

WS 352
Fall 2008

WOMEN IN LITERATURE
Thursdays, 4:00-6:40 p.m.

LS 365

Dr. Anne Donadey:

Office hours: Mon. 1:00-3:00 p.m.; Th. 7-8 p.m.; and by appointment (tel: 619/594-0815) in 308 EBA (Business Administration, recently renamed Education and Business)

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Description: This general education course in the humanities features contemporary works by writers from the U.S., France, and different parts of Africa. Works were originally written in English or French, and will be read and discussed in English. Issues to be discussed include world feminisms; history, memory, and fiction; writing the self through autobiography; identity formation and (de)colonization; anti-racism struggle; female solidarity, relationships, and language in diverse culturally specific contexts.

Student Learning Goals: Students will develop an appreciation for contemporary world literature by women. They will develop a better understanding of the interconnections between issues of race, class, gender, and colonialism through studying their literary representations. They will better understand and appreciate multiple perspectives and will be able to explain how social location affects a person's view of the world. In addition, students will become better readers of texts by honing their analytical, critical, and interpretative skills. They will also polish their writing skills in order to write a focused and coherent essay that makes an argument.

Courses that fulfill the 9-unit requirement for **Explorations** in General Education take the goals and skills of GE Foundations courses to a more advanced level. Your three upper division courses in Explorations will provide greater interdisciplinary, more complex and in-depth theory, deeper investigation of local problems, and wider awareness of global challenges. More extensive reading, written analysis involving complex comparisons, well-developed arguments, considerable bibliography, and use of technology are appropriate in many Explorations courses.

This is an **Explorations course in the Humanities and Fine Arts**. Completing this course will help you to do the following in greater depth: 1) analyze written, visual, or performed texts in the humanities and fine arts with sensitivity to their diverse cultural contexts and historical moments; 2) describe various aesthetic and other value systems and the ways they are communicated across time and cultures; 3) identify issues in the humanities that have personal and global relevance; 4) demonstrate the ability to approach complex problems and ask complex questions drawing upon knowledge of the humanities.

The learning environment should be accessible to all. If you have a disability and need adaptations or accommodations, please register with Student Disability Services and see me after class or during my office hours so that we can make appropriate arrangements.

SDSU also makes accommodations for religious holidays, provided the student lets the instructor know within the first two weeks of class.

Noisemakers (ringing cell phones, pagers, watches, etc.) will not be tolerated. Do remember to turn them off or set them to vibrate before entering the classroom.

Texts required (all available for purchase at **KB Books** and on 2-hour reserve in the library):

Aidoo, Ama Ata. *Changes: A Love Story* (Ghana, 1991)

Butler, Octavia. *Kindred* (U.S., 1979)

Dangarembga, Tsitsi. *Nervous Conditions* (Zimbabwe, 1988)

Ernaux, Annie. *A Woman's Story* (France, 1987)

Mernissi, Fatima. *Dreams of Trespass* (Morocco, 1994)

One large exam book

Films (screened in class):

Faat Kine (Ousmane Sembene, Senegal, 2000)

Xala (Ousmane Sembene, Senegal, 1973, excerpt)

Islamic Conversations: Women and Islam (with Leila Ahmed, U.S., 1993)

Silences of the Palace (Moufida Tlatli, Tunisia, 1994)

Evaluation: Students will be graded on regular homework assignments (**40%**), in-class activities (**20%**), and a final, in-class paper (**40%**). **There will be no extra credit activities—do not ask!** The Women's Studies Department encourages students to explore the connections between theory and activism by offering students in every course the option to fulfill a percentage of their course requirements through participation in colloquia, student organizations, and/or community events relevant to Women's Studies. Students who choose this option will attend at least **TWO** meetings or events that highlight issues of significance for women, and provide a written reflection on each event, which may include (with the approval of the instructor): departmental colloquia or brown bag lunches, meetings of student organizations, and/or lectures or events sponsored by other departments or organizations in the broader San Diego/Tijuana community. This opportunity will be worth 10% of the final grade (5% for each event and reflection). For students selecting this option, the in-class activities will count for 10% of the final grade. If you are selecting this option for more than one Women's Studies class per semester, you must attend different events and write different reflections for each class. Turning in the same paper for credit in more than one class is considered cheating. **Your two write-ups must be one single-spaced page long and must be turned in no later than two weeks after the event.**

Assignment grading scale:

A: Excellent achievement in both substance and style.

B: Good work overall.

C: Average achievement, or very good achievement in only one area.

D: Below average achievement. Passing at a minimal level.

F: Failure to achieve class goals.

If you miss a class, get class notes from another student. GET THE NAME, PHONE NUMBER, AND E-MAIL ADDRESS OF THREE CLASSMATES NOW:

Students must come to class prepared to actively contribute to the class discussion. As you read each novel before class, take written notes on loose-leaf paper about various aspects of the novel (plot; structure; literary techniques; character development; themes...). Be sure you always come to class with your reading notes, as they will help you with class participation and with preparing for the final paper.

Assignments: written homework will generally be assigned at the end of the previous week's class for the following week. WRITTEN HOMEWORK MUST BE TYPED UP AND SPELL CHECKED OR IT WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. You will be graded down for poor grammar, so make an effort on the form as well as the content of your work. **Late homework will be accepted during the week following the due date with a penalty of two full letter grades. After a week, no late assignments will be accepted.** Students who were absent on the day the homework was assigned are expected to find out from me or other students what the assignment was and come to the next class ready. Students will also complete group in-class activities or take short quizzes (typically in the first five minutes of class). **There will be no make-up quizzes or in-class activities.** However, your lowest homework and class activity scores will be dropped.

Final in-class paper: for your final exam, you will write a paper on a given topic in class. Choices of topics will be given to you on the last day of classes so you can have time to prepare your argument and organize your ideas. You may bring the novels on which you will be writing your paper, as well as a one page outline with a few notes, but not a pre-written paper. I will look over the page of notes and reserve the right to take it away from you if it looks too much like a pre-written paper.

Academic Honesty:

You are free to discuss ideas and strategies for approaching assignments with others, but with the exception of in-class group work, students must complete their own work individually. Using other people's work in any form and passing it off as your own will result in disciplinary action. You must always give credit for ideas from other sources (including the Web), even if you are not citing word for word. The CSU system mandates that faculty report students whom they believe have cheated to the Judicial Procedures Office. In addition to the academic penalty (usually an F for the assignment

or for the course), the Judicial Procedures Office may decide upon additional sanctions such as expulsion.

Conflicts/Issues:

Should you have any concerns about the course, please see me during my office hours or make an appointment and we will try to resolve the problem together. If you are not satisfied with the resolution after having discussed the issue with me, you may contact Dr. Bonnie Kime Scott, Chair of the Women's Studies Department, at bkscott@mail.sdsu.edu or 619/594-6460.

Thinking about a Major or Minor in Women's Studies? The program offers exciting courses, is committed to women's issues and social justice, and is adaptable to your interests and concerns. Women's Studies is not impacted! For more information contact Dr. Irene Lara, A&L 353, tel. (619) 594-7151, lara@mail.sdsu.edu

Syllabus:

You must come to class having done the reading (R) to be discussed in class (D).

	<u>Before class:</u>	<u>In class:</u>
Sept. 4		Introduction and writing activity
Sept. 11	R <i>Kindred</i> 9-107	D <i>Kindred</i>
Sept. 18	R <i>Kindred</i> 108-188	D <i>Kindred</i>
	Last day to complete the SDSU library tutorial on plagiarism at http://infotutor.sdsu.edu/plagiarism/index.cfm and to turn in the printout demonstrating that you took the tutorial and the two tests to the instructor	
Sept. 22	Last day to add, drop, or change grading basis	
Sept. 25	R <i>Kindred</i> 189-264	D <i>Kindred</i>
Oct. 2	R <i>Nervous</i> 1-119	D <i>Nervous Conditions</i>
Oct. 9	R <i>Nervous</i> 120-204	D <i>Nervous Conditions</i>
Oct. 16	R <i>Woman's Story</i> (all)	D <i>Woman's Story</i>
Oct. 23	R <i>Changes</i> 1-79	D <i>Changes</i>
Oct. 30	R <i>Changes</i> 80-166	D <i>Changes</i> View film excerpt, <i>Xala</i>
Nov. 6	View film, <i>Faat Kine</i>	D <i>Faat Kine</i>
Nov. 13	R <i>Dreams</i> 1-122	D <i>Dreams</i>

Bring a large exam book with your name on it

Nov. 20 R *Dreams* 125-242 D *Dreams*
View film, *Islamic Conversations*

Nov. 27 THANKSGIVING—NO CLASS

Dec. 4 View film, *Silences of the Palace*

Dec. 11 D *Silences of the Palace*
Discuss final paper

EXAM: Thursday, December 18, 4:00-6:00 p.m. in LS 365

Bring the novels on which you are writing your paper and your one page outline, which should be typed up double-spaced in a 12-point or larger font with one-inch margins on all sides.