Course Title: African Women Speak
Course Number: V29.9666.001
Instructor: SUTHERLAND, Esi
Activity Type: Lecture
Credit Hours: 4
Semester: Fall & Spring

NOTE: this course is open to all students for elective credit. Comparative Literature majors in Track II (Literary and Cultural Studies) may count this course toward one of their non-core major requirements.

Course Description:
This course shall focus on the place of women in the literary tradition, an issue that is very current in the discourse on the literature of Africa and its Diaspora. Women writers have emerged at the forefront of the movement to restore African women to their proper place in the study of African history, society and culture.

In this process, the need to recognize the women as literary artists in the oral mode has also been highlighted. Furthermore, the work of women writers is gaining increasing significance and deserves to be examined within the context of canon formation. Authors and texts, focusing on such topics as the heritage of women’s literature, images of women in the works of male writers; women in traditional and contemporary society; women and the African family in the literary tradition; literature as a tool for self-definition and self-liberation; African women writers; female expressions of cultural nationalism in the Caribbean; female novelists of the African continent; Black women dramatists; the poetry of African women.

Requirements:
Students will be required to have a thorough familiarity with assigned reading. They will also be expected to prepare a 10-15 page research paper which will be presented in class. There will be a final examination.

Course Outline:

Week 1. Being African and Being Woman – distilling the experience
   • Alice Walker; *In Search of Our Mother's Garden*
   • Ama Ata Aidoo; “The African Woman Today”
   • Christine Oppong (Ed); *Female and Male in West Africa*

Week 2. Feminism – The theoretical foundations.
   • Beverly Guy-Sheftall (Ed). *Words of Fire : An Anthology of African American Feminist Thought*
   • Ifi Amadiume; *Male Daughters, Female Husbands, Sex and Gender in African Society.*
Week 3. African Women’s Literary Culture through the Ages.
• Stephanie Newell; *The Literary Culture of Colonial Ghana*
• Charlotte H. Bruner; *Unwinding Threads*
• Margaret Busby; *Daughters of Africa*
• M. J. Daymond etal.(Eds.); *Women Writing Africa- The Southern Region.*

Week 4. African Women’s Literary Culture through the Ages, cont.
• Selected oral texts
• Paule Marshall; *Praise song for the Widow*

Week 5. The encounter with Europe and the Literary world of the African Woman.
• Women’s Studies Quarterly Volume XXV. No. 3 & 4, Fall/Winter 1997
• M. J. Daymond etal (Eds) *Women Writing Africa- The Southern Region.*
  Sheila S. Walker (Ed) *African Roots/American Cultures*

Week 6. Nationalism in the writing of African Women
• Stephanie Newell; *The Literary Culture of Colonial Ghana*
• Esi Sutherland-Addy, Aminata Diaw; *Women Writing Africa, West Africa and the Sahel*
• Mabel Dove Danquah; *The Torn Veil and other stories.*

Week 7. The Poetic Impulse
• Karin Barber; *I Could Speak Until Tomorrow*
• Kwabena Nketia; *Funeral Dirges of the Akan People*
• Selected texts by Catherine Acholonu, Tanella Boni, Abena Busia

Week 8. African Women and the Narrative Culture
• Harold Scheub, *The Xhosa Ntsomi*
• Christiane Owusu Sarpong (ed), *A Trilingual Anthology of Akan Folktales Vols I andII*

Week 9. Selection of Prose Works
• Gordimer; Dangarembga, Bessie Head, Tsitsi Mariama, Zora Neal Huston, Alice Walker, Toni Morrison, Jamaica Kincaid
• Oladele Taiwa, *Female Novelists of Modern Africa*
• Charlotte H. Brunner (Ed) Unwinding *Threads. Writing By Women in Africa*

Week 10. Women’s Drama and Theatre.
• Efua Sutherland, *Edufa and The Marriage of Anansewa*
• Ama Ata Aidoo, *Anowa*
• Zulu Sofola, *Wedlock of the Gods*
Gay Wilentz; Binding Cultures

African Theatre (3) Women In African Theatre

Weeks 11 and 12. Presentation of Research Papers

Week 13 & 14. Revision & Final Exam

Further Reading


Amadiume, Ifi. 1987 Male Daughters and Female Husbands: Gender and Sex in an African Society; London, Zed Books ltd:


Bame, Kwabena N. Profiles in African Traditional Popular Culture: Consensus and Conflict. New York: Clear Type Press Inc.


Stella and Frank Chipasula (Eds.). 1995. African Women’s Poetry. Ibadan:


Maryland:

Rowman Littlefield publishers, Inc

marital Loneliness and Intimacy” in *Sage*, Vol. VI, No. 1


