

Marriage at the Turn of the Twentieth Century

Dr. Dalit Alperovich

Spring 2017

Tuesday, 10:15-11:45

Webb 103

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Office hours: Tuesdays, 9:00-10:00 , by appointment

Course description:

Is marriage simply a romantic and intimate bond between two consenting people? This course explores the ways in which the nation institutes and maintains a certain social order, allocates and regulates the distribution of property and rights in society, defines citizenship, draws racial lines and prescribes gender roles through the institution of marriage. We will read a variety of literary works from the turn of the twentieth century in the context of changing marriage laws and conventions, and will trace the ways in which literature portrays and challenges the connection between love, marriage and the nation.

Course requirements:

A short assignment – 10%

Midterm paper – 30%

Final exam – 60%

Syllabus:

March 14th Introduction

March 21st The Cult of True Womanhood and the New Woman

Kate Chopin, “The Story of an Hour”, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, “The Yellow Wallpaper”

March 28th Interracial marriage, the tragic mulatta, and miscegenation laws

Kate Chopin, “Desiree’s Baby”, Pauline Johnson, “A Red Girl’s Reasoning”

April 4th Mourning Dove, *Cogewea, The Half-Blood: A Depiction of the Great Montana Cattle Range*

April 5th *Cogewea*

April 25th Suffragists, marriage and same-sex marriage

Henry James, *The Bostonians*

May 9th *The Bostonians*

May 16th *The Bostonians*

May 23rd Marital alternatives

Ruth Underhill, *The Autobiography of A Papago Woman*

Elsie Clews Parsons, “Waiyautitsa of Zuni, New Mexico”

June 6th Marriage reconsidered

Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes were Watching God*

June 13th *Their Eyes*

June 20th *Their Eyes*

June 27th Concluding remarks

Reading list

Kate Chopin, “Desiree’s Baby” (1893), in Per Seyersted (ed.), *The Complete Works of Kate Chopin*, Baton Rouge: LSU P, 1969.

--- “The Story of an Hour,” (1894), in Per Seyersted (ed.), *The Complete Works of Kate Chopin*, 1969.

Mourning Dove, *Cogewea, The Half-Blood: A Depiction of the Great Montana Cattle Range*

(1927), Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1991.

Charlotte Perkins Gilman, “The Yellow Wallpaper” (1892), in Robert Shulman (ed.), *The Yellow Wallpaper and Other Stories*, New York: Oxford U P, 1998.

Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes were Watching God* (1937), New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2013.

Henry James, *The Bostonians* (1886), London: J. Lehmann, 1952.

Pauline Johnson, “A Red Girl’s Reasoning” (1893), in Bernd C. Peyer (ed.), *The Singing Spirit: Early Short Stories by North American Indians*, Tucson, London: U of Arizona P, 1989.

Elsie Clews Parsons, “Waiyautitsa of Zuni, New Mexico” (1922), in Elsie Clews Parsons (ed.), *North American Indian Life: Customs and Traditions of Twenty-three Tribes*, New York: Dover, 1992.

Ruth Underhill, *The Autobiography of A Papago Woman* (1936), New York: Kraus Reprint Co., 1969.