

IED 6/720 British Women Poets
2015-16 Spring
Tentative Course Outline
Assoc.Prof.Dr. Hande Seber

Aim and Contents:

The aim of the course is to study the representative British women poets and their works, their contribution to British literature within the context of social and cultural background.

The course will begin with a discussion of the place of women poets and their works in the canon. Related articles about women's place in life and art, and the place of the women poets in a male poetic tradition will be studied. After the study of the theoretical background, the sample works of the women poets from Classical period and anonymous lyrics/works of the Medieval period written by women will be read and discussed in class along with the condition of women in those times and how they were represented in the predominant literary tradition.

Then representative English/British women poets of the Elizabethan period, 17th, 18th, 19th and 20th centuries and their works will be read and discussed. Each century will be individually studied with particular emphasis on the role of women in life, society and literature. The changing role of women in the society through centuries, and the place of women poets in the male poetic tradition, their choice of subject matter will also be discussed through a comparative study of their works.

Course Outline:

Week I: (11.02.2016)

Some preliminary remarks on the aim, contents and requirements of the course. Then an introductory lecture covering the following topics will be given by the instructor:

- Women poets throughout ages and their place in the canon
- Male and female voices in literature, and in the poetic tradition.
- The muse for the male and female poets
- A comparative study of a selection of poems
- Myths about poetic creativity, and of poets
- Women and women's place in life/society/art in the Classical age.
- A discussion of Sappho's poetry

Week II: (18.02.2016)

Week III: (25.02.2016)

The Middle Ages:

- Women's education and culture in the Old English period and the Middle Ages.
- Women's place in the society, and her representation in the predominant literary tradition.
- Women's writing in the Middle Ages
- Study of some sample texts:

Liandan (Ireland, 7th C.) *Liandan Laments Cuirithir*

Anonymous (Ireland 9th C.) from *The Hag of Beare*

Gormley (Ireland, 10th C.) from *Gormley's Laments*: "T have loved thirty by three..."

Anonymous (Wales, 9th C.) *Eagle of Pengwern*

Anonymous (England 11th C) *Edvacer, Wife's Lament*

Marie de France *Guigemar, Lanval and Yonec*

Week IV: (03.03.2016)

Julien of Norwich From the Short (Carthusian) Version of *A Revelation of Love*

Margery Kempe, from the *Book of Margery Kempe*

Christine de Pisan from *The City of Ladies*

Week V: (10.03.2016)

The Renaissance

- Women's education and culture in the Renaissance
- Women's place in the society, and her representation in the predominant literary tradition.
- Women's writing in the Renaissance

Queen Elizabeth I

"Written with a Diamond on her Window of Woodstock"

"Written on a Wall at Woodstock"

"Written in her French Psalter"

"In Doubt of Future Foes"

"On Monsieur's Departure"

"Now Leave and Let Me Rest"

"When I Was Fair and Young"

Week VI: (17.03.2016)

Lady Mary (Sidney) Herbert, Countess of Pembroke

“To Queen Elizabeth”

“To the Angel Spirit of the Most Excellent Sir Philip Sidney”

“A Dialogue Between Two Shepherds, Thenot and Piers, in Praise of Astraea”

From her *Psalm* translations: 57, 58, 92, 139

Lady Mary Wroth

Sonnets from *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*

Female and Male Voice; a comparative study of Lady Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke’s “The Doleful Lay of Clorinda” and Henry Vaughan’s “Silence, and Stealth of Days”

Week VII: (24.03.2016)

17th Century

- Women’s education and culture in the 17th Century
- Women’s place in the society, and her representation in the predominant literary tradition.
- Women’s writing and the women poets of the 17th Century

Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle

Atomic Poems

“An Excuse for so much writ upon my Verses”

“A Poet I am neither born, nor bred”

“Nature’s Cook”

“Soule, and Body”

“A Woman drest by Age”

“Of the Animal Spirits”

“A Dialogue betwixt the Body and the Mind”

The Description of a New World, Called The Blazing World

Week VIII: (31.03.2016)

Anne Finch, Countess of Winchilsea

“The Introduction”

“Adam Pos’d.”

“On Myself.”

“The Appology.”

“The Bird and the Arras.”

“To Mr. F[inch] Now Earl of W[inchilsea]”

“From the Muses at Parnassus.”

“The Circuit of Apollo”

“Upon Ardelia’s Return Home.”

“To the Nightingale”

“The Spleen”

“A Nocturnal Reverie”

Week IX: (07.04.2016)

18th and 19th Centuries

- Women’s education and culture in the 18th and the early 19th centuries.
- Women’s place in the society, and her representation in the dominating literary tradition.
- Women’s writing and women poets of the 18th and the early 19th centuries.

Letitia Elizabeth Landon

From “The Improvisatrice”

“Love’s Last Lesson”

“Felicia Hemans”

“The Princess Victoria”

“The Poet’s Lot”

“Death in the Flower”

“Experience too Late”

“The Farewell”

Felicia Dorothea Hemans

“The Records of Women”

“Properzia Rossi”

“Indian Woman’s Death Song”

“The Grave of a Poetess”

“Corinne at the Capitol”

“To the Poet Wordsworth”

Week X: (14.04.2016) Mid-Term Exam

Week XI: (21.04.2016)

Week XII: (28.04.2016)

- Women’s education and culture in the Victorian Period
- Women’s place in the society, and her representation in the predominant literary tradition.
- Women’s writing and the women poets of the Victorian Period, poetic theory of the age.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

Sonnets from the Portuguese

Aurora Leigh (with particular emphasis on Books 1 and 5)

“The Deserted Garden”

“The Lost Bower”

“The Dead Pan”

“A Musical Instrument”

“Lord Walter’s Wife”

Christina Rossetti

Goblin Market

Week XIII: (05.05.2016)

20th Century

Rich, Adrienne. “Women’s Poetry” An Introduction to Twentieth -Century Poetry in English. Ed. R.P.Draper. New York: St Martin’s Press,1999.

Related articles from Acheson, James and Romana Huk eds. Contemporary British Poetry: Essays in Theory and Practice. New York: State Univ.of New York Press, 1996.

Edith Sitwell

“Waltz”

“From Façade “Trio for Two Cats and a Trombone,” “Sir Beelzebub”

“Still Falls the Rain”

“The Poet Laments the Coming of Old Age”

Nuala Ni Dhomhnaill

“As For the Quince”

“The Language Issue”

“Miracle Grass”

Caroll Ann Duffy

“Standing Female Nude”

“Psychopath”

“Poet of Our Times”

“Anne Hathaway”

“Warming her Pearls”

Week XIII: (12.05.2016)

Jackie Kay

From “Adoption Papers”

“In My Country”

“In the Red Graveyard”

“So you think I am a mule”

“Self-centre”

“The visit”

Lavinia Greenlaw

“Galileo’s Wife”

“The man Whose Smile Made Medical History”

“The Innocence of Radium”

“From Scattered Blue”

“Hurting Small Animals”

Grace Nichols

“Those Women”

“Tropical Death”

“Abra Cadabra”

“My Northern Sister”

“The Fat Black Woman Remembers”