

A survey of modernist fiction and poetry by women, this course is based on a contestatory critique of traditional views of modernism as a male field. Relying on critical and theoretical work recently shored up, we shall reconfigure modernism as a sphere accommodating both genders -- together with representatives of racial and sexual "Others." We will explore the female Bildungsroman and Künstlerroman (Kate Chopin, Edith Wharton, Willa Cather, Nella Larsen, Zora Neale Hurston, H.D.), the various narrative constructions of black and white femininity (Nella Larsen, Zora Neale Hurston), experimental writing (Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Gertrude Stein, Djuna Barnes, H.D.), lesbian modernism (Gertrude Stein, Djuna Barnes, H.D.), and the female poetic traditions (Gertrude Stein, H.D., Mina Loy, Marianne Moore, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Laura [Riding] Jackson, Elizabeth Bishop, Muriel Rukeyser). We will also investigate how the critical and publishing establishments were imbued with the rhetoric of gender hierarchies. The required readings have been collected in a PACKET (available in Student Service).

Class requirements: preparation, attendance, participation. Grades will be based on (i) class performance, (ii) midterm and final tests, and (iii) one final seminar paper.

Syllabus

1. Women modernists

- Introductory readings:
 - Elaine Showalter, "The Other Lost Generation"
 - Karla Jay, "Lesbian Modernism"
 - Sandra M. Gilbert, "Costumes of the Mind: Transvestism as Metaphor in Modern Literature"
 - Rachel Blau DuPlessis, "Breaking the Sentence; Breaking the Sequence"
 - Steven Watson, *Strange Bedfellows. The First American Avant-Garde*

2. The female *Bildungsroman* & *Künstlerroman*

- Background reading:
 - Rachel Blau DuPlessis, "To 'bear my mother's name': *Künstlerromane* by Women Writers"
- Kate Chopin, *The Awakening* (1899)
 - Elaine Showalter, "*The Awakening*: Tradition and Talent"
 - Linda Huf, "*The Awakening* (1899): Kate Chopin's Crimes Against Polite Society"
- Edith Wharton, *The House of Mirth* (1905), *The Summer* (1917)
 - Elaine Showalter, "The Death of the Lady (Novelist): Wharton's *House of Mirth*"
 - Sandra M. Gilbert & Susan Gubar, "Angel of Devastation: Edith Wharton on the Arts of the Enslaved"

- Willa Cather, *My Ántonia* (1918)
 - Sandra M. Gilbert & Susan Gubar, "Lighting Out for the Territories: Willa Cather's Lost Horizons"
 - Judith Butler, "'Dangerous Crossing': Willa Cather's Masculine Names"
- H.D., *Palimpsest* (1926)
- Nella Larsen, *Quicksand* (1928), *Passing* (1929)
 - Judith Butler, "Passing, Queering: Nella Larsen's Psychoanalytic Challenge"
- Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937)

3. Experimental Modernism

- Introductory readings:
 - Shari Benstock, "Women of the Left Bank"
 - Ellen G. Friedman & Miriam Fuchs, "Contexts and Continuities: An Introduction to Women's Experimental Fiction in English"
- Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "The Yellow Wallpaper" (1892)
 - Paula A. Treichler, "Escaping the Sentence: Diagnosis and Discourse in 'The Yellow Wallpaper'"
- Gertrude Stein, *Three Lives*, *The Making of Americans*
 - Shari Benstock, "Beyond the Reaches of Feminist Criticism. A Letter from Paris"
 - Shari Benstock, "Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas: Rue de Fleurus"
 - Stephen-Paul Martin, "Gertrude Stein: The Reembodied Word"
 - Julia Kristeva, "Revolution in Poetic Language: The Semiotic and the Symbolic"
- Djuna Barnes, *Nightwood*
 - Joseph Frank, "Djuna Barnes, *Nightwood*"
 - Shari Benstock, "Djuna Barnes: Rue St.-Romain"
 - Stephen-Paul Martin, "Djuna Barnes: The Non-Temporal Novel"
 - Donna Gerstenberger, "The Radical Narrative of Djuna Barnes's *Nightwood*"
- H.D., *HERmione*, *The Gift*
 - Shari Benstock, "H.D. and Bryher: *En passant*"
 - Linda W. Wagner-Martin, "H.D.'s Fiction: Convolutions to Clarity"

4. Women poets

- Introductory readings:
 - + Josephine Donovan, "Toward a Women's Poetics"
 - + Susan Stanford Friedman, "When a 'Long' Poem Is a 'Big' Poem: Self-Authorizing Strategies in Women's Twentieth-Century 'Long Poems'"
- Gertrude Stein, *Tender Buttons*

- Marjorie Perloff, "A Fine New Kind of Realism': Six Stein Styles in Search of a Reader"
- Mina Loy, "Gertrude Stein"
- Marianne DeKoven, "Breaking the Rigid Form of the Noun: Stein, Pound, Whitman, and Modernist Poetry"
- H.D., "Oread," "Orchard," "Eurydice," "Hermes of the Ways," "Hyacinth," "Toward the Piraeus," "The Charioteer," "Red Roses for Bronze"
 - + Cyrena N. Pondrom, "H.D. and the Origins of Imagism"
 - Cassandra Laity, "H.D., Modernism, and the Transgressive Sexualities of Decadent-Romantic Platonism"
 - Cassandra Laity, "H.D. and A.C. Swinburne: Decadence and Women's Poetic Modernism"
 - Rachel Blau DuPlessis, "Romantic Thralldom and 'Subtle Geneologies' in H.D."
- Mina Loy, "Aphorisms on Futurism," "The Ineffectual Marriage," "Joyce's Ulysses," "Brancusi's Golden Bird," "Love Songs," "Costa Magic"
 - Carolyn Burke, "Mina Loy"
- Poetry of Marianne Moore, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Laura (Riding) Jackson, Elizabeth Bishop, Muriel Rukeyser (Norton anthology)

SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS

September 14

- Introductory lecture:
 - Elaine Showalter, "The Other Lost Generation"
 - Karla Jay, "Lesbian Modernism"
 - Sandra M. Gilbert, "Costumes of the Mind: Transvestism as Metaphor in Modern Literature"
 - Rachel Blau DuPlessis, "Breaking the Sentence; Breaking the Sequence"
 - Steven Watson, *Strange Bedfellows. The First American Avant-Garde*

September 21

- Kate Chopin, *The Awakening* (1899)
 - Rachel Blau DuPlessis, "To 'bear my mother's name': *Künstlerromane* by Women Writers"
 - Elaine Showalter, "*The Awakening*: Tradition and Talent"
 - Linda Huf, "*The Awakening* (1899): Kate Chopin's Crimes Against Polite Society"

September 29

- Edith Wharton, *The House of Mirth* (1905) [optional], *The Summer* (1917)
 - Elaine Showalter, "The Death of the Lady (Novelist): Wharton's *House of Mirth*"
 - Sandra M. Gilbert & Susan Gubar, "Angel of Devastation: Edith Wharton on the Arts of the Enslaved"

October 5

Please check the libraries and try to read one of these novels/books + the relevant essay(s).

- Willa Cather, *My Ántonia* (1918)
 - Sandra M. Gilbert & Susan Gubar, "Lighting Out for the Territories: Willa Cather's Lost Horizons"
 - Judith Butler, "'Dangerous Crossing': Willa Cather's Masculine Names"
- H.D., *Palimpsest* (1926)
- Nella Larsen, *Quicksand* (1928), *Passing* (1929)
 - Judith Butler, "Passing, Queering: Nella Larsen's Psychoanalytic Challenge"
- Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937)

October 12

- Introductory readings:
 - Shari Benstock, "Women of the Left Bank"
 - Ellen G. Friedman & Miriam Fuchs, "Contexts and Continuities: An Introduction to Women's Experimental Fiction in English"
- Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "The Yellow Wallpaper" (1892)
 - Paula A. Treichler, "Escaping the Sentence: Diagnosis and Discourse in 'The Yellow Wallpaper'"

October 19

- Gertrude Stein, *Three Lives* [available in Hungarian], *The Making of Americans*
 - Shari Benstock, "Beyond the Reaches of Feminist Criticism. A Letter from Paris"
 - Shari Benstock, "Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas: Rue de Fleurus"
 - Stephen-Paul Martin, "Gertrude Stein: The Reembodied Word"
 - Julia Kristeva, "Revolution in Poetic Language: The Semiotic and the Symbolic"

October 26

MIDTERM TEST

November 2

Reading week.

November 9

- Djuna Barnes, *Nightwood* (Copies of *Nightwood* will be probably very difficult to locate ; ask Szilvia about the availability of the Hungarian translation.)
 - Joseph Frank, "Djuna Barnes, *Nightwood*"
 - Shari Benstock, "Djuna Barnes: Rue St.-Romain"
 - Stephen-Paul Martin, "Djuna Barnes: The Non-Temporal Novel"
 - Donna Gerstenberger, "The Radical Narrative of Djuna Barnes's *Nightwood*"

November 16

- H.D., *HERmione, The Gift* (Probably no copies available; in any case, please read the critical essays.)
 - Shari Benstock, "H.D. and Bryher: *En passant*"
 - Linda W. Wagner-Martin, "H.D.'s Fiction: Convolutions to Clarity"

November 23

+ intro readings?

- Gertrude Stein, *Tender Buttons*
 - Marjorie Perloff, "'A Fine New Kind of Realism': Six Stein Styles in Search of a Reader"
 - Mina Loy, "Gertrude Stein"
 - Marianne DeKoven, "Breaking the Rigid Form of the Noun: Stein, Pound, Whitman, and Modernist Poetry"

November 30

- H.D., "Hyacinth," "Toward the Piraeus," "The Charioteer," "Red Roses for Bronze"
 - Cassandra Laity, "H.D., Modernism, and the Transgressive Sexualities of Decadent-Romantic Platonism"
 - Cassandra Laity, "H.D. and A.C. Swinburne: Decadence and Women's Poetic Modernism"
 - Rachel Blau DuPlessis, "Romantic Thralldom and 'Subtle Geneologies' in H.D."

December 7

- Mina Loy, "Aphorisms on Futurism," "The Ineffectual Marriage," "Joyce's Ulysses," "Brancusi's Golden Bird," "Love Songs," "Costa Magic"
 - Carolyn Burke, "Mina Loy"
- Poetry of Marianne Moore, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Laura (Riding) Jackson,

Elizabeth Bishop, Muriel Rukeyser (Norton anthology)

December 15: FINAL TEST

January 10: SEMINAR PAPER DUE.

Your paper should be an issue paper developing one of the issues we discussed in class.

You can also write on one particular author but -- again -- from the point of view of a specific issue (like race, gender, sexuality, experimentation, *Bildung*, ect.). You are expected to use (argue with, refer to, quote from) at least six of the essays on our reading list.

Length: b. 15,000-20,000 ch.

PACKET OF READINGS

1. Elaine Showalter, "The Other Lost Generation" (Sister's Choice: Tradition and Change in American Women's Writing. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991)
2. Karla Jay, "Lesbian Modernism" (Professions of Desire, ed. George E. Haggerty & Bonnie Zimmermann. MLA, 1995)
3. Sandra M. Gilbert, "Costumes of the Mind: Transvestism as Metaphor in Modern Literature" (Writing and Sexual Difference, ed. Elizabeth Abel. U of Chicago P, 1982)
4. Rachel Blau DuPlessis, "Breaking the Sentence; Breaking the Sequence" (Writing Beyond the Ending. Narrative Strategies of Twentieth-Century Women Writers. Indiana UP, 1985)
5. Rachel Blau DuPlessis, "To 'bear my mother's name': Künstlerromane by Women Writers" (Writing Beyond the Ending. Narrative Strategies of Twentieth-Century Women Writers. Indiana UP, 1985)
6. Elaine Showalter, The Awakening: Tradition and Talent (Sister's Choice: Tradition and Change in American Women's Writing. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991)
7. Linda Huf, "The Awakening (1899): Kate Chopin's Crimes Against Polite Society" (A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Woman. The Writer as Heroine in American Literature. New York: Frederick Ungar, 1983)
8. Elaine Showalter, "The Death of the Lady (Novelist): Wharton's House of Mirth (Sister's Choice: Tradition and Change in American Women's Writing. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991)
9. Sandra M. Gilbert & Susan Gubar, "Angel of Devastation: Edith Wharton on the Arts of the Enslaved" (No Man's Land. The Place of the Woman Writer in the Twentieth Century, vol. 2. Yale UP, 1989)

10. Sandra M. Gilbert & Susan Gubar, "Lighting Out for the Territories: Willa Cather's Lost Horizons" (No Man's Land. The Place of the Woman Writer in the Twentieth Century, vol. 2. Yale UP, 1989)
11. Judith Butler, "'Dangerous Crossing': Willa Cather's Masculine Names" (Bodies That Matter. New York: Routledge, 1993)
12. Judith Butler, "Passing, Queering: Nella Larsen's Psychoanalytic Challenge" (Bodies That Matter. New York: Routledge, 1993)
13. Shari Benstock, "Women of the Left Bank" (Women of the Left Bank. Paris, 1900-1940, U of Texas P, 1986)
14. Ellen G. Friedman & Miriam Fuchs, "Contexts and Continuities: An Introduction to Women's Experimental Fiction in English" (Breaking the Sequence. Women's Experimental Fiction, ed. Friedman & Fuchs. Princeton UP, 1989)
15. Paula A. Treichler, "Escaping the Sentence: Diagnosis and Discourse in 'The Yellow Wallpaper'" (Feminist Issues in Literary Scholarship, ed. Shari Benstock. Indiana UP, 1987)
16. Shari Benstock, "Beyond the Reaches of Feminist Criticism. A Letter from Paris" (Feminist Issues in Literary Scholarship, ed. Shari Benstock. Indiana UP, 1987)
17. Shari Benstock, "Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas: Rue de Fleurus" (Women of the Left Bank. Paris, 1900-1940. U of Texas P, 1986)
18. Stephen-Paul Martin, "Gertrude Stein: The Reembodied Word" (Open Form and the Female Imagination. Washington, D.C.: Maisonneuve Press, 1988)
19. Julia Kristeva, "Revolution in Poetic Language: The Semiotic and the Symbolic" (The Kristeva Reader, ed. Toril Moi. Columbia UP, 1986)
20. Joseph Frank, "Djuna Barnes, Nightwood (The Widening Gyre. Crisis and Mastery in Modern Literature. Indiana UP. 1963)
21. Shari Benstock, "Djuna Barnes: Rue St.-Romain" (Women of the Left Bank. Paris, 1900-1940, U of Texas P, 1986)
22. Stephen-Paul Martin, "Djuna Barnes: The Non-Temporal Novel (Open Form and the Female Imagination. Washington, D.C.: Maisonneuve Press, 1988)
23. Donna Gerstenberger, "The Radical Narrative of Djuna Barnes's Nightwood (Breaking the Sequence. Women's Experimental Fiction, ed. Ellen G. Friedman & Miriam Fuchs. Princeton UP, 1989)
24. Shari Benstock, "H.D. and Bryher: En passant" (Women of the Left Bank. Paris, 1900-1940. U of Texas P, 1986)
25. Linda W. Wagner-Martin, "H.D.'s Fiction: Convolutions to Clarity" (Breaking the Sequence. Women's Experimental Fiction, ed. Ellen G. Friedman & Miriam Fuchs. Princeton UP, 1989)

- + Josephine Donovan, "Toward a Women's Poetics" (Feminist Issues in Literary Scholarship, ed. Shari Benstock. Indiana UP, 1987)
- + Susan Stanford Friedman, "When a 'Long' Poem Is a 'Big' Poem: Self-Authorizing Strategies in Women's Twentieth-Century 'Long Poems'" (Dwelling in Possibility. Women Poets and Critics on Poetry, ed. Yopie Prins & Maera Shreiber. Cornell UP, 1997)
26. Marjorie Perloff, "A Fine New Kind of Realism': Six Stein Styles in Search of a Reader" (Poetic License. Essays on Modernist and Postmodernist Lyric. Northwestern UP, 1990)
27. Mina Loy, "Gertrude Stein" (The Gender of Modernism. A Critical Anthology, ed. Bonnie Kime Scott. Indiana UP, 1990)
28. Marianne DeKoven, "Breaking the Rigid Form of the Noun: Stein, Pound, Whitman, and Modernist Poetry" (Critical Essays on American Modernism, ed. Michael J. Hoffman & Patrick D. Murphy. New York: G.K. Hall, 1992)
29. H.D., "Oread," "Orchard," "Eurydice," "Hermes of the Ways," "Hyacinth," "Toward the Pyraeus," "The Charioteer," "Red Roses for Bronze"
- + Cyrena N. Pondrom, "H.D. and the Origins of Imagism" (Signets. Reading H.D., ed. Susan Stanford Friedman and Rachel Blau DuPlessis, U of Wisconsin Press, 1990)
30. Cassandra Laity, "H.D., Modernism, and the Transgressive Sexualities of Decadent-Romantic Platonism" (Gendered Modernisms. American Women Poets and Their Readers, ed. Margaret Dickies & Thomas Travisano. U of Pennsylvania P, 1996)
31. Cassandra Laity, "H.D. and A.C. Swinburne: Decadence and Women's Poetic Modernism" (Critical Essays on American Modernism, ed. Michael J. Hoffman & Patrick D. Murphy. New York: G.K. Hall, 1992)
32. Rachel Blau DuPlessis, "Romantic Thralldom and 'Subtle Geneologies' in H.D." (Writing Beyond the Ending. Narrative Strategies of Twentieth-Century Women Writers. Indiana UP, 1985)
33. Mina Loy, "Aphorisms on Futurism," "The Ineffectual Marriage," "Joyce's Ulysses," "Brancusi's Golden Bird," "Love Songs," "Costa Magic"
34. Carolyn Burke, "Mina Loy" (The Gender of Modernism. A Critical Anthology, ed. Bonnie Kime Scott. Indiana UP, 1990)