

English 359: American Women Writers of the Nineteenth Century Winter 2012

Professor Stephanie Carpenter



This course will study prose writings of American women authors of the nineteenth century (roughly 1833-1900). We'll read with attention to how these writers fit—or don't—the literary movements of their time periods. We'll also look at how these writers represent social issues—including abolition, labor reform, and women's rights—in their work. Finally, we'll consider questions of reception: some of these writers were wildly-popular in their day but were subsequently forgotten; some were little known in their lifetimes and are widely-studied now. What accounts for these shifts?

The reading list will include nonfiction and fiction by Harriet Jacobs, Louisa May Alcott, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, Constance Fenimore Woolson, and Zitkala-Sa, among others. Students will be required to write several papers and deliver an in-class presentation. Short weekly written responses to the readings and class participation will make up the remainder of the course work.

Prerequisites: ENG112 or ENG120 **and** a 200-level literature course.

This course can be used by English majors to fulfill the American Literature requirement.