

ENG 2305: Are You a Good Witch or a Bad Witch? Magical Feminism as a Feminist Literary Genre

This course is a special topic, 3 credit seminar featuring a genre of sci-fi and/or fantasy literature and film that explore women's power and feminism (particularly Third Wave feminism) through magic commonly associated with witches (although a couple of our witches are “scientifically” created). We will argue that Magical Feminism, in modeling female agency, allows readers to imagine themselves as agents of and for that social change.

Anne Llewelyn Barstow's pivotal study of real women accused as witches in the sixteenth century argues that the fact “that European women first emerged into full legal adulthood as witches, that they were first accorded independent legal status in order to be prosecuted for witchcraft, indicates both their vulnerability and the level of antifeminism in modern European society” (41). This emergence of women as legal entity and witch, at the same historical moment, also shows how strongly connected the concept of independent woman and our modern concept of witch has been ever since. By placing creativity, power, and feminism in the same categories as witchcraft, we define female power, looking at witches within novels and films that are seen as popular women's texts, a so-called “women's genre,” and examine how those texts may make change happen. We examine the “transformative” power of feminism in an entertaining format. Magic, in the hands of powerful witches, can change the world, just as feminism strives to do.

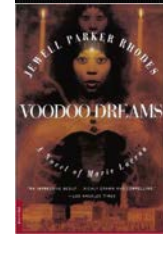
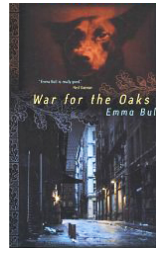
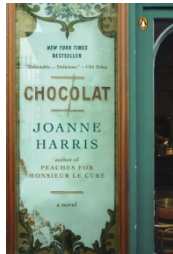
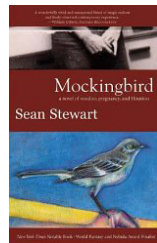


Much of the reading is light—mass market fiction aimed at a popular audience. So we will supplement the fun with essays on feminist scholarship each week (a different kind of fun). The reading load may be intense, and films assigned will be expected to be watched outside of class. Weekly screenings will be set up on campus so that we can watch as a class for free on the big screen, if desired, or students can watch them on their own.

Students will be expected to prepare a conference style research paper, which we will find a nearby conference to propose attendance. It is not a requirement to attend a conference, but it is a requirement to learn how to write the kinds of papers and proposals that you will be writing as a professional scholar.

Assignments	Percentage of Grade	Due Date
Weekly Scholarly Student report. Each week, a student will present a summary of a work of scholarly criticism about one of these authors, texts, or themes to the class. A handout is required.	10%	
Daily reading journal	20%	Due every two weeks
Proposal & annotated bibliography	20%	
Conference Style paper. (10 pages, MLA style, with visuals if possible)	40%	
Participation & attendance	10%	

Required Texts. Note: Many of these are available digitally, on Kindle or Nook. You may read those versions (as long as you still remember to take notes when needed). However, the ISBNs listed here are for the mass market paperback.



Reading Schedule:

Week One: *Practical Magic*, by Alice Hoffman. ISBN: 0425190374

Article: Orians, G. Harrison. "New England Witchcraft in Fiction." *American Literature* 2.1 (1930): 54-71.

Movie Screening: *Practical Magic*, (2009)



Week Two: *Mockingbird*, by Sean Stewart. ISBN: B005Q6899W.

Article: Lieberman, Marcia K. "'Some Day My Prince Will Come': Female Acculturation Through the Fairy Tale." *College English* 34 (1972): 383-395.

Week Three: *Brown Girl in the Ring* by Nalo Hopkinson. ISBN: 0446674338.

Article: Collier, Gordon. "Spaceship Creole: Nalo Hopkinson, Canadian-Caribbean Fabulist Fiction, and Linguistic/Cultural Syncretism." *Mataw* 27-28 (2003): 443 -56.



Week Four: *Mistress of Spices* by Chitra Divakaruni. ISBN: 0385482388

Article: Faris, Wendy B. "Scheherazade's Children: Magical Realism and Postmodern Fiction." *Magical Realism: Theory, History, Community*. Ed. Lois Parkinson Zamora and Wendy B. Faris. Durham: Duke UP, 1995.163-90.

Movie Screening: *Mistress of Spices*, (2007).

Week Five: *Indigo Springs*, by A.M. Dellamonica. ISBN: 0765319470.

Article: Weigman, Robyn. "Feminism's Apocalyptic Futures." *New Literary History* 31 (2000): 805-25.

Week Six: *Chocolat*, by Joanne Harris. ISBN: 0140282033.

Article: Patterson, Laura. "From Courtship to Kitchen: Radical Domesticity in Twentieth-Century Southern Women's Fiction." *Women's Studies* 32:8 (2003): 907-936.
Movie Screening: *Chocolat*, (2011).



Week Seven: *A Fistful of Sky* by Nina Kiriki Hoffman. ISBN: 0441011772.

Article: Maglin, Nan. "Full of Memories": Teaching Matrilineage" *College English* 40.8 (1979): 889-898.

Week Eight: *Trash Sex Magic*, by Jennifer Stevenson. ISBN: 1931520127.

Article: Wilkerson, Abby. "Ending at the Skin: Sexuality and Race in Feminist Thinking." *Hypatia* 12.3 (1997): 164-82.



Week Nine: Whedonverse Witches. Selections from *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. Episode: "Gingerbread" (4:11); Episode: "Get it Done," (7:15); "Hush," (4:10); "The Killer in Me" (7:13); "Grave" (6:22).

Firefly: "Safe" (1:5); Clips from *Serenity*

Article: Fudge, Rachel. "The Buffy Effect, Or, a Tale of Cleavage and Marketing." *Bitch: Feminist Responses to Popular Culture* 10 (1999). June 10, 2004. http://www.bitchmagazine.com/archives/08_01buffy/buffy1.shtml

Article: Zacharek, Stephanie. "Deconstructing 'Buffy.'" *Salon.com* 9 Nov 2002. <http://archive.salon.com/ent/tv/feature/2002/11/09/buffy_conference/index.html>.

Week Ten: *War for the Oaks*, by Emma Bull. ISBN: 0765300346.

Article: Radway, Janice A. "Romance and the Work of Fantasy: Struggles over Feminine Sexuality and Subjectivity at Century's End." *Feminism and Cultural Studies*. Ed Morag Shiach. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999. 395-416.

Week Eleven: *Voodoo Dreams A Novel of Marie Laveau*, by Jewell Parker Rhodes. ISBN: 0312119313.

Article: Walker, Alice. "In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens." *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens: Womanist Prose*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1983. 231-243.

Other Magic Feminist Texts to explore on your own:

TV & Movies

Bewitched. Dir. Nora Ephron. Perf. Nicole Kidman, Will Ferrell, Shirley MacLaine. Columbia Pictures, 2005.

Buffy the Vampire Slayer. Dir. Joss Whedon. Perf. Sarah Michelle Gellar, Nicholas Brendon, Alyson Hannigan, Anthony Head. 20th Century Fox, 1997-2003.

Charmed. Dir. Janice Cooke-Leonard. Perf. Shannen Doherty, Holly Marie Combs, Alyssa Milano, Rose McGowan. Paramount, 1998-2006.

Eve's Bayou. Dir. Kasi Lemmons. Perf. Samuel L. Jackson, Diahann Carroll. Lion's Gate, 1997.

The Gift. Dir. Sam Raimi. Perf. Cate Blanchett, Keanu Reeves, Hilary Swank. Lakeshore Entertainment, 2000.

Simply Irresistible. Dir. Mark Tarlov. Perf. Sarah Michelle Gellar, Sean Patrick Flanery. New Regency Pictures, 1999.

Books

- Allen, Sarah Addison. *Garden Spells*. Bantam Discovery, 2008.
- . *The Sugar Queen*. Random House Reader's Circle. 2009.
- Allende, Isabel. *The House of the Spirits*. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1985.
- Bull, Emma. *Bone Dance: A Fantasy for Technophiles*. New York: Ace Books, 1991.
- Butler, Octavia. The *Paternist* series, including: *Patternmaster*, *Mind of My Mind* (1977), *Survivor* (1978), *Wild Seed* (1980) and *Clay's Ark* (1984).
- Caine, Rachel. The "Weather Wardens" series.
- Conde, Maryse. *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*. Charlottesville: UP Virginia, 1992.
- Davidson, Mary Janice. "The Betsy Taylor: Undead" series.
- Dean, Pamela. *Juniper, Gentian, and Rosemary*. New York: Tor, 1999.
- Hamilton, Laurel K. The "Anita Blake, Vampire Hunter" series.
- . *Nightseer*. New York: Roc, 1992.
- Harris, Charlaine. "The Southern Vampire Mysteries" series.
- Harrison, Kim. "The Hollows" Series.
- Hartman, Keith. *The Gumshoe, The Witch, and the Virtual Corpse*. Decatur: MM Publishing, Inc. 1999.
- Hetley, James A. *The Summer Country*. New York: Ace, 2002.
- Huff, Tanya. "The Keeper's Chronicles" series.
- Joyce, Graham. *Dark Sister* New York: Tor, 2000.
- Lee, Tanith. *White as Snow*. New York: Tor, 2001.
- Lindskold, Jane. *Child of a Rainless Year*. New York: Tor, 2005.
- Maguire, Gregory. *Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West*. New York, Regan Books, 1996.
- Murphy, C.E. *Thunderbird Falls*. New York: Luna, 2006.
- . *Urban Shaman*. New York: Luna, 2005.
- Naylor, Gloria. *Bailey's Café*. New York: Vintage Reprint Ed, 1993.
- . *Mama Day*. New York: Random House, 1993.
- Priest, Cherie. *Four and Twenty Blackbirds*. New York: Tor, 2005.
- . *Wings to the Kingdom*. New York: Tor, 2006.
- Steiber, Ellen. *A Rumor of Gems*. New York: Tor, 2005.
- Stewart, Sean. *Cloud's End*. New York: Ace, 1996.
- . *Galveston*. New York: Ace Books, 2001.
- Wilkins, Kim. *The Autumn Castle*. New York: Aspect, 2003.
- Wolf, Krista. *Kassandra*. New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1984.
- Wynne-Jones, Diana. *A Sudden Wild Magic*. New York: Avon Books, 1992.

Bibliography: (Scholarly Works Suggested)

Alfonso, Rita and Jo Triglio. "Surfing the Third Wave: A Dialogue Between Two Third Wave Feminists." *Hypatia* 12.3 (1997): 7-16.

Anderlini-D'Onofrio, Serena. "'Bitches, Witches, and Sluts': Narratives of Feminist Empowerment in Caribbean Italian Studies." *Women and Language*. 26 (2003): 44-51.

Anzaldúa, Gloria and Cherrie Moraga. *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*. New York: Kitchen Table, Women of Color Press, 1983.

- Apter, T.E. *Fantasy Literature: An Approach to Reality*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1982.
- Armitt, Lucie. *Contemporary Women's Fiction and the Fantastic*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000.
- Bartkowski, John P. "Claims-Making and Typifications of Voodoo as a Deviant Religion: Hex, Lies, and Videotape." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 37.4(1998): 559-579.
- Beck, Debra Baker. "The 'F' Word: How the Media Frame Feminism." *NWSA Journal* 10:1 (1998): 139-153.
- Columbia, David. "Rethinking Philosophy in the Third Wave of Feminism." *Hypatia* 12.3 (1997):100-15.
- Cranny-Francis, Anne. *Feminist Fiction: Feminist Uses of Generic Fiction*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1990.
- de Blécourt, Willem. "The Making of the Female Witch: Reflections on Witchcraft and Gender in the Early Modern Period." *Gender and History* 12.2 (2000): 287-309.
- de Lauretis, Teresa. *Technologies of Gender: Essays on Theory, Film and Fiction*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1987. 135.
- Denike, Margaret. "The Devil's Insatiable Sex: A Genealogy of Evil Incarnate." *Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy* 18.1 (2003): 10-31.
- Deren, Maya. *Divine Horsemen: the Living Gods of Haiti*. New York: MacPhearson, 1983.
- Ehrenreich, Barbara and Deirdre English. *Witches, Midwives, and Nurses*. New York: Feminist Press, 1973.
- Faris, Wendy B and Lois Parkinson Zamora, Eds. *Magical Realism: Theory, History, Community*. Durham: Duke UP, 1995.
- Fowler, Bridget. *The Alienated Reader: Women and Romantic Literature in the Twentieth Century*. New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991.
- Gauthier, Xavière. "Pourquoi Sorcières?" *New French Feminisms: An Anthology*. Marks, Elaine and deCourtivron, Isabelle, Eds. New York: Schocken Books, 1980. 199.
- Goldenberg, Naomi. "Witches and Words." *Feminist Theology* 12.2 (2004):203-211.
- hooks, bell. *Feminism Is for Everybody: Passionate Politics*. Cambridge: South End Press, 2000.
- . *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center, 2nd Edition*. Cambridge: South End Press, 2000.
- Jackson, Rosemary. *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion*. London: Methuen, 1981.
- Jocks, Yvonne, editor. "Witchcraft as Empowerment." *Witches Brew*. 77-232. New York: Penguin Putnam, 2002.
- Kramer, Heinrich and James Sprenger. *The Malleus Maleficarum: 1928 Edition*. New York: Dover, 1971.
- LeGuin, Ursula K. "The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction." *Dancing at the Edge of the World: Thoughts on Words, Women, Places*. New York: Grove Press, 1997. 165-171.

Nelson, Alondra. "Making the Impossible Possible: An Interview With Nalo Hopkinson." *Social Text* 20.2 (2002): 97-113.

Orr, Catherine M. "Charting the Currents of the Third Wave." *Hypatia* 12.3 (1997): 29-45.

Radway, Janice A. *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy, and Popular Literature*. Chapel Hill: North Carolina UP, 1984.

Romines, Ann. *The Home Plot: Women, Writing, and Domestic Ritual*. Amherst: U of Mass Press, 1992.

Siegel, Deborah L. "The Legacy of the Personal: Generating Theory in Feminism's Third Wave." *Hypatia* 12.3 (1997): 46-75.

Slemon, Stephen. "Magic Realism as Postcolonial Discourse." *Magical Realism: Theory, History, Community*. Ed. Lois Parkinson Zamora and Wendy B. Faris. Durham: Duke UP, 1995. 407-26.

Springer, Kimberly. "Third Wave Black Feminism?" *Signs* 27.4 (2002): 1059-82.

Warner, Marina. *From the Beast to the Blonde: On Fairy Tales and Their Tellers*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1995.

Wilcox, Rhonda V. and David Lavery, Eds *Fighting the Forces: What's at Stake in Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. New York: Rowman and Littlefield. 2002.