Week Twelve:
Applying Feminist Analysis to Literature

Monday, November 12
Bonnie Lyons & Edwidge Danticat 2003 An interview with Edwidge Danticat.
*Contemporary Literature* 44(2): 183-198

Wednesday, November 14

Friday, November 16: Discussion Groups

Readings for this Week

Available on WyoCourse as:


You may consult related sources online in open access format by consulting the “Additional Resources” section of this document.

Context, Relevance, and Reading Questions

As we have learned throughout the semester, Gender & Women’s Studies is an interdisciplinary field that spans every type of scientific and creative work. This week we read two short stories by Edwidge Danticat, an interview with her, and a scholarly article about Caribbean women writers’ fiction that included analysis of Danticat’s work. These texts are designed to assist you with developing strategies to prepare your book review and associated presentation, our last assignment of the semester. We will approach our analysis of Danticat’s two short stories by following the same format we will follow in the written book review and oral presentation of it.

Fiction allows us to enter the world of the characters presented in it, whose lives may be very different from our own. Creative writers choose a variety of strategies in their fiction to engage the reader. Some creative writers meticulously describe every element of a scene in order to vividly bring it to life in a clear-cut manner, while others are highly selective in the information that they include, leaving the reader to speculate as to what is happening. In other words, creative writers include as much or as little information as they think is necessary in order to
convey a particular message. Our job as readers is to use the tools available to us as a means to interpret the author's creative work.

Successfully engaging with our book review and oral presentation of it will involve mastery over the five following items:

1. Brief overview of plot so that the audience understands the basic elements of what takes place;

2. Concise description of central themes developed in the novel so that the audience can see the major concerns under analysis;

3. Application of theories and concepts from our class to the novel;

4. Discussion of how a reader could interpret the novel from multiple perspectives;

5. Analysis of how reading the novel through the lens of theories and perspectives learned in our class offers a unique interpretation of the novel.

**Additional Resources**

1. Cambridge University Press, one of the most highly respected publishers in the world, featured a blog post on feminist literary criticism by Gill Plain and Susan Sellers, co-authors of the book *A History of Feminist Literary Criticism*. It is available at: [http://www.cambridgeblog.org/2017/03/international-womens-day-spotlight-on-feminist-literary-criticism/](http://www.cambridgeblog.org/2017/03/international-womens-day-spotlight-on-feminist-literary-criticism/)

2. Edwidge Danticat’s professional website: [http://www.edwidgedanticat.com](http://www.edwidgedanticat.com)

Applying Feminist Analysis to Literature

Week Twelve

Interdisciplinarity

- Gender & Women’s Studies is an interdisciplinary field that spans every type of scientific and creative work
- This week we read
  - Two short stories by Edwidge Danticat
  - An interview with Edwidge Danticat
  - A scholarly article featuring analysis of Danticat and other Caribbean and Caribbean-American women writers’ work
Feminist literary analysis

- Fiction allows us to enter the world of the characters
- Creative writers use a variety of strategies to engage the reader in their fiction
- Our job as readers is to use the tools available to us as a means to interpret the author’s creative work

Book review and oral presentation

- Brief overview of plot so that the audience understands the basic elements of what takes place;
- Concise description of central themes developed in the novel so that the audience can see the major concerns under analysis;
- Application of theories and concepts from our class to the novel;
- Discussion of how a reader could interpret the novel from multiple perspectives;
- Analysis of how reading the novel through the lens of theories and perspectives learned in our class offers a unique interpretation of the novel.
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- Edwidge Danticat's professional website: [http://www.edwidgedanticat.com](http://www.edwidgedanticat.com)