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### PHIL 119H.01: Philosophical Perspectives on Women in the Western Hemisphere

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Spring 2002

Philosophical Perspectives on Women in the Western Hemisphere  
Phil.119/WS 119

**Dr. Ruth Vanita**

Tuesday, Thursday, 12.40-2.00 p.m. LA 138. 3 credits

Grader: Dawn Walsh

Office: Liberal Arts 146-A. Office Phone: 243-4894.

Office Hours: Tuesday, Thursday 2-3 p.m., and by appointment

Texts

1. Sappho, Poems
2. Euripides, Medea
3. Christine de Pizan The Book of the City of Ladies
4. Henrik Ibsen, A Doll's House
5. Lewis Carroll, Alice in Wonderland
6. Jeannette Winterson, Written on the Body
7. Facpac, available from Denny's Copy Stop, 2330 South Higgins (Corner of South and Higgins).

Requirements

Students are required to

- (a) attend classes regularly. More than two unexplained absences will result in a zero for attendance and class participation. Explanations must be communicated to me in person and accepted by me. Acceptable explanations are illness (backed up by a medical certificate) and emergencies such as major sickness in the family or serious weather conditions.
- (b) keep up with the assigned reading, bring the text to class, participate in class discussions, and complete weekly quizzes and other in-class assignments.
- (c) write a paper (4-5 pages double-spaced typed). Topics for papers must be selected from those given by me.
- (d) Hand in a one-page abstract of the paper in advance, and discuss it with me during office hours.

Grades:

The paper will be worth 25 percent, class attendance and participation 25 percent, and the quizzes and other in-class assignments 50 percent.

Quizzes will contain both multiple-choice type questions and short answer questions and are designed to test whether you have read the prescribed texts and remember the basic facts about the author and the text, as well as information communicated in lectures.

If you have any condition, such as a physical or learning disability, that will make it difficult for you to complete the work as I have outlined it, please notify me in the first week of class.

### Reading Schedule

**This schedule is tentative. It is the student's responsibility to keep up with any changes.**

January 29 Introduction

January 31 Sappho, Poems, Nos. 1-61

February 5 Sappho, Poems Nos. 62-100. Quiz.

February 7 Extract from Plato, Symposium (facpac). Quiz. Lecture on Greek goddesses.

February 12 Book of Genesis, Chapters 1, 2, 3 (facpac). Quiz.

February 14 Euripides, Medea.

February 19 Euripides, Medea continued. Quiz.

February 21 Ecclesiasticus, chapter 24, and Gospel according to St Luke, Chapter 1 (both in facpac). Quiz.

February 26 The Book of the City of Ladies Part I, chapters 1-19. Quiz.

February 28 The Book of the City of Ladies Part I, chapters 27-32, 34, 35, 43, 44. Quiz.

March 5 The Book of the City of Ladies Part II, 36, 44, 47, 53, 56. Quiz.

March 7 The Book of the City of Ladies Part III, chapters 1, 2, 12, 17, 19, and extract from Ariosto, Orlando Furioso (facpac). Quiz.

March 12 Lecture and slide show by Monica Bachmann on sex and gender categorization, followed by discussion.

March 14 Extract from Henricus Cornelius Agrippa, Declamation on the Nobility and Preeminence of the Female Sex (facpac). Quiz.

March 18-22 Spring Break.

- March 26 Selections from History of Woman Suffrage (facpac). Quiz.
- March 28 John Ruskin, "Of Queens' Gardens" (facpac). Quiz.
- April 2 Alice in Wonderland, chapters 1-6. Quiz.
- April 4 Alice in Wonderland, 7-12, and Freud, "On the Sexual Enlightenment of Children"(facpac). Quiz.
- April 9 Henrik Ibsen, A Doll's House Acts I and II. Quiz.
- April 11 A Doll's House, Act III, and Virginia Woolf, "Professions for Women" (facpac). Quiz.
- April 16 Margaret Sanger, "My Fight for Birth Control," Ann Oakley, "Sexuality"; extract from Alfred Kinsey, Sexual Behavior in the Human Male (facpac). Quiz.
- April 18 Simone de Beauvoir, extract from The Second Sex (facpac). Quiz.
- April 23 Joan Dunayer, "Sexist Words, Speciesist Roots" (facpac). Quiz
- April 25 Andrew Sullivan, extract from Virtually Normal; Suzanne Kessler, "The Medical Construction of Gender"; Florence Dillon, "Tell Grandma I'm a Boy." (facpac). Quiz.
- April 30 Written on the Body, 1-76. Hand in abstract of paper in class.
- May 2 Written on the Body, 76-140. Discuss your abstract with me (during my office hours, which will be extended to 4 p.m. if necessary).
- May 7 No class. Instead, a film, Being John Malkovich, will be shown from 6 to 8 p.m. Attendance is required.
- May 9 Written on the Body, 141-end.
- May 14 Conclusion. Hand in paper in class.