

HONR 3900: Warrior Women from Antigone to Buffy

Dr. Christie Fox

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Office: MLib 374/ Office Hours: by appointment. You are free to stop by, but I may be in a meeting.

1 credit/fulfills Honors seminar requirement
Tuesdays 4:30-5:20 OM 304

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This one-credit class will explore the phenomenon of women warriors, or strong female characters in literature and culture. We will start with antiquity and skip along through the ages as our readings and whims dictate. As it is one-credit, this class will only meet once per week. There will be weekly reading and writing assignments but no papers. We will interrogate the existence and persistence of the woman warrior and juxtapose her with the “traditional” male warrior.

As the class is discussion based, you carry more than usual responsibility for the success of this class. It is vital that you come to class prepared to discuss the readings.

COURSE GOALS:

At the end of the semester you will:

Have an increased appreciation for and depth of understanding of women warriors throughout history;

Be able to articulate the role of women warriors in contemporary culture;

Have a working knowledge of a definition of a woman warrior;

Develop your critical thinking and analysis skills;

Demonstrate via a class presentation your depth of understanding of a woman warrior of your choice.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Euripides, *Medea and other plays*. Trans. Phillip Vellacott. New York: Penguin Books, 1963.

Other editions acceptable.

Hong Kingston, Maxine. *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts*. New York: Vintage Books, 1975.

Sophocles. *The Three Theban Plays*. Trans. Robert Fagles. New York: Penguin Books, 1982.

Other editions acceptable.

A course reader will also be required. It is not yet available!

DISCLAIMER: COURSE CONTENT AND TONE

The English department's Course Content Policy reads as follows. We shall adopt it for this class:

English professors at USU make text choices with great care and forethought and base their choices on sound pedagogical reasoning. They are trained experts in their fields and make choices founded in their knowledge of the history and current state of the field and in accordance with paradigms of literary criticism accepted at national and international institutions of higher education. The English Department opposes censorship in the study of literature and supports the selection of texts deemed by professors as appropriate and necessary for the course.

Accordingly, students are expected to read all texts assigned in this course in their entirety, and to strive for a degree of analytical distance from ideas, language, and subject matter they may find objectionable. You should feel free to express any view, but you should always be ready to defend your position, and your position should be grounded in evidence, logic, and thoughtful analysis. You are expected always to treat your fellow classmates and the professor with courtesy and respect, even when expressing sharply different views.

COURSE ASSESSMENT:

Attendance/participation 50%

Weekly “journal” questions 35%

(I will drop or give you a pass for two weeks)

Presentation 25%

Attendance—which means coming to class with the reading completed—is obviously a vital part of this class, and something I take very seriously. The vagaries of life occasionally intrude in our attempts to educate ourselves, so there will be times when you must miss class. You may miss two classes—no questions asked—but more than that will lower your participation grade by 5 points for each day missed. Needless to say, you must still hand in any assignment that was due the day you were absent and it will be considered late. I suggest you obtain the information regarding what you missed from your classmates.

CLASSROOM CONDUCT: I expect all students to behave in a way that facilitates learning. This means being actively engaged in what’s going on and participating to the best of your ability. An average of one good comment or question per week will earn an A for participation. At the same time, you should not be paying attention to your cell phone or beeper. These should be off or at least on silent and out of sight. I answer anything that rings in my class. Failure to allow me to answer your ringing thing results in an absence for that day.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: You’re Honors students. I expect you to behave with the highest academic integrity at all times and to follow the USU Honor Pledge.

H3900 WARRIOR WOMEN UPDATED CLASS SCHEDULE

Please note that this is (still) tentative and subject to change. All readings are DUE on the

date listed below.

8/30 Course introduction

9/6 Antigone I – Journals due

9/13 Antigone II – Additional reading due (TBA)

9/20 Medea I – Journals due

9/27 Medea II – Additional reading due (on ERES)

10/4 No class

10/11 Athena/Artemis/Medea (ERES)

10/18 Amazons + article (online)

Please read also: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amazons>

10/25 Warrior Woman, pp. 1-110

11/1 Warrior Woman, pp. 111-209

11/8 Xena or St. Joan of Arc–class choice

Readings TBD

11/15 BtVS

Read: “Buffy Intro”; “Female Just Warrior”; “Whose Side are You On?” (ERES)

Screening

11/22 BtVS

Read: “Stalking in Tongues”; “My Emotions Give Me...” (ERES)

Screening

11/29 Presentations on warrior woman of your choice I

12/6 Presentations on warrior woman of your choice II

When we are discussing Buffy the Vampire Slayer, Xena, and other visual texts, we will meet for screenings. Videos/DVDs will be made available for those who cannot attend the screenings.