

Beth Flynn  
 HU5116, Rhetorics of Difference and Alterity  
 Walker139  
 T,Th 12:35-1:50 p.m.  
 Fall, 2005  
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 Office Hours: T,Th 10-11 a.m. and by appointment

**Texts:**

- Haraway, Donna. The Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People, and Significant Otherness.  
 Chicago: Prickly Paradigm P, 2003. ISBN: 09717585.
- Levinas, Emmanuel. Alterity and Transcendence. Trans. Michael B. Smith.  
 New York: ColumbiaUP, 1999. ISBN: 0-231-11650-0.
- Lunsford, Andrea A. and Lahoucine Ouzgane, eds. Crossing Borderlands: Composition and Postcolonial Studies.  
 Pittsburgh, U of Pittsburgh P, 2004. ISBN: 0-8229-5837-6.
- Menchú, Rigoberta. I, Rigoberta Menchú: An Indian Woman in Guatemala.  
 London: Verso, 1984. ISBN: 0860917886.
- Royster, Jacqueline Jones. Traces of a Stream: Literacy and Social Change Among African American Women.  
 Pittsburgh, U of Pittsburgh P, 2000. ISBN: 0-8229-5725-6.
- Schweickart, Patrocínio P. and Elizabeth Flynn. Reading Sites: Social Difference and Reader Response.  
 New York: Modern Language Association, 2004. ISBN: 0-87352-985-5.

**Supplies:**

Please keep your response statements, drafts, and returned papers in a file folder. I'll collect it at the end of the term.

**Purpose:**

The course is described in the catalog as follows:

A critical examination of discourses, theories, and representations of "otherness" or "difference" according to race, gender, sexuality, class, age, nationality, ethnic background, and other socio-cultural categories. May include discussion of issues of self-representation within and among groups, the rhetorics of exile or diaspora, colonial and post-colonial constructions of identity and difference, etc.

**Writing Assignments:**

Response Statements:

Response statements of one or two double-spaced pages should be turned in on designated days. Statements should summarize the text under consideration and then critique it or relate it to previous course readings or reading you have done elsewhere. Once during the term you should send one of these responses to the class e-mail list [5116-l@mtu.edu](mailto:5116-l@mtu.edu).

Portfolio Analysis

Please prepare a portfolio analysis (at least a page long) that provides a commentary on response statements, drafts, and final papers. What are some strengths of your performance on these assignments? What are some limitations? What positions that you have taken strike you now as especially insightful? What positions do you now think are questionable?

Formal Writing:

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Three formal papers will be required. Each should be at least 1,250 words long.

#### Paper # 1

Haraway and the authors in the Lunsford and Ouzganecollection focus on relationships across difference. Haraway focuses on human/dog relationships, and the authors in the Lunsford and Ouzgane collection focus on asymmetrical relationships that result from differences in academic field or differences in culture. Using one or more of these assigned readings as a point of departure, discuss asymmetrical relationships described in works that have not been assigned. Describe the nature of the asymmetry, any resulting conflicts or imbalances, and the ways in which the asymmetries are embodied in discourse. Be sure to make explicit connections with course readings.

#### Paper # 2

Schweickart and Flynn's collection explores political and ethical relationships between readers and writers from marginalized groups, often within a pedagogical context. Describe the political and ethical dimensions of readers and writers discussed in one or more of the unassigned essays in the collection, in the Lunsford and Ouzgane collection, or in other works. Do not select essays that you discussed in paper # 1. In your discussion, make sure to make connections with assigned readings.

Or

Discuss the political and ethical dimensions of Rigoberta Menchú's embrace of literacy. You might want to take into consideration the controversy over the credibility of her story. Include in your discussion the perspective taken in at least two additional works that focus on her book.

#### Paper # 3

In the concluding chapter of Traces of a Stream, Royster describes her standpoint as a researcher and scholar. Using her essay as a possible model for your own, describe your professional standpoint. What discourses and fields have influenced you? What kinds of research have you done or do you intend to do? What ethical or political perspectives inform your scholarly approach? How is your standpoint similar to or different from Royster's? Also make explicit references to Levinas in your essay by explaining how his discussions of the ethics of alterity are similar to or different from your perspective.

#### **Reports/Discussions:**

Once during the term make a five-minute report on background material that informs the reading assignment for that day or start the class discussion for that day's reading. If you prepare a report, be sure to submit an outline of it. If you start the discussion, submit the question or questions that you use to stimulate discussion.

#### **Presentations:**

You will have an opportunity to present essays # 1, 2, and 3 in presentations of at least ten minutes. The presentation should be based on the paper you have submitted but should be tailored for oral delivery. Please use at least one overhead that provides an outline of your paper including its central point or points. Please include a paper copy of the outline with your paper.

#### **Attendance:**

Attendance is mandatory. Much of the course involves conversation about course readings. If you miss those conversations, you will have missed a good deal of the course content. More than four unexcused absences will affect your grade.

#### **Late Papers:**

Since the course emphasizes the revision process and since it is important that presentations be based on finished

essays, drafts and final essays must be submitted on time. Late papers will affect your grade.

### **Grades:**

Your grade will be based on the following:

Response statements, e-mail, portfolio, report	25 %
Presentation # 1	5 %
Presentation # 2	5 %
Presentation # 3	5%
Formal essay # 1	20 %
Formal essay # 2	20 %
Formal essay # 3	20%

### **Criteria for Evaluation:**

#### A Papers and Presentations:

The author makes an original contribution so that the reader becomes involved and learns from the piece or presentation.

The central point of the essay is clear, and the parts of the essay have been connected effectively. The outline for the presentation is correct in form and effective.

Support for the point is appropriate for the intended audience and convincing.

The reader's or listener's needs have been taken into consideration.

There are few if any errors.

#### B Papers and Presentations:

The writing or speaking is clear, but the contribution does not seem especially original or new.

The central point is clear, but the parts of the essay or talk could be connected more effectively.

Support for the point is adequate for the intended audience and fairly convincing.

The reader's or listener's needs have been taken into consideration to an extent.

There are some errors.

#### C Papers and Presentations:

Takes some effort on the part of the reader or listener to get through the essay or talk.

The paper or talk does not have a strong focus, and it is not always clear how the parts support the thesis.

Support for the point is not especially appropriate for the intended audience and not especially convincing.

The reader's or listener's needs have not always been taken into consideration.

There are a number of errors.

### **Other:**

When papers are returned, most papers will have a letter grade on them. If you receive a grade lower than A, you may revise the essay and submit it no later than two weeks after it is returned. A few papers, though, will have an "R" on them. This means that the paper must be revised within two weeks of the time the paper was returned, and only the revision will be graded. I will usually suggest that individuals who receive Rs see me before revising. Please include the original paper with the revision! Please use Modern Language Association (MLA) format in your essays where appropriate. A useful Website that describes MLA format is <http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/DocMLA.html>.

Remember that formal essays should have titles. Please leave at least an inch margin on the sides and top and bottom of the paper and remember to number the pages on papers. Label all work. Include your name, my name, the course number and time, the date, and the course assignment. Be sure to indicate if the paper is a draft, a formal paper, or a revision.

MTU complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). If you have a disability and need a reasonable accommodation for equal access to education or services at MTU, please call Dr. Gloria Melton, Associate Dean of Students (7-2212). For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, department head or chair, or the Affirmative Action Office (7-3310).

It may be necessary to alter the syllabus as the semester proceeds in order to better meet the instructional needs of the class.

Plagiarism--using the ideas or words of others without acknowledging the source--is unethical and a violation of University policy. Plagiarism cases will be handled by the Dean of Students. Some consequences of plagiarism could be failure of a paper or course. The University has subscribed to an anti-plagiarism service that can detect plagiarized material. If you have questions about the proper way to cite the ideas of someone else, please see me.

### **Course Schedule:**

#### Week 1 (August 30-Sept. 1)

T Introduction  
Th Haraway, pp.1-47. Response # 1 due.

#### Week 2 (Sept. 6-8)

T Haraway, pp. 48-100. Response # 2 due.  
Th Lunsford, Introduction, pp. 1-8, Lu, pp. 9-32. Response # 3 due.

#### Week 3 (Sept. 13-15)

T Lunsford, Anzaldúa, pp. 33-66. Proposal for essay # 1 due.  
Th Lunsford, Bahri, pp. 67-83, Jarratt, pp. 110-128. Response # 4 due.

#### Week 4 (Sept. 20-22)

T Lunsford, Behr, pp. 129-142, Dzaka, pp. 157-170. Draft of essay # 1 due.  
Th Lunsford, Connal, pp. 199-217, Swearingen, pp. 238-254. Response # 5 due.

#### Week 5 (September 27-29)

T Essay # 1 due. Presentations.  
Th Presentations.

#### Week 6 (Oct. 4-6)

T Schweickart and Flynn, Introduction, pp. 1-38, Yelin, pp. 83-107. Response # 6 due.  
Th Schweickart and Flynn, Greer, pp. 135-165, Berggren, pp. 166-188. Response # 7 due.

#### Week 7 (October 11-13)

T Schweickart and Flynn, Kaufman, pp. 221-255, Grobman, pp. 256-285. Response # 8 due.  
Th Schweickart and Flynn, Bleich, pp. 286-313, Keating, pp. 314-344. Response # 9 due.

#### Week 8 (October 18-20)

T Menchú, pp. 1-58. Proposal for essay # 2 due.  
Th Menchú, pp. 59-122. Response # 10 due.

#### Week 9 (October 25-27)

T Menchú, pp.123-183. Draft of essay # 2 due.  
Th Menchú, pp.184-247. Response # 11 due.

Week 10 (Nov. 1-3)

T Essay # 2 due. Presentations.  
Th Presentations

Week 11 (Nov. 8-10)

T Royster, pp.3-76. Response # 12 due.  
Th Royster, pp.77-175. Response # 13 due.

Week 12 (November 15-17)

T Royster, pp.176-250. Proposal for essay # 3 due.  
Th Royster, pp.251-288. Response # 14 due.

Week 13 (Nov. 29-Dec. 1)

T Levinas, pp.ix-xxiv, 1-76. Draft of essay # 3 due  
Th Levinas, pp.77-120. Response # 15 due.

Week 14 (Dec. 6-8)

T Presentations.Essay # 3 due.  
Th Presentations,portfolio due.

