

# Gender and Sexuality through Fiction

Dr. Susana Cerda  
Winter Semestre  
January-April 2022

## **BRIEF COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course offers an introduction to the study of literature by focusing on the ways in which fiction reflects, influences, creates, and reveals cultural beliefs about gender and sexuality.

We aim to analyse how gender and sexuality intersect with other social and cultural issues such as inequality, class, and race, religion, among others. We will pay attention to discourses about gender to examine how gender and sexuality are portrayed in literary texts. Throughout the term we will be reading Bernardine Evaristo's novel *Girl, Women, Other* as the main primary text, but we will also examine some flash-fiction texts, short films, and podcasts to investigate how and why does fiction, and specifically literary fiction, matter in the context of gender and sexuality.

The course will function as a workshop where students will be encouraged to bring their own ideas, concepts and readings they are doing from other courses related to gender studies. The idea is to enhance understanding of both the primary source texts and the topics of discussion.

## **Outcomes:**

This course is designed to help you learn key concepts and skills in literary studies, so you can engage fiction and concepts of gender and sexuality in meaningful ways.

At the end of this course students shall be able to read, summarise and analyse complex fictional texts with discernment and comprehension and with an understanding of their conventions, both formal and stylistic.

Identify how literary and cultural texts complement or challenge understandings of gender and sexuality.

Employ creativity, and interpretative skills to produce persuasive and imaginative arguments about literature, gender and sexuality.

## **Assignments:**

- a) **Weekly reflexion -entrance for Reading Journal-** due on Mondays. Extension min. 200 - max. 300 words. Each Monday you will be expected to submit a short critical reflection on the week's reading. They should focus on an idea, concept or problematic that you find interesting. You should not summarise the text. This is a simple assignment that asks you to reflect, in writing, on what you have been reading and discussing during the week. This reflexion may work as a prompt for participation in class.

## **Gender and Sexuality through Fiction**

**b) Presentation:** One 10-15 minutes presentation individual. Each student will choose one week to make a presentation in front of the class. You will spend 10-15max. minutes summarising an academic article and relating it to the text we are reading that week.

**c) Wednesday's mini quiz** done in class, one or two questions related to the literary text

### **d) Reading Journal due on 30.03.2022**

The Reading Journal basically consists of your weekly reflexions plus one final long reflexion where you write about what have you learn from the texts and in class discussions.

Weekly Reflexion 25%

Reading Journal 35%

Presentation 25%

Quiz 10%

Participation 5 %

### **Course Outline (Basic Topics):**

#### **Week 1 Introduction and Overview**

Monday 10.01.2022 Introduction

Wednesday 12 January Chapter 1 Bernardine Evaristo *Girl, Woman, Other* pp. 1-40

#### **Week 2 The Body**

**Monday 17.01.2022**

Chris Shilling, "Natural Bodies or social bodies?". *The Body. A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford UP, 2016. pp 7-23. ANNA & ETHAN

Wednesday 19 January

Chapter 1 Bernardine Evaristo *Girl, Woman, Other*, pp. 41-75.

#### **Week 3 Sexed Bodies**

**Monday 24.01.2022**

Chris Shilling, "Sexed bodies". *The Body. A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford UP, 2016. pp 24-41

**LAURA & DORKA**

Wednesday 26 January Chapter 1 Bernardine Evaristo *Girl, Woman, Other*, pp. 75-112.

## Gender and Sexuality through Fiction

### Week 4 The invention of sexuality

**Monday 31.01.2022**

Véronique Mottier. "The invention of sexuality". *Sexuality. A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford UP, 2008. pp **FIKHAR**

Wednesday 2 February Chapter 2 Bernardine Evaristo *Girl, Woman, Other*, pp. 113-149.

### Week 5 The question of gender

**Monday 07.02.2022**

Raewyn Connell, "The question of Gender". *Gender in World Perspective*. Polity Press, 2021. pp 1-14 **RAHEL**

Wednesday 9th February Chapter 2 Bernardine Evaristo *Girl, Woman, Other*, pp. 150-188

### Week 6 Sex differences and gendered bodies

**Monday 14.02.2022**

Raewyn Connell, "Explaining difference". *Gender in World Perspective*. Polity Press, 2021. pp. 34-36

Wednesday 16 February Chapter 2 Bernardine Evaristo, *Girl, Woman, Other*, pp. 189-216

### Week 7 Gender relations

**Monday 21.02.2022**

Raewyn Connell, "Four dimensions of gender relations". *Gender in World Perspective*. Polity Press, 2021. pp 75-85

Wednesday 23 February Chapter 3 Bernadine Evaristo, *Girl, Woman, Other*, pp. 217-248

### Week 8 Gender identity

**Monday 28.02.2022**

Raewyn Connell, "Gender identity". *Gender in World Perspective*. Polity Press, 2021. pp 92-94. **MARTA**

Wednesday 2 March Chapter 3 Bernadine Evaristo *Girl, Woman, Other*, pp. 249-275

### Week 9 Feminisms

**Monday 07.03.2022**

Nancy A. Hewitt. "Feminist Frequencies. Regenerating the Wave Metaphor". *Feminist Studies*, vol. 38, 2012. pp 658-680. **VARVARA**

Wednesday 9 March Chapter 3 Bernadine Evaristo *Girl, Woman, Other*, pp. 276-306

### Week 10 Manhood

**Monday 14.03.2022**

Agustín Fuentes Searching for the "Roots" of Masculinity in Primates and the Human Evolutionary Past. *Current Anthropology*, vol. 2. N.S23, February 2021 pp. 15-25. **FERDINAND**

Wednesday 16 March Chapter 4 Bernadine Evaristo *Girl, Woman, Other*, pp. 307-340

## Gender and Sexuality through Fiction

### Week 11 Gender transitions

Monday 21.03.2022

Raewyn Connell, "Gender Politics". *Gender in World Perspective*. Polity Press, 2021. pp 129-134  
Chapter 4 Bernardine Evaristo *Girl, Woman, Other*, pp. 341-371

### Week 12 Conclusion

Monday 28.03.2022

Chapter 4 Bernardine Evaristo, *Girl, Woman, Other*, pp. 372-404

Wednesday 30.03.2022

Chapter 5 Bernardine Evaristo, *Girl, Woman, Other*, pp. 405-452

### Basic Bibliography:

ConnellRaewyn, "Gender Politics". *Gender in World Perspective*. Polity Press, 2021

Davis, Kathy, *Handbook of Gender and Women's Studies*. London: Sage, 2006

Evaristo, Bernardine. *Girl, Woman, Other*. Penguin, 2019.

Fuentes Agustín Searching for the "Roots" of Masculinity in Primates and the Human Evolutionary Past. *Current Anthropology*, vol. 2. N.S23, February 2021 pp. 15-25

HewittNancy A.. "Feminist Frequencies. Regenerating the Wave Metaphor". *Feminist Studies*, vol. 38, 2012. pp 658-680

Mottier Véronique. "The invention of sexuality". *Sexuality. A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford UP, 2008. pp

Shilling, Chris, "Natural Bodies or social bodies". *The Body. A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford UP, 2016. pp 7-23