality shape personal and social realities in literature. Themes of poverty, immigration, education, music, art, gender expression, racial profiling, identity, friendship, relationships, and family are central in these selections of literature. You will learn that critical reflection is essential to cultural critique. You will do close readings and analytical writings regularly in this class. In addition, you will engage in open discussion about the literature read. By the end of the term, you will create journals and portfolios in which you interpret social issues in your lives and in the literary works read. This course fulfills a Women’s and Gender Studies requirement.

**Catalog Description:**   
An exploration of selected themes in writings by women drawn from worldwide literature, and including a range of genres, as well as different forms such as fiction, drama, poetry and creative non-fiction.

**Required Texts (any edition):**

•Feinberg, Leslie. *Stone Butch Blues.* Ithaca: Firebrand, 1993.

Free Online (20th Anniversary edition): <http://www.lesliefeinberg.net>

•Hernandez, Daisy. *A Cup of Water under My Bed*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2014 (Blackboard).

•Orlandersmith, Dael. *Yellowman*. New York: Dramatists Play Service, Inc., 2002

(on Blackboard).

•Additional materials on Blackboard

**Course Goals:**

• You will do close readings of literary texts, including summarizing and annotating, and understand theoretical, historical, and literary contexts and terms.

• You will create central arguments that include a clear topic, a solid stance, and provide support for your main ideas by quoting, paraphrasing, and analyzing passages from texts.

• You will recognize your writing processes, receive feedback from your peers, conference with me, and revise your major writing assignments.

• You will engage in rigorous discussion that fosters critical reflection about your lives, the world, and the texts through collaborative interaction.

• You will write grammatically and mechanically correct papers and cite in MLA format.

**Requirements:**

•A creative writing journal consisting of regular prose (i.e., essays, letters, diaries, etc.) and/ or poetry, reflecting on personal and/or social themes related to gender, totaling approximately five to six pages

•A reader response journal consisting of informal responses to scheduled readings, two of which I will assess and provide feedback for to prepare you for your reader response portfolio

•A reader response portfolio consisting of the your favorite reflections on at least two works in your journals, developed to approximately five to six pages

•Class participation and peer reviews

All written assignments should be submitted to me as a hard copy and posted on Blackboard.

**Grade Distribution:**

Creative Writing Portfolio 40%

Reader Response Portfolio 40%

Participation (Journals and Peer Reviews) 20%

**Writing Procedures:**

• You will engage in a process of composing (i.e., prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading) for all writing assignments.

• You will receive a wealth of feedback on your essays from your peers. You also will conference with me. Before you submit your final drafts, you will produce several drafts for each essay, including for peer review and professor review. You will present your papers to the class during writing workshops once during the semester for feedback. If you fail to complete your rough drafts on time, you will have a letter grade taken off for each day late.

• You will have the opportunity to revise your essays after your initial grade is recorded so long as you discuss your writing in informal conferences with me within one week. Other drafts also may be revised after the first revision, but again, only after you have met with me within one week. Essentially, you have unlimited revision possibilities. Revisions have the possibility of replacing the previous grade, but only if substantial improvement is evident. In other words, simply changing mechanical errors (i.e., commas) in essays will not raise grades.

• You will be given ample feedback on each essay before the next essay is due. This feedback will allow you to learn from the comments and apply the comments to the next essay.

**Discussion Procedures:**

• You will be well-prepared for all class discussions by doing all the assigned reading and writing prior to class.

• You will demonstrate your understanding and analysis of the readings by being fully engaged in class discussions.

• You will be respectful of your peers’ ideas and my ideas.

**Online Instructions:**

• All the information about the course, me, contacting me, the readings, syllabus, assignments, discussion board, and grades (under tools) are on the left menu of Blackboard once you log in.

• You will have to create a thread, attach your work, and submit your work under the Discussion Board before Sundays at 11:59PM, unless otherwise noted on the syllabus.

•I will post more instructions under the Announcements on Blackboard.

To post assignments online, go to the main menu on the course page. Select the “Discussions” button. Select the name of your assignment listed for submission, i.e., “Reader Response – Week Two,” select “Create Thread,” and follow upload instructions. All assignments must be submitted as attachments using Microsoft applications, i.e., Word. Your file extension should read .doc, .docx, .pdf, or.rtf. OTHER FILES CANNOT BE ACCESSED BY BLACKBOARD.

**Civility:** Kingsborough Community College is committed to the highest standards of academic and ethical integrity, acknowledging that respect for self and others is the foundation of educational excellence. Civility in the classroom and respect for the opinions of others is very important in an academic environment.  It is likely you may not agree with everything that is said or discussed in the classroom, yet courteous behavior and responses are expected. Acts of harassment and discrimination based on matters of race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, religion, and ability, etc., are not acceptable. As the Director of Women’s and Gender Studies and as an ally of Safe Zone, I promote strict enforcement of these rules. All students, faculty, and staff have a right to be in a safe environment, free of disturbance, and civil in all aspects of human relations.

**Pronoun and Name:** I affirm all forms of gender expressions and identities. If you prefer to be called a different name than what is on the class roster, please let me know. Feel free to inform me on your gender pronoun (i.e., she/her/hers, he/him/his, or they/them/theirs, she/they, they/he, etc.) or if you do not have a pronoun (i.e., name only). If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. For more information, please visit [http://www2.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/legal-affairs/policies-procedures/equal-opportunity-and-non-discrimination-policy/and](http://www2.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/legal-affairs/policies-procedures/equal-opportunity-and-non-discrimination-policy/and" \t "_blank) [https://www1.cuny.edu/mu/forum/2017/02/24/protecting-the-rights-of-transgender-and-gender-nonconforming-students/](https://www1.cuny.edu/mu/forum/2017/02/24/protecting-the-rights-of-transgender-and-gender-nonconforming-students/" \t "_blank)​

**Attendance:**

You are expected to read, write, and discuss regularly each week online. This is your way of “attending” and participating in an online class.

**Academic Integrity:**

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged (intentionally or unintentionally) use of summary, paraphrase, direct quotation, language, statistics, or ideas from articles or other information sources, including the Internet. You must cite according to MLA or Chicago format, outlined in the required text. If you plagiarize all or part of a writing assignment, you will automatically receive an F on it, and it cannot be revised. If you repeat the offense, you will fail the course and be reported to Office of the Dean of Student Affairs. At Kingsborough Community College, plagiarism falls under the larger heading of Academic Dishonesty and is adjudicated by the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs.

**Access-Ability:** Kingsborough Community College provides accommodations to students with disabilities. If you have a documented disability and need supplemental accommodations in connection with this class, contact Access-Ability services directly.

**Schedule of Assignments:** The following schedule is tentative and may change based on the needs of the class. All reading assignments must be done before the date on which they are scheduled in order to maximize engagement. Late papers will be penalized, unless I grant you an extension.

**Week One (3/5-3/13): Course Introductions and Spoken Word**

Syllabus Distribution and Introduction

Introduce Yourself on Blackboard Discussion Board before 11:59PM on Sunday, 3/13

Spoken Word - Slanty Eyed Mama, Athens Boy Choir, Kai Davis, Lenelle Moise, Suheir Hammad, Anida Yoeu Ali, Andrea Gibson, Joy Harjo, Julie Novak, Alysia Harris, Aysha El Shamayleh, and Sonia Sanchez, Justin Vivian Bond, Heather Acs, Staceyann Chin, Alix Olson, Pamela Z, Climbing Poetree, Storme Webber, C.C. Carter, Dark Matter, Wazina Zondon, and Terna Hamida Jahnjeh Tilley-Gyado (Blackboard)

**Week Two (3/14-3/20): Poetry**

Poetry - June Jordan, Sylvia Plath, Ericka Huggins, Roseleen Walsh, Assata Shakur, Nikki Finney, Adrienne Rich, Rita Ann Higgins, Audre Lorde, Eavan Boland, Chrystos, Pat Parker, Cherrie Moraga, Mary Oliver, Joy Harjo, Judy Grahn, Paula Gunn Allen, Eileen Myles, Gloria Anzaldua, Mary Dorcey, Minnie Bruce Pratt, Emily Dickinson, Marie Howe, Kay Ryan, Elizabeth Bishop, Muriel Rukeyser, Michelle Tea, Lucille Clifton, Wislawa Szymborska, Nikki Giovanni, Gwendolyn Brooks, Mitsuye Yamada, Julia Alvarez, Jamaica Kincaid, Alice Walker, Virginia Hamilton Adair, and Marge Piercy (Blackboard)

**Week Three (3/21-3/27): Dael Orlandermith’s *Yellowman***

*Yellowman*, Parts I-V, Dael Orlandersmith (Blackboard)

**Reader Response Due on Blackboard Discussion Board before 11:59PM on Sunday, 3/27**

**Week Four (3/28-4/3): Creative Writing Portfolio Review**

**Rough Draft of Creative Writing Portfolio Due** **on Blackboard Discussion Board before 11:59PM on Sunday, 4/3**

**Week Five: (4/4-4/10): Final Draft of Creative Writing Portfolio Due** **on Blackboard Discussion Board before 11:59PM on Thursday, 4/10**

**Week Six (4/11-4/14): Daisy Hernandez’s *A Cup of Water under My Bed***

*A Cup of Water under My Bed*, Daisy Hernandez, Parts 1-3, “A Cup of Water under My Bed,” “Even if I Kiss a Woman,” “Queer Narratives,” and “Only Ricos Have Credit” (Blackboard)

**Week Seven (4/15-4/24): Spring Break – No Classes**

**Week Eight (4/25-5/1):** **Leslie Feinberg’s *Stone Butch Blues***

Leslie Feinberg’s *Stone Butch Blues*, chapters 1-13 (<http://www.lesliefeinberg.net>)

**Week Nine (5/2-5/8): Leslie Feinberg’s *Stone Butch Blues***

Leslie Feinberg’s *Stone Butch Blues*, chapters 13-26 (<http://www.lesliefeinberg.net>)

**– Reader Response Due on Blackboard Discussion Board before 11:59PM on Sunday, 5/8**

**Week Ten (5/9-5/15): Reader Response Portfolio Review**

**Rough Draft of Reader Response Portfolio Due on Blackboard Discussion Board before 11:59PM on Sunday, 5/15**

**Week Eleven (5/16-5/22): Reader Response Portfolio Peer Review**

Write a few sentences to a paragraph for a peer, beginning with one part of the paper you enjoyed and ending with one part of the paper you have suggestions for or questions. Please review whoever posted after you, and if you are the last person, review whoever posted first on the thread.

**Peer Review of Reader Response Portfolio Due on Blackboard Discussion Board before 11:59PM on Sunday, 5/22**

**Week Twelve (5/23-5/29): Reader Response Portfolio Review**

**Final Draft of Reader Response Portfolio Due** **on Blackboard Discussion Board before 11:59PM on Sunday, 5/29**

**Week Thirteen (5/31-6/7): Film and Course Wrap-Up**

***The Watermelon Woman*, Dir. Cheryl Dunye**

**Revisions TBA**

**Reader Response Journal**

**Overview**

You are required to do weekly journaling of at least a paragraph to each scheduled reading throughout the semester. You are not required to share these informal responses on the discussion board, but you may do so if you want feedback from your peers. Please keep track of themes, symbolism, and passages with page references to use for your final reader response portfolio due at the end of the semester. I will collect two of your responses throughout the semester near the beginning (Orlandersmith) and near the end (Feinberg) to give you some feedback to prepare for your reader response portfolio. These responses are due Sunday before 11:59PM on the Discussion Board; the dates are noted on the syllabus. I will grade these two responses as part of your participation. They should be informal prose. Please focus more on content than on form. You will select one theme from a text, select at least one passage from a text, and analyze them. You should pick a topic, make an argument, and use at least one passage from the text to support your claims. You should not write summaries. You should focus on discussing the text itself, and develop your own critical insights. For instance, you might explore biracial issues with colorism in the South in Orlandersmith’s *Yellowman*. How does Orlandersmith discuss these themes? What is her critique and why? What do you think of her views on these topics? You might argue that she views colorism as a form of power and discrimination. You also might note the role it plays in the (re)production of the family, post-slavery. That could be your focus and argument. Then you should locate at least one passage from the text to support your ideas about this topic. These responses must demonstrate that you have read the works, and thought critically about themes within them over the course of your reading. In addition, you should demonstrate that you can do close readings of the texts by pulling examples from them and analyzing their significance. The journals will help you generate ideas for your reader response portfolio, your final course project for which you have complete freedom to select and develop at least one or two responses to any of the texts we read throughout the semester.

**Critical Reading Strategies**

•Text-to-Self with a focus on images (responding, image-making, and creating associations)

•Text-to-Text with a focus on language of the text (questioning, inferring, and interpreting)

•Text-to-World with a focus on issues and themes (drawing on background knowledge and connecting to relevant issues and themes)

**Creative Writing Portfolio**

**Due 4/3 (Rough Draft) and 4/10 (Final Draft)**

**Overview**

The purpose of creative writing is to tell stories about human life in an aesthetic, unique, honest, and personal way. You should dredge upsignificant moments, events, persons, or “truths” that are marked indelibly in your memory, examine them fully, and reveal them to your readers in order for them to make connections to other people’s experience through writing. You should evoke strong and powerful impressions in your writing (whether prose or poetry) by manipulating the concrete, sensory details and descriptions of your experiences in order to recreate (or show, not tell) them for your readers. You should write about important issues in your life and in the world. You should explore personal and social issues about the theme of gender. You should try to explore yourself and the world in which you live, intellectually, politically, physically, and emotionally. You can write prose and poetry. You are encouraged to explore yourself freely about any topic you wish, without self-censorship. For instance, you may write about personal topics, such as how you express your gender in your workplace, at school, in your family, around your friends, and in your community. You can connect to other identities, such as race, class, sexuality, ethinicity, religion, age, and disability, etc. You may write a short story, a poem, a journal, an essay, or any combination of forms. You can write about currents events or theories of gender, as well. The purpose of this assignment is twofold: 1) to get you writing regularly about topics related to sexuality that you are interested in order to empower you through the act of writing, and 2) to begin learning how to write in a descriptive, argumentative, and developed way. You are required to compile and submit your best five to six pages of your creative writing portfolio. Your portfolio may contain description and narration as well as exposition and argumentation, depending on whether the topic is more personal or social. You can submit fragmented pieces (i.e., poetry) and write a shorter prose essay. You can toggle between different genres and page lengths. You can write a short story that is three pages, a letter that is one page, and a poem that is one page, for example. However, you are expected to revise your work. The purpose of this assignment is both to encourage your free expression and access your improvement through revision processes. Your submissions should be well-developed, well-organized, and well-written. You should submit all drafts and peer reviews. The creative writing portfolio comprises 40% of your grade. Your portfolio should be double-spaced, typed, and stapled, have one inch margins all around, be 12 point Times New Roman font, and have a proper heading with your full name, my full name, the full course title and section, date, and a title.

**Grading Checklist**

• You should have a strong, honest writing voice.

• You should use description and narration or exposition and argumentation.

• You should use develop your characters and setting or arguments and examples.

• You should have an appropriate tone and audience.

• You should consider language and sentence structure or line and stanza style.

• You should revise your portfolio with a close eye on eliminating any grammatical and mechanical errors, unless you are employing poetic license for a specific purpose.

**Freewriting**

Please feel free to use the following freewrite topics for your informal writing.

1. Any of the topics in the course text
2. Writing muse or demon
3. “Why I write”
4. Freewrite: about an image or an artifact or object that has significance for you.
5. A fragment a sense memory from childhood—or a fragment of a personal essay or memory that you have a start for
6. Freewrite: “Color my childhood….” Choose a color or series of colors
7. Earliest memories or early memories of home or family
8. Sense memories
9. Birth of consciousness
10. Moment of pain
11. Weird childhood obsession
12. Encounter with a stranger or strange encounter with a stranger
13. Defining moments
14. Close your eyes. Think of a year in your life—events—images that rise to the surface of consciousness
15. Think about a time in your life when your forgot something about yourself or your past—or tried to forget something about yourself or your past
16. Write about an event that you witness or experienced that led you to have negative associations with a place, person, or object
17. Write about death or loss
18. Lost places or lost people
19. Describe your childhood home—use your five senses
20. Food memories
21. Failed romance
22. Photograph and its significance/think about a movie scene or a photo or video that challenges you to figure out what is going on or you cannot figure out
23. Think of an incident in your life that happened and pretend that it didn’t happen
24. Describe a party—focus on one person and his/her backstory
25. Moment of moral choice
26. Experience of prejudice
27. Moment of fear
28. An unexpected event that caught you off guard
29. A holiday experience
30. A time you did not want to be part of your culture
31. Write about a time you were treated unfairly for your age
32. Write about a time an adult was too afraid or uncomfortable to do something, so you had to do it instead
33. Write about a sanctuary
34. Exploration of a deeper topic through a sense
35. Experience of a physical trauma that led to a psychological change
36. Flashback—pieces of regret—memories of regret
37. Unsent letters expressing what you would have liked to say to someone--write in the form of a letter
38. Describe a time when it meant more for someone to simply listen to what you had say, rather than engage in conversation.
39. Write about lost people or lost places
40. Write about a person who made a mark on your life
41. Write about your relationship with your body or your hair
42. Use this opening: “When I look in the mirror, I…
43. I fear … I release …
44. One thing I want my family to know about me is … One thing I wish I would

hear my family say is …

45. I feel the most joy when …

46. I feel the most pain when …

47. So here’s what happened …

48. The ways I identify include … Of these, I identify the most as/with …because...

49. One thing I never want to say is…

50. I am … I was …

51. I remember … I forgot…

52. I want … I desire…

53. If fear was not a factor, I would …

54. What is most important to me is …

55. I was taught to … but I defy that because …

56. I say… Society says…

57. If my life were a movie, the theme song would be …

58. The meaning of my life is …

59. I often wonder …

60. My truth is …

**Reader Response Portfolio**

**Due 5/15 (Rough Draft), 5/22 (Peer Review) & 5/29 (Final Draft)**

**Overview**

The purpose of analytical writing is to argue your interpretation, perspective, point of view, or slant on particular literary works. It should lure people to your way of thinking or, at the very least, to make them aware of your views. You should not include summaries or personal experiences. Instead, you should show your own critical understanding of the literary works—what you think of them. You should shape your subject matter in a sophisticated and persuasive way. You should consider subject, occasion, and point of view as readers and writers for a general audience. You should narrow down your topics by theme. Then you must make a solid argument that contains several main ideas that support your purpose. For instance, you might decide to write about the theme of sexuality and Daisy Hernandez’s *A Cup of Water under My Bed*. You might decide to discuss the theme of queering gender in autobiographical narratives. How are gendered expressions and identities lived and sanctioned? How are they authentic? How are they resistant? How are they perceived and received? Why does gender matter in queer communities? Where do race, ethnicity, and class fit in, as well? That could be your focus and argument. However, then you must find specific passages from the text that show these themes. You must use specific textual evidence--to quote and paraphrase--to support your central arguments. You must explain and analyze why you are using the passages to build your arguments in all paragraphs. For this reason, you should not under-quote or over-quote material. All of your citations for passages should be cited according to MLA format (see the citation guide below for further assistance).You must choose your best readers response journal entries about at least one or two works of literature and then develop them into a longer reader response portfolio. You can write five pages about one text. You also can write three pages about one text and two pages about another text, or divide it up as two on one text, and three on another text. I do not want you to write under two pages about a single text, however. You will not be able to develop your analysis. You also can write about them together, totaling at least five pages. You should organize your portfolio in a way that shows your introduction, purpose, point of view, audience, central argument and main ideas, forms of supporting evidence, and conclusion. You should check for coherence within and between paragraphs, and proofread your work for errors in grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, and spelling. You should think hard, think deep, and write a reader response portfolio of approximately five to six pages that shows your interpretation of at least two the literary works. You may select any theme and passages from the texts (i.e., novels, autobiographical stories, poems, and/ or spoken word) that you want. You should submit all drafts and peer reviews. This portfolio comprises 40% of your grade. Your portfolio should be double-spaced, typed, and stapled, have one inch margins all around, be 12 point Times New Roman font, and have a proper heading with your full name, my full name, the full course title and section, date, and a title.

**Grading Checklist**

•You should write an introduction that has a strong hook or captivating opening (i.e., quote, anecdote, or question).

• You should re-read your responses about two different literary works (one text before midterms and one text before finals). You should synthesize your central arguments and main ideas in your responses, but include room for other critical insights that you did not develop deeply.

• You should work on rewriting in a professional tone by removing or revising personal experiences and reflections. Instead, you should focus on social and cultural commentary about the texts for your body and middle paragraphs.

• You should save passages from the texts you enjoyed and used in your journals, yet locate additional passages that further support your critical insights.

• You should explain and analyze why the passages you chose are important. You should support your claims by adding additional topic paragraphs.

• You should include a conclusion that neither summarizes your introduction nor includes topics that you did not discuss in your portfolio. It should focus on wrapping up your portfolio.

• You should revise your portfolio with a close eye on eliminating any grammatical and mechanical errors.

**Citation­­ Guide**

•Remember to include all drafts.

•Remember to include a proper heading.

•Remember to craft a creative title. (i.e., “Portfolio” or “*Stone Butch Blues*” are not creative).

•Remember to do parenthetical references in some type of format. For instance, according to MLA format, all references for *Stone Butch Blues* should have the author and the page from which you are citing in parentheses followed by a period. For instance, “. . .” (Feinberg 56). If “Feinberg” is in a sentence, just write the page number. For instance, Feinberg writes, “. . .” (56).

•Remember a passage that is more than four lines long needs to be indented.

•Remember that periods and commas always go in quotes and that only quotes within quotes have single quotes.

•Remember to do a Works Cited page. No secondary sources are required, but if you wish to use them, you can do so.

For a book, the citation is:

Brady, Evelyn et al. *In the Footsteps of Anne: Stories of Republican Women*

*Ex-Prisoners*. Belfast: Shanway Press, 2011.

For an article in a book, the citation is:

James, Joy. “Framing the Panther: Assata Shakur and Black Female Agency.” *Want to Start a Revolution?: Radical Women in the Black Freedom Struggle*. Ed. David F. Gore, Jeanne Theoharis, and Komozi Woodard. New York: New York University Press, 2009. 138-160.

For a journal article, the citation is:

Butler, Judith. “Critique, Dissent, Disciplinarity.” *Critical Inquiry*. 35.4. (Summer 2009): 773-795.

For a website, the citation is:

Goodman, Amy. “Deportations Continue Despite Review of Immigrants with Family Ties.” *Democracy Now!* 7 June 2012. Headlines. <www.democracynow.org>.