

Women In Literature

Focus: Genre Studies: Interrupting the Historical Narrative
Faculty Advisors: Dr. Lane Clarke and Dr. Jennifer Tuttle

Key Question(s): How do these authors disrupt our understanding of the historical narrative? What aspects of form and genre do they employ?

How do these authors utilize genre to insert themselves into the cultural dialogue of gender roles? How did their "disruptions" alter the understanding of is
How does learning about this author disrupt your understanding of the historical context

Pamphlet - Rachel Speght

Primary Text: *A Mouzell for Melastomus, the Cynicall Bayter of, and Foule Mouthed Barker against Eva's Sex*

Supplementary Text(s):

- *Arraignment of Lewd, Idle, Forward, and Unconstant Women* by Joseph Swetnam (Thomas Tell-Troth)
- Public reactions to Swetnam and Speght

Supplementary/Secondary Sources for Educators:

- <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uneedu/reader.action?docID=3030559&c=UERG&ppg=141>
- <https://www.proquest.com/docview/1685862693?pq-origsite=primo&searchKeywords=rachel%20speght&sourcetype=Scholarly%20journals>

Topics:

- Pen names
- The invention of the printing press
 - Imagining what it was like to live in a time where widespread access to information was not prominent
 - Impact of pamphlet - the effort that went into its circulation
 - What were pamphlet wars? Why were they a thing? Importance?
- Why is it important to consider gender when considering the time period that this was written?
 - Women insisting on being in the historical narrative despite the demonization they faced by cultural gender expectations

Play - Susan Glaspell

Primary Text: "Trifles"

Supplementary Text(s):

- TBD or n/a

Supplementary/Secondary Sources for Educators:

Commented [1]: intervening/inserting themselves into the cultural dialogue of gender roles and the true lives of women

Disrupting their understanding in their own cultural times
- Why? Why did they take up the pen and why did they choose the genre they used to achieve that goal?
- what difference would it have made if this author utilized a different genre?

How does that change what students think they know about women writers/literary history?

Commented [2]: what did they achieve and how did they get that

Commented [3]: what active choices are the writers making and how does that help them achieve their goals

Commented [4]: backward planning of the summative that should answer these questions

Commented [5]: (aka to be reworded)

Commented [6]: Find excerpt(s)

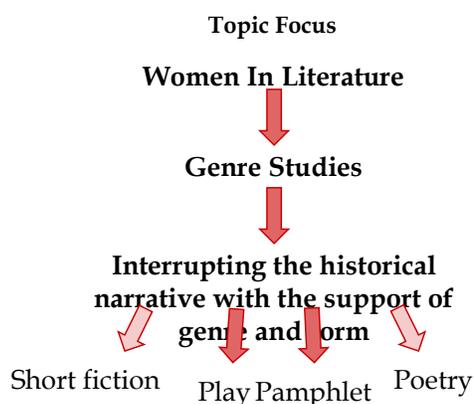
Commented [7]: To be reviewed

- <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uneedu/reader.action?docID=4844190&c=UERG&ppg=109>

Commented [8]: To be reviewed

Topics:

- Gender Hierarchy & Social biases of gender roles
- Genre of play → murder mystery = inherently conservative (not experimental: realistic)
 - Maintains the arc of “social order” (comedic)
 - How does Glaspell thwart that standard? How does she alter the form of a murder mystery?
 - Women gain no protection (from the law) from the emotional and physical abuse of their husbands → Women take the matter into their own hands
 - The “justice” does not get served in the way the reader typically expects



Why is this focus important?

It is critical to expose students to a variety of writing genres and authors across time periods for them to understand that writing practices and definitions of authorship are shaped by cultural and historical principles. Much of the standard curriculum excludes women writers, because, until recent times, they faced barriers to their authorship (published or not), and when they did write, their work was not valued or taken seriously. My goal is to find a way to integrate a wider variety of genres and women writers into the classroom, extending students’ learning and understanding of women’s history. Framing this unit by genre accentuates each writer’s creative work with craft, honoring these women’s contributions to history and their respective cultures while building student’s critical reading skills.

How will this project provide a “cap” to my major coursework?

This project provides direct links from my English, writing and literature coursework to my education practices and knowledge. By directly combining the two subjects that make up my major, I will be preparing myself for my career as an English educator. Converting my learning into physical lesson plans allows my future students to gain important historical context and develop critical thinking and reading skills.

How will the analysis develop? What is the critical approach?

With the chosen focus, I will recenter the literature I studied in a college class to suit the high school level and the accompanying Maine State Standards and Common Core Standards. As I begin planning the unit, I will analyze the texts further and search for supplementary readings to further the students' understanding and provide context. I will likewise find associated texts to further my knowledge on form, the authors, their genres, and historical context that will not be read by students, but will be vital teacher knowledge. As I think through how I would teach these texts myself, I will examine them with a more critical lens, as they will need more thorough analysis than I was able to provide in my original journal entries. Providing a focus of genre for these texts requires a thoughtful investigation and exploration of genre, time period, cultural gender expectations, and more. By the end of the semester, the analysis and conversion of the original journal entries and resulting lesson plans will become cohesive and teachable to students at the high school level.

Where are the texts sourced from?

The original timeline of the course I am reconstructing and refocusing follows female British (and some American) writers across centuries, from the Middle Ages to the present day (~2007 when the anthology was published). All the authors were part of the two-volume *Norton Anthology of Literature by Women*, third edition (2007). Each selection is prefaced by an introduction written by editors Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar. They delineate the author's life, sometimes including the public's perception of their works, and any other relevant details or events from their lives. This anthology contains vital information alongside a selection of each author's works that will help guide my decisions for supplementary readings and excerpts from the text itself. I will likely need to find external sources to complement the selected works for the unit, which will likewise come from reputable sources.

Timeline

Ideally, completing most, if not all, of the lesson plans should be done by Thanksgiving break. This would be starting next week, since this week's focus is laying out the timeline of the project and deciding unit outcomes.

Abstract

This four-week genre studies unit inspires students to examine how women writers disrupted the traditional historical narrative through their use of genre, prompting readers to consider the writers' lives and perspectives as women. I plan to concentrate on two writers, sifting through a variety of historical and modern documents (about or by the authors) to obtain background information on the time period and cultural expectations for women and their writing. I will find more supplementary texts (and lesson plans) for the teacher's knowledge and texts to aid students' learning. While planning this unit, I will explore how form and structure benefit writers and how their chosen form is fitted to their message.

Plan - Project Activities

- **Researching** secondary sources for additional background knowledge
 - Reviewing ENG 206 coursework for feminist criticism and its historical development
 - Books, critiques, articles, etc. on feminism, genre, the authors themselves, the author's cultures they existed in, etc.
 - Defining unit and lesson **objectives** and **essential questions**
 - Making them clear and visible to students too
 - Associating appropriate **Maine Learning** and **Common Core Standards**
 - Outlining the lessons
 - **Sequencing** lessons/topics and activities
 - Emphasis on **scaffolding**
 - Integrating technology along the way
 - Powerpoints for visuals, reading access, videos?, design tools, etc.
 - Planning for **assessment** - both formative and summative
 - Summative rubric and/or checklist
 - **Multimodal** if possible
 - Mapping out homework and assignments
 - **Differentiating** class activities, content, assignments, etc. for a variety of learners
 - **Accommodating ELL/ML** students and those with **disabilities**
 - Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences
-

Initial Bibliography

- Glaspell, Susan. *Trifles*. *The Norton Anthology of Literature by Women: The Traditions in English*. Edited by Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, 3rd ed., Vol. 2, W.W. Norton, 2007, pp. 178–189
- Speght, Rachel. *A Mouzell for Melastomus, the Cynicall Bayter of, and Foule Mouthed Barker against Eva's Sex*. *The Norton Anthology of Literature by Women: The Traditions in English*. Edited by Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, 3rd ed., Vol. 1, W.W. Norton, 2007, pp. 109-112
- Swetnam, Joseph. *Arraignement of Lewd, Idle, Froward, and Unconstant Women*. Printed by George Purslowe for Thomas Archer. 1615.