

Course Syllabus - Summer II 1997

ENGLISH 5307M:2
SEMINAR: WOMEN READING AND WRITING THE RURAL WEST

Dr. Barney Nelson
Office Hours: MWF 10-11:00 am
Or by Appointment

Office: Morelock 112
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Texts: Jordan, Teresa. *Riding the White Horse Home: A Western Family Album*
Hasselstrom, Linda. *Going Over East: Reflections of a Woman Rancher*
Stewart, Elinore Pruitt. *Letters of a Woman Homesteader*
Ehrlich, Gretel. *The Solace of Open Spaces*
Blew, Mary Clearman. *All But the Waltz: A Memoir of Five Generations in the Life of a Montana Family*
Cabeza de Baca, Fabiola. *We Fed Them Cactus*
Silko, Leslie Marmon. *Storyteller*
Austin, Mary. *The Land of Little Rain*

Materials: Three-ring loose-leaf notebook, loose-leaf notebook paper, tabbed dividers, two pocket folders, two manila envelopes

Course Objectives:

- # investigate representation of rural women in literature, film, photography, and art
- # compare and contrast possibly conflicting viewpoints through guest speakers, authors, panelists, archival material
- # produce a bibliography of material about rural women
- # discuss literary criticism which is especially illuminating to women and/or rural areas, such as Orientalism, post-colonialism, ecofeminism, ecocriticism, and sense of place
- # become familiar with publishing opportunities for personal essay, memoir, and other forms of self-reflective writing which students may produce
- # become familiar with writing techniques which will enhance publication: framing devices, layering, dialog, sensuality
- # become familiar with problems associated with publishing memoir: gossip, contradictions from or embarrassment to family members, legal responsibilities
- # generate lists and story fragments from which seminar participants may draw for further writing inspiration

Writing Assignments
for ENG 5307M:2 Seminar:
Women Reading and Writing the Rural West

Class Requirements (for a grade of “B”): Graduate students are expected to attend class daily, be prepared to discuss assigned readings, contribute suggestions toward bibliographies, contribute “found items” (xeroxes, photos, clips, etc.), and in general actively participate in exploring the seminar topic.

****40% One Page Reading Response** for each book - due last day each book is discussed

- 1) MLA bibliographic information at the top
- 2) Summary: Brief (1-2 sentence) summary of what the book was about
- 3) Rural Women: Respond to the stereotypes, stories, voice, structure, anything concerning rural women that you notice while reading
- 4) Connections: films, other books, or ideas for your own family stories this book brings to mind

****40% Writing Journal** - due Tues. July 29

- 1) A 3-ring loose-leaf notebook in which you will organize your responses to guests, activities, and films; your writing, ideas, lists, and fragments as part of the daily discussions
- 2) Copies of your contributions to class discussions (xeroxes, etc.) should be included as well

****20% Group Oral Presentation** - Group #1 (7/23); Group #2 (7/24); Group #3 (7/25)

- 1) Using one of the following themes (or one approved by professor): Children’s Literature, Western Film, Rural Schools, Rural Women and Nature;
- 2) Produce a 30 minute project with participation from all group members. Projects can summarize further research, use film clips, posters, activities, readings -- anything the group feels will enhance our understanding of representation of rural women.

Contract for “A”: Those students who desire an “A” in the class will contract with the professor to produce a piece of creative work suitable for publication and actually mailed to a prospective publisher. I will not grade the article, nor does your article have to be published in order to receive an “A” -- it just needs to be sent. You can always “chicken-out” and refuse to publish it later. Deadline schedule:

July 14 - **Contract plus three addresses for possible publication sources.** Student should look through magazines, look at editions of *Writer’s Market*, and find sources which publish the kind of writing the student hopes to produce.

July 16 - **Ideas for artwork.** What do you have or what can you do to illustrate your work?

July 25 - **Rough draft.** Computer typed (see directions for final draft).

July 28 - **Personal appointment with professor to discuss your work.**

Aug. 9 - **Final draft.** Submit in an unsealed manila envelope with address of publisher, postage, and return address in place; include a cover letter, a second self-addressed and postaged manila envelope for return of your materials, a neatly typed (top ½ of first page blank, double spaced, your name on every page) article, illustration material, and typed captions for your illustration material. I will record your A, seal the envelope, and put it in the mail!

Tentative Schedule
English 5307M:2 - Women Reading and Writing the Rural West

Date	Time	Activity
Th 7/10	1:30-2	Syllabus - dialog w/ readings, notebook journal
	2-2:30	PowerPoint on rural women's poetry
	2:30-3	Define good, bad, historic, modern rural woman & you!
	3-3:30	Write: memory list
	3:30-4	Library - peruse art books
	4-4:30	Discuss art books /stereotypes (butcher paper lists)
F 7/11	1:30-2	Discuss We Fed Them Cactus (pg. Due)(esp. ix-31 and 126-178)
	2-2:30	Write: sense of place, detail, foreign words
	2:30-3	Representation of rural women in rural dances - Ballet Folklorico
	3-3:30	Discuss representation of Hispanic women
	3:30-4	Guests - Cornelia and Maria Muzquiz
	4-4:30	

M 7/14	1:30-2	Discuss Letters from a Woman Homesteader (pg. Due)
	2-2:30	video Heartland
	2:30-3	video Heartland
	3-3:30	Discuss differences between book and film, write: belle lettre
	3:30-4	phone conference with Heartland director Annick Smith
	4-4:30	traditional women characters, (A=Contract and sources due)
Tu 7/15	1:30-2	Discuss 1/2 Land of Little Rain (1-30)
	2-2:30	Ecocriticism - relationship w/natural world, write: land description
	2:30-3	Film clips of western women
	3-3:30	Archives - women's art
	3:30-4	Archives - women's letters
	4-4:30	Discuss work hierarchies
W 7/16	1:30-2	Discuss 1/2 Land of Little Rain (30-71)(pg. Due)
	2-2:30	Discuss land as character, animism, women's impermanent art
	2:30-3	Rural Women on Internet
	3-3:30	
	3:30-4	
	4-4:30	(A=ideas for artwork due)
Th 7/17	1:30-2	Discuss 1/2 Storyteller (1-137)
	2-2:30	Library - photos of /by women
	2:30-3	Library - photos of /by women
	3-3:30	Compare art/film/photo representation, write: recall a storyteller
	3:30-4	Guest - Brewster County Judge Val Beard
	4-4:30	
F 7/18	1:30-2	Discuss 1/2 Storyteller (138-278) (pg. Due)

2-2:30
2:30-3 discuss female ethnic representation, Orientalism
3-3:30 Tell/read one of your own stories
3:30-4
4-4:30 Write: bad behavior as humor, irony, paradox

M 7/21 1:30-2 Discuss 1/2 **Solace of Open Spaces** (1-61)
2-2:30 Write: experiment with layering of themes - Holidays
2:30-3 Ecofeminism - women closer to nature?
3-3:30 (tape of Ehrlich reading)
3:30-4 Panel - Educated & Prof. Rural Women - K.Dawn Glover
(teacher), Janet Greathouse (vet), Christy Dillard
(newspaper photographer)
4-4:30

Tu 7/22 1:30-2 Discuss 1/2 **Solace of Open Spaces** (62-131)(pg. Due)
2-2:30 Discuss ecoporn
2:30-3 Write: erotic, sensual, body
3-3:30
3:30-4 Guests: Kristen Lacy Cavness, Carla Spencer, Carol Woodward
4-4:30

W 7/23 1:30-2 Discuss 1/2 **Riding the White Horse Home** (1-88)
2-2:30 Stegner's letter to mother, describe your mother
2:30-3 (tape of Teresa reading)
3-3:30
3:30-4
4-4:30 Group #1 presentation

Th 7/24 1:30-2 Discuss 1/2 **Riding the White Horse Home** (91-207)(pg. Due)
2-2:30 Experience for sake of story?
2:30-3 video - "Cowgirls"
3-3:30 Telephone conference with Teresa Jordan
3:30-4
4-4:30 Group #2 presentation

F 7/25 1:30-2 Discuss 1/2 **Going Over East** (1-105)
2-2:30 Experiment with framing devices, draw a map w/stories in place
2:30-3 Tape of Sense of Place
3-3:30 Telephone conference with Linda Hasselstrom
3:30-4
4-4:30 Group #3 presentation (A=rough draft due)

M 7/28 1:30-2 Discuss 1/2 **Going Over East** (109-200)(pg. Due); 1/2 **All But the**

Waltz (1-99)

2-2:30 Marxist criticism, class divisions
2:30-3 (A=Personal appointments w/prof)
3-3:30 (A=Personal appointments w/prof)
3:30-4 (A=Personal appointments w/prof)
4-4:30 (A=Personal appointments w/prof)

Tue 7/29 1:30-2 Discuss ½ **All But the Waltz** (103-223)(pg. Due)
2-2:30 Video one-room school VRT-610 (16 min)
2:30-3 experiment with dialog, verbs, title
3-3:30 Telephone conference with Mary Clearman Blew
3:30-4
4-4:30 Closing discussion for class (class journals due)

Sat 8/9 1:30-2 Field trip to a Woman's Ranch: Barbara Saunders, Marfa
2-2:30
2:30-3
3-3:30
3:30-4
4-4:30 (A=Articles ready to mail to publisher due)