ENG 316: Women Writers/Forms
Nosey Spinsters & Tough Broads: Women Writers (Re)Invent the Detective

Winter 2015 CRN 26069 MWF 10:00-10:50 a.m.
204 Chapman Hall

Instructor: Dr. Kathleen O'Fallon
Office: 256 PLC Phone: 346-0994 Email: kofallon@uoregon.edu
Office Hours: MWF 11:00-11:50 a.m. and 1:00-1:50 p.m.

Required Texts:

Susan Glaspell "A Jury of Her Peers" (1917)*
Anna Katharine Green The Leavenworth Case (1878)
Wilkie Collins The Woman in White (1860)
Agatha Christie The Murder at the Vicarage (1930)
Dorothy Sayers Strong Poison (1930)
Sara Paretsky Indemnity Only (1982)
Tana French In the Woods (2007)

*A free pdf can be found at this link: http://www1.law.umkc.edu/Academic/Spring2011/assignments/MiniTerm/AJuryofHerPeers.pdf

Course Description:

The names of male writers like Arthur Conan Doyle and Dashiell Hammett have long dominated the study of detective fiction, leaving the significant contributions of women writers to be marginalized and dismissed as formulaic, “cozy” or stylistically uninteresting. This course aims to question assumptions about female detectives and female writers of detective fiction by examining novels by women (and one man) who began defining the conventions of the mystery/detective fiction genre before Sherlock Holmes was created, who challenged established conventions, who created some of the genre’s most memorable detectives, and who refused to be limited by common conceptions of what can be achieved in crime fiction. We will study groundbreaking works by A.K. Green and Wilkie Collins, widely influential works by Agatha Christie and Dorothy Sayers, and contemporary works by Sara Paretsky and Tana French.

Requirements:

1. Regular and prompt attendance.
2. Close reading of all texts, completed by the day the assignment is listed on the schedule.
3. Active participation in class discussion.
4. Four short (3-4 page max) essays on assigned novels.
5. Group presentation on novels not assigned for class. (Details of assignment TBA)

Policy on Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty:
All work submitted in this course must be your own and must be written exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, and paraphrases) must be properly documented. Refer to the summary of the Code of Student Conduct in the Schedule of Classes. In cases where plagiarism has been clearly established, the award of an F for the final course grade is my standard practice. It is simple to discover if a paper has been “borrowed” from the online sources, so don’t underestimate my ability to spot plagiarism. Please talk to me if you have any questions about your use of sources before you turn in something that might be questionable.

Policy on Late Papers and Make-up Exams:
If exigent circumstances cause problems with the due date for the essays, you must discuss this with me BEFORE the deadline so that arrangements can be made. Late work which is not cleared with the instructor prior to the due date will not be accepted.

Policy on Disabilities:
Students with physical or learning disabilities should consult the instructor as soon as possible so accommodations can be made.

Learning Outcomes: The Department’s assessment procedure for the Undergraduate English Major is built around six desired learning outcomes. All assignments for this class are designed to help students achieve one or more of these learning outcomes, and grades will reflect students’ progress toward these goals. These outcomes are:

1. To read literary and cultural texts with discernment and comprehension and with an understanding of their conventions;
2. To draw on relevant cultural and/or historical information to situate texts within their cultural, political, and historical contexts;
3. To perform critical, formal analyses of literary, cinematic, and other cultural texts;
4. To write focused, analytical essays in clear, grammatical prose;
5. To employ logic, creativity, and interpretive skills to produce original, persuasive arguments;
6. To employ primary and/or secondary sources, with proper acknowledgment and citation, as they contribute to a critical essay’s thesis.

Grades:
Each of the following requirements has weight in determining your grade:
✓ Essays (70%)
✓ Attendance and Participation (10%)
✓ Group Presentation and Evaluation (20%)

Attendance and Participation:
Students are expected to be in class, on time, having read the materials assigned for that day and having done any required writing. Assignments are due when class begins. Attendance will be taken every day. It is your responsibility to sign in on the attendance sheet for yourself only. More than three absences will result in a one-half grade penalty in the final course grade. Attending class is a choice you have to make on your own, and that means you have to accept the consequences of that choice.
I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences, except in two cases:
1. Illness so severe and prolonged that a doctor officially excuses you.
2. You are involved in a university-sanctioned activity.
Written proof of these excuses is required, but there is no need to explain your reasons for
other absences. Emailing me that you are going to miss does not excuse you from class.
If you know you are going to miss a class, make advance arrangements with me to
turn in any work that is due and/or to pick up handouts. Ask a classmate to catch you up on
discussion that you will miss.
If you have an unplanned absence, see me as soon as you return to pick up missed
handouts, and ask a classmate for any missed notes. If you have questions about material
discussed while you were gone, come to my office hours. We will have carried on in your
absence, so please don’t be arrogant enough to ask if you missed anything. Of course, you
did.

STUDENTS MUST ALWAYS BRING TEXTS TO CLASS WHEN THEY ARE BEING
DISCUSSED. IT SHOULD GO WITHOUT SAYING THAT WRITING IMPLEMENTS ARE ALSO
REQUIRED.

Students are expected to contribute significantly to discussion, and to do so in a way that shows respect for classmates. Listening carefully is as important as
speaking thoughtfully, so please do not interrupt or wave your hand insistently while
someone else is speaking. All ideas are welcome in this class, but they should be
backed up by evidence from the texts.

To be fully present in the class, you must be focused on the reading and the discussion at
hand. THEREFORE, please turn off and put away all electronic devices before class
begins, unless you are using an e-book for your text. Please do not leave the room
during class unless you have an emergency.

**Statement Regarding Sexual Harassment**

The UO is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and
sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence, and gender-
based stalking. If you or someone you know has experienced or is currently experiencing
gender-based violence (intimate partner violence, attempted or completed sexual assault,
harassment, coercion, stalking, etc.), know that you are not alone. UO has staff members
trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling
services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective
orders, and more.

Please be aware that all OU employees are required reporters. This means that if you tell
me about a situation, I may have to report the information to my supervisor or the Office of
Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity. Although I have to report the situation, you will
still have options about how your case will be handled, including whether or not you wish
to pursue a formal complaint. Our goal is to make sure that you are aware of the range of
the options available to you and that you have access to the resources you need.

If you wish to speak to someone confidentially, you can call 541-346-SAFE, UO’s 24-hour
hotline or visit the website at safe.uoregon.edu.
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