



SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

ENG 192

Gender and Literary Texts

2019-2020

(3 credits)

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ENG 192: Gender & Literary Texts is a regularly-offered 3-credit course on the Syracuse University campus that is cross-listed with WGS 192 (Women & Gender Studies) in the Course Catalog. A university-designated writing-intensive course, it fulfills the College of Arts & Sciences Liberal Arts core curriculum and skills requirement, and thus familiarizes students with the thought processes, structures, and styles associated with writing in the liberal arts.

ENG 192: Gender & Literary Texts explores the “construction and representation of ‘gender,’ especially as it affects the production and reception of literary and other cultural texts. The course foregrounds readers’ interpretive practices, i.e., how we read and make meaning in texts, particularly if we interpret them using the premise that gender is a social construct—rather than a natural, ahistorical “essence” that somehow “expresses” our true “selves.”

To examine the ways in which literature participates in the social reproduction of gender, as well as the difference that gender makes in the production and reception of literary texts, students will practice extensive close reading, evidence-based analysis and argumentation, and independent-inquiry. Raising awareness of how meanings are created through acts of critical reading, students will thus learn to analyze the ways texts construct categories of difference, including differences of gender, race and social class.

Theoretical anchor texts for each unit are required, but literary texts and secondary resources are selected by the course instructor and represent a range of historical periods and cultures. There are three kinds of writing assignments in this class: shorter, prompt-driven close reading responses, responses focused on reading through literary theory, and major essays.

Grades will be based on four things: reading responses, presentation and critical reflection, quizzes and informal writing, and two major essays.

Beyond anchor texts that instructors provide for students, wide latitude is given for choosing the other texts students will read. No “reader” is suggested for the course.