

SEMINAR: CHILD, STOWE, ALCOTT – PR. BIZZELL – FALL 2003

OFFICE HOURS: Fenwick 210, x 2524 or 2562, M,T, W, R 1-3, W 10-noon and by appointment; email pbizzell@holycross.edu

COURSE E-RES Password: Northbury

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Alcott, Louisa May. *Alternative Alcott*. Elaine Showalter, ed. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1988.

----- *Little Women, Parts I and II*. 1868, 1869; rpt. Elaine Showalter, ed. New York: Penguin Books, 1989.

----- *Louisa May Alcott: Signature of Reform*. Madeleine Stern, ed. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2002.

----- *Work*. 1873; rpt. New York: Schocken Books, 1977.

Child, Lydia Maria. *A Lydia Maria Child Reader*. Carolyn L. Karcher, ed. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1997.

----- *Hobomok and Other Writings on Indians*. Carolyn L. Karcher, ed. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1986.

Stowe, Harriet Beecher. *The Minister's Wooing*. 1859; rpt. Susan K. Harris, ed. New York: Penguin, 1999.

----- *The Oxford Harriet Beecher Stowe Reader*. Joan Hedrick, ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999. [includes *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 1852]

----- *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. 1852; rpt. Elizabeth Ammons, ed. New York: W. W. Norton, 1994.

SYLLABUS

Please note: reading assignments are indicated by abbreviated titles of required texts or by "on reserve" designation. All "on reserve" texts are also available on electronic reserve unless otherwise indicated.

Sept. 3: Introduction to seminar

Sept. 10: Lydia Maria Child as social activist

READING:

Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood," in *Dimity Convictions* [on reserve]

In *Child Reader*:

Introduction [by Karcher]

"An Appeal for the Indians"

Extracts from "Management during the Teens"

"Prejudices against People of Color, and Our Duties . . ."

Letters from New York, Number 12

"Talk about Political Party"

Letters from New York, Number 33

Reply of Mrs. Child [to Mrs. Mason]

"Homesteads"

"William Lloyd Garrison"

Letters from New York, Number 29

"Speaking in the Church"

"Woman and Suffrage"

Extracts from "Concerning Women"

"Women and the Freedmen"

REPORTS:

1. On 19th-century women's rhetorical challenges, Johnson, Introduction and Chapter 4, "Noble Maids Have Come to Town," in *Gender and Rhetorical Space* [on reserve]
2. On dress as an aspect of ethos, Mattingly, Introduction and Conclusion, *Appropriate[ing] Dress*, [on reserve]
3. On Black women's experiences, Logan, Chapter 1, "Black Women on the Speaker's Platform, 1832-1900," in *We Are Coming* [on reserve]
4. Biographical information on Child, Karcher, Introduction, in *Child Reader*

Sept. 17: Child as sentimental fiction writer

READING:

In *Child Reader*:

"Willie Wharton"

"Slavery's Pleasant Homes"

In *Hobomok and*:

"A Legend of the Falls of St. Anthony's"

REPORTS:

1. An anti-sentimental analysis of problems with "domesticating" Indians, Wexler, "Tender Violence," in *Culture of Sentiment* [on reserve] [two students]
2. A pro-sentimental analysis of Child's literary strategies, Karcher, "Rape, Murder, and Revenge," in *Culture of Sentiment* [on reserve]
3. On Child's relationship with Harriet Jacobs, Yellin, Introduction, and Child, Introduction, in Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* [on reserve]

Sept. 24: *Hobomok*: A case study

READING:

*Hobomok***Oct. 1: Harriet Beecher Stowe as social activist**

READING:

In *Stowe Reader*:

Introduction [by Hedrick]

"Modern Uses of Language"

"To the Editor of the *Cincinnati Journal and Luminary*"

"The Freeman's Dream: A Parable"

Letter to Henry Ward Beecher, p. 63 ff

Letter to Gamaliel Bailey, p. 65 ff

Letter to Eliza Cabot Follen, p. 71 ff

"An Appeal to the Women of the Free States . . ."

"What Is To Be Done With Them?"

"Will You Take a Pilot?"

Letter to Sarah Buckingham Beecher, p. 483 ff

"What Is a Home?"

Selections from *Little Foxes*

"Home Decoration"

In *Signature of Reform*:Excerpts from *The American Woman's Home* [with Catherine Beecher]

On reserve:

Stowe, "Sojourner Truth, the Libyan Sibyl"

Gage/Truth, "A'n't I a Woman?"

REPORTS:

1. The Beecher family leadership tradition: Lyman [father], Catharine [sister], Henry Ward [brother], and biographical information on Stowe [see Hedrick, Introduction, *Stowe Reader*] [two students]
2. On Gage's and Stowe's appropriations of Truth, Painter, Chapters 17, 18 in *Sojourner Truth: A Life, A Symbol* [on reserve]
3. On "romantic racialism," George Frederickson essay [in Ammons]

Oct. 8: Stowe as regionalist

READING:

The Minister's Wooing

REPORTS:

1. On Stowe's theology, Westra, "Confronting AntiChrist," in *The Stowe Debate* [on reserve]
2. Regionalism defined, Fetterley and Pryse, Chapter 1, in *Writing Out of Place* [on reserve] [two students]

COLUMBUS DAY RECESS

Oct. 15: Stowe as American literary master

READING:

Uncle Tom's Cabin [in Ammons]

REPORTS:

1. On Biblical imagery in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Lowance, "Biblical Typology," in *The Stowe Debate* [on reserve]
2. Illustrations and stage/film representations of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 1852-present [must include visuals]

Oct. 22: Stowe as master, continued: "The Stowe Debate"

READING:

All critical essays listed below in Ammons on which reports will be given

REPORTS:

1. Contemporary praise for the novel by George Sand, Charles Dudley Warner, Helen Gray Cone [in Ammons]
2. Contemporary attacks on the novel by George F. Holmes, and documented by Thomas F. Gossett [in Ammons]
3. Anti: Baldwin, "Everybody's Protest Novel" [in Ammons]
4. Pro: Tompkins, "Sentimental Power" [in Ammons]
5. Pro: Levine, "*Uncle Tom's Cabin* in *Frederick Douglass' Paper*" [in Ammons]
6. Pro: Donovan, "Women's Masterpieces," in *Challenging Boundaries* [on reserve]
7. Reprise: Wexler [on Tompkins-Ann Douglas debate] [on reserve]

Oct. 27: Stowe, continued; Alcott as social activist

READING:

In *Signature of Reform*, all pieces by Alcott in the following sections, plus some other reading as noted:

Domestic Reform

Education [here also read Peabody]

"The Newness" [here also read Alcott, Sears]

AntiSlavery and Abolition

Woman's Economic Role

Sex and Feminism [here read only "Woman's Part in the Concord Celebration"]

Suffrage

In *Alternative Alcott*:

Introduction [by Showalter]

"My Contraband"

"Happy Women"

"The Sunny Side"

REPORTS:

1. Biographical information about Alcott, Showalter, Introduction, in *Alternative Alcott*
2. Reception history, Sicherman, "Reading *Little Women*: The Many Lives of a Text" in *U. S. History as Women's History* [on reserve]

Nov. 5: Alcott's fiction: early experiments

READING:

In *Alternative Alcott*:

Behind a Mask: or, A Woman's Power

Hospital Sketches

In *Signature of Reform*:

Taming a Tartar [excerpts]

REPORTS:

1. On Alcott and the Civil War, Young, "A Wound of One's Own," in *Disarming the Nation* [on reserve] [two students]
2. Feminist reading of *Behind a Mask*, Keyser, "Chapter 4: 'The Second Sex': *Behind a Mask or A Woman's Power*," in *Whispers in the Dark* [on reserve]

Nov.12: Alcott's masterpiece: *Little Women*

READING:

Little Women, Parts I and II

REPORTS:

1. Film versions of *Little Women*, 1933, 1994, compared and contrasted [must include visuals]
2. Feminist reading of *Little Women*, Keyser, "Chapter 5: Portrait(s) of the Artist: *Little Women*," in *Whispers in the Dark* [on reserve]

Nov. 19: "What if little women need a job?"

READING:

Work

In *Alternative Alcott*:
"How I Went Out to Service"

REPORTS:

1. Androgynous hero, Keyser, "Chapter 7: The Quest for Identity: *Work: A Story of Experience*," in *Whispers in the Dark* [on reserve]

THANKSGIVING RECESS

Dec. 3: Alcott's feminism; seminar wrap-up

READING:

In *Alternative Alcott*:
Diana and Persis
"Jo's Last Scrape"

SEMINAR PAPERS DUE DEC. 5