

Department of French & Italian
FALL 2013

Dr. Béatrice Mousli Bennett
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M-W, 10:00 – 11:20 pm, VKC 104
Office hours M & W, 9:00-10:00 am, and by appointment

FR 383 FRENCH WOMEN WRITERS: A VOICE OF THEIR OWN

Women have always been tempted to become writers, but only rarely have they been able to do so. Yet, as Virginia Woolf like to say, a writer is one of the easiest things to be when you have other responsibilities: what could be better for a woman than an activity that allows her to stay at home and be both mother and wife? Not to mention the fact that the material necessary for such a task was inexpensive, a table in one corner of a room completing the equipment. Of course she would have to overcome certain prejudices: does a woman have the right to expose herself in public this way? And moreover, what recognition could a woman writer hope to have?

Ever since the Middle Ages, women have been able to overcome obstacles and resistance to create a literature which would not only survive them but which was also able to find a place in the literary world, side by side with texts written by men. This course is dedicated to various aspects of the creation of a literature produced by women from the Middle Ages to the present day. Through their works we shall attempt to determine the place these writings occupy in the French literary tradition, and the extent to which they are significant with respect to the situation of women in society throughout the ages.

Required texts:

George Sand. *Mademoiselle Merquem*. Collection Babel.
Nathalie Sarraute, *Enfance*. Editions Gallimard, coll. Folio.
Marguerite Duras. *L'amant*. Editions de Minuit.
Maryse Condé, *Moi, Tituba sorcière*. Editions Gallimard, coll. Folio.
Simone de Beauvoir, *Une mort très douce*. Editions Gallimard, coll. Folio.
Some additional photocopied reading will be given by the professor, as needed in the course of the class.

Course assignments and grading:

Attendance, homework & participation – 25%
Midterm – 30 %

oral presentation – 15 %

Paper – 30%

Presence and participation are essential in this course. No more than 3 unexcused absences will be tolerated.

You must take all tests and return all compositions on the scheduled day. No late assignments will be accepted. No make-up exams will be given.

Please note that students who need to request accommodations based on a disability are required to register each semester with the Disability Services and Programs (STU 301, 213- 740 0776). In addition, a letter of verification to the instructor from the Disability Services Program is needed for the semester you are enrolled in this course.

Grading scale:

93-100	A	77-79	C+	60-62	D-
90-92	A-	73-76	C	under 60	F
87-89	B+	70-72	C-		
83-86	B	67-69	D+		
80-82	B-	63-66	D		

Alternative track :

You can serve with a mini-team course in French with the Joint Educational Program (JEP) and earned 3% of your grade as extra-credit.

Founded in 1972, JEP is one of the oldest and largest service-learning programs in the country, offering students at the University of Southern California the unique opportunity to combine academic coursework with experiences in the community surrounding the campus. Each year, some 2000 students from over several courses receive academic credit for their participation in JEP. In addition, about 400 students serve as non-credit volunteers and share their time and special talents with their neighbors. JEP is also home to the Trojan Health Volunteers, a program designed to serve pre-meds and health educators, and USC ReadersPlus, an America Reads / America Counts work-study affiliate.

SCHEDULE

This schedule is only indicative. In case of absence, you need to check with your classmates what has been done in class and what is to be done for the next class.

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Week 1

August 26 - 28

Introduction to the class

Christine de Pizan et some feminists pre-19th century

Week 2
September 2 **Labor day** - 4
Introduction to the 19th Century and George Sand
George Sand. *Mademoiselle Merquem*.

Week 3
September 9 - 11
George Sand. *Mademoiselle Merquem*.

Week 4
September 16 - 18
George Sand. *Mademoiselle Merquem*.

Week 5
September 23 - 25
Nathalie Sarraute, *Enfance*.

Week 6
September 30 – October 2
Nathalie Sarraute, *Enfance*.

Week 7
October 7 - 9
Nathalie Sarraute, *Enfance*.
Marguerite Duras, *L'Amant*

Week 8
October 14 - 16
Midterm
Marguerite Duras, *L'Amant* (film)

Week 9
October 21 – 23
Marguerite Duras, *L'amant*.

Week 10
October 28 – 30
Maryse Condé, *Moi, Tituba sorcière*.

Week 11
November 4 – 6
Maryse Condé, *Moi, Tituba sorcière*.

Week 12
November 11 – 13
French Feminism in the 20th century
Simone de Beauvoir

Week 13
November 18 – 20
Simone de Beauvoir, *Une mort très douce*
Feminine autobiography

Week 14
November 25 – 27 (**no class Thanksgiving week end**)
Simone de Beauvoir, *Une mort très douce*

Week 15
December 2 – 4
Conclusion of the class

Final Paper due Monday December 16th, at 11:00 am at the latest. To be dropped in the French & Italian Department office. NO EXCEPTION...