

FYSE 114: Reading the Female Gothic

Fall 2021

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Office Hours: W/Th 3:00-4:30

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Mystery, fear, obsession, and romance mark the genre of Gothic fiction, a tradition that women have long been involved in—as authors, characters, and readers. This class focuses on how women helped create, develop, and revise the Gothic genre, often adding gender considerations to more traditional Gothic elements. We'll explore themes of dangerous fathers and absent mothers, domestic entrapment within patriarchal societies, repressed female sexuality, and transgressive behavior among women. We'll also examine issues of intersectionality and race, exploring how women writers of color have adopted the Gothic tradition as their own. The authors we read will range from Mary Shelley and Jane Austen to more contemporary writers such as Shirley Jackson, Joyce Carol Oates, and Toni Morrison.

BOOKS

- *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley
- *Northanger Abbey* by Jane Austen
- *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë
- *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* by Shirley Jackson
- *Beloved* by Toni Morrison

COURSEWORK

Required work for the course includes careful reading of all assigned material and active participation in class discussions. Please come to class prepared with questions and comments about the assigned reading for each day—the success of the course depends on your involvement.

Papers and Exams: You will write two short papers involving some research for the course. Paper 1 involves defining the Gothic. Paper 2 asks you to research the criticism of a specific novel and present your findings to class. I'll give you more information about these papers well in advance of their due dates.

Project: The final project in the class involves your own creative response to the Female Gothic. You may choose to write your own Gothic short story or poem; you may create a blogsite; you may make a short video or a game; or you may choose some other project of your own design.

Blog: For every day that we have assigned readings in the course, students may post a response on our class blog. I will provide a prompt for each of these days to get you started thinking. You may respond to the prompt if you like, but you may also respond to other students' comments, or to anything else that interests you in the reading. Blog posts must be at least 150 words to receive full credit for the day, and they must be posted **before** 11:00

a.m. on the day they're due. Blog posts will not receive letter grades, but you will receive credit for the number of comments you post, with 15 posts throughout the semester equaling 100%.

Exams: There will be a Mid-Term and a Final Exam in the class. We'll talk in more detail about the exams before they're scheduled.

Synthesis Seminar: Attendance, participation, and completion of models in your linked synthesis seminar are required.

GRADING

Your final grade will be determined according to these percentages:

Letter grades assigned will have the following numerical values:

Class Blog	15%	A+/98	B+/88	C+/78	D+/68
Paper 1	10%	A /95	B /85	C /75	D /65
Paper 2	15%	A- /92	B- /82	C- /72	D- /62
Presentation	5%				
Creative Project	15%	F = 50	Paper not turned in = 0		
Mid-Term Exam	15%				
Final Exam	15%				
Synthesis Seminar	10%				

LATE PAPERS

Late papers will be penalized five points for each day or fraction of a day they are late. Late outlines, peer comments, and blog posts will not be accepted. Failure to turn in a complete draft on time will result in ten points automatically being subtracted from final versions of papers.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All work submitted must be your own. You may discuss writing assignments and prepare for tests with your classmates (in fact, I strongly **encourage** you to do so), but all that you write should be yours. Incorporating others' words or ideas in your essays without proper acknowledgment, or any other form of academic dishonesty, will result in an "F" for the entire course.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The college will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. Students should apply for services at the Center for Disability Services/SNAP. Students approved for accommodations are responsible for notifying me as soon as possible and for contacting me one week before accommodation is needed.

FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the completion of the First-Year Experience, a student will be able to:

- *use appropriate tools and search strategies for identifying particular types of information specific to the discipline*
- *evaluate the relevance, quality, and appropriateness of different sources of information*

- recognize and classify the information contained within a bibliographic citation.
- access and use information ethically and legally

Faculty will use writing, speech, or media in innovative ways to achieve integrative learning by students. By the completion of the first year, a student will be able to:

- Use appropriate critical thinking skills and problem-solving techniques in appropriate disciplinary contexts
- Make connections across disciplines and/or relevant experiences

COURSE READING SCHEDULE

Read all assignments before coming to class on the dates below. Some of the course readings are available on the class website.

Week 1:

Tu August 24

- Course Introduction

Th August 26

- Background readings on the Female Gothic (Moers, Milbank) **(Class website)**
- Excerpts from *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (Vol. 1, Chs. 1-4) **(Class website)**

Week 2:

Tu August 31

- Excerpts from *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (Vol 2, Chs. 5-10; Vol. 3, Chs. 1-6) **(Class website)**
- Discuss Paper 1

Th Sept. 2

- *Northanger Abbey* (Chapters 1-10)

Week 3:

Tu Sept. 7

- **Paper 1 Due**
- Discuss Paper 2
- *Northanger Abbey* (Chapters 11-21)

Th Sept. 9

- *Northanger Abbey* (Chapters 22-31)

Week 4:

Tu Sept. 14

- **Presentations/Paper 2 Due** (those working on Austen)

Th Sept. 16

- *Frankenstein*, (Author's Introduction – Chapter 6)

Week 5:

Tu Sept. 21

- *Frankenstein*, (Chapters 7 - 21)

Th Sept. 23

- *Frankenstein*, (Chapters 22 – end)

Week 6:

Tu Sept. 28

- **Presentations/Paper 2 Due** (those working on Shelley)

Th Sept. 30

- *Jane Eyre* (Chapters 1 – 9)

Week 7:

Tu Oct. 5

- *Jane Eyre* (Chapters 10 – 19)

Th Oct. 7

- *Jane Eyre* (Chapters 20 – 26)

Week 8:

Tu Oct. 12

- *Jane Eyre* (finish book)

Th Oct. 14

- **Presentations/Paper 2 Due** (those working on Brontë)

Week 9:

Tu Oct. 19

- **Fall Break**

Th Oct. 21

- **Mid-Term Exam**

Week 10:

Tu Oct. 26

- Charlotte Perkins Gilman, “The Yellow Wallpaper” (**Class Website**)

Th Oct. 28

- *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, (Chapters 1 – 4)

Week 11:

Tu Nov. 2

- *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, (Chapters 5 – 8)

Th Nov. 4

- *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, (finish book)

Week 12:

Tu Nov. 9

- **Presentations/Paper 2 Due** (those working on Jackson)

Th Nov. 11

- *Beloved* (Part I)

Week 13:

Tu Nov. 16

- *Beloved* (Part II)

Th Nov. 18

- *Beloved* (Part III)

Week 14:

Tu Nov.23

- **Presentations/Paper 2 Due** (those working on Morrison)

Th Nov. 25

- **Thanksgiving**

Week 15:

Tu Nov. 30

- Flanner O'Connor, "A Good Man is Hard to Find" (**Class Website**)
- Joyce Carol Oates, "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been" (**Class Website**)

Th Dec. 2

- **Last Day of Class**—wrap up short stories; discuss final exam
- **Creative Projects Due**

Final Exam: Monday, December 13, 1:00-3:00 p.m.