

## Portfolio Exam

**Due by 9:00AM on August 13, 2018 emailed as one continuous PDF (including cover sheet) to [nsilverman@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:nsilverman@gc.cuny.edu). Exams received after 9:00AM on August 13 and/or not sent as one continuous PDF will receive a grade of Fail.**

Student Number: 81815

### **This exam includes:**

- Framing Essay (2000 words total)
  - Including:
    - Intellectual Autobiography (1000 words)
    - Reflections on the Portfolio Exam (1000 words)
- Conference Paper (10 double spaced pages + works cited)
  - Including:
    - Conference Call for Papers
    - Abstract (200 words)

### **Plus two of the following three parts:**

- Review Essay (12-15 double spaced pages)
- Annotated Bibliography
  - Including:
    - 15 Entries
    - 1500 word Rationale
- Syllabus (5-8 double spaced pages in total)
  - including:
    - Teaching Statement (1-2 pages)
    - Syllabus (3-4 pages)
    - Analytical Explanation (2-3 pages)

### **This exam fulfills the comprehensive stipulations in the following ways (texts may be repeated):**

1. Three different centuries:
  - a. Text: "To Penshurst" Part: Syllabus
  - b. Text: Sense and Sensibility Part: Annotated Bibliography
  - c. Text: The Handmaid's Tale Part: Syllabus
2. One Pre-1800 text & One Post-1800 text:
  - a. Text: A Simple Story Part: Annotated Bibliography
  - b. Text: The House of Mirth Part: Conference Paper
3. Two different national traditions:
  - a. Text: American Part: Conference Paper
  - b. Text: British Part: Annotated Bibliography

## FRAMING ESSAY

### Intellectual Autobiography

My scholarship has focused on the role of female communities in eighteenth-century British literature and how they both define and shatter conventions of female behavior. My MA thesis, “‘So Uncommon a Society’”: A Utopian Model of Friendship in *Millenium Hall*,” centers around female friendship in Sarah Robinson Scott’s novel, written in 1762. The narrative follows four pairs of close female friends whose stories are largely interchangeable. Their narrative voices are similar, their personalities are indistinguishable and when they arrive at the Hall, they lose their individual identities entirely, becoming a powerful collective force and creating a communal vision of subjectivity that prefigures both the roots of feminism and women’s ability to step out of the shadows of matrimony through property ownership and philanthropy. Scott manages to transform the discourse of friendship into a business partnership, a means of acquiring monetary agency through gentry capitalism.

While in the MA program at Queens College, I studied a number of mid-to-late eighteenth-century novels including *Clarissa*, *Belinda*, *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*, *Emmeline*, *The Female Quixote*, and *Maria, or the Wrongs of Woman*. What attracts me most about these texts is the tension between societal expectations and the heroine’s struggle to assert her own dreams and desires, which are often expressed to a close female friend through dialogue or letters. Janet Todd, author of *Women’s Friendship in Literature*, maintains that in the eighteenth-century, close friendships between women served to “ease loneliness, teach survival and create power” (413). My work builds on this concept and engages with the ways in which significant political, economic and social shifts impact corresponding ideas about femininity – what it means to be a woman in the Enlightenment, what is expected, what transgressions are

possible and how women can circumnavigate the marriage plot without losing their identity in the process. I am especially interested in the ways in which social relationships and communities contribute to female identity formation, how salon culture and intellectual alliances such as the Bluestocking circle affect selfhood, both by giving women a physical space to meet outside the realm of marriage and motherhood and by legitimating their access to public discourse.

As I move into my second year of coursework, I feel that my professors and advisor at the Graduate Center have helped me expand my research in new and interesting ways. Caroline Reitz suggested I read *Cranford*, about a community of women in the nineteenth-century. Nancy K. Miller recommended two books: Ivy Schweitzer's *Perfecting Friendship: Politics and Affiliation in Early American Literature* and an essay collection called *Figuring Age: Women, Bodies, Generations*. Her Postmodern Memoir class allowed me to consider the role of female friendship in graphic autobiographies written by women.

I also think that my scholarly interests are broadening. I recently became interested in ecocriticism and the ways in which literature and the environment intersect. Talia Schaffer recommended Alan Buell's *Natures in Translation*, a transformative book that made me re-evaluate the way I view Nature, with a capital N. Instead of a monolithic, single entity, Buell argues that there are all kinds of natures, a concept I've applied to Romantic poetry and short stories that I read and teach. Our annual Victorian conference focused on Eco-time this year and I was able to hear talks on everything from the latest developments in the environmental justice movement to the relationship between the Anthropocene and late Victorian disaster science fiction. In a roundtable meeting the day before the conference, I was also privileged to hear two speakers, Nathan Hensley and Devon Griffiths, discuss their latest books in depth. In addition, I joined GC Poetics, a student group that meets bi-monthly. Besides receiving feedback on poems

I am working on, the group conducts workshops, including one on translation that I found especially helpful.

In the near future, I would like to visit the Huntington Library in San Marino, CA. to explore the papers of Elizabeth Montagu, known as the Queen of the Bluestockings. This collection (# MSSMO 1-6923) comprises 117 boxes, consisting chiefly of letters, with some manuscripts. Correspondents include the Duchess of Portland, Sarah Robinson Scott, Elizabeth Vesey, and Montagu's husband, Edward, who was a member of Parliament, a prominent Whig, and the owner of coal mines in Northumberland, which Montagu managed after his death. The papers deal with literary affairs, personalities and gossip, including references to current books and plays, as well as the social and everyday life of Montagu, and current political events, such as the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745, the Seven Years War, the Coronation of George III, the John Wilkes Affair, and the trial of Warren Hastings. My goal is to seek connections between the bonds the women formed, themes of female friendship in the novels they read and discussed (by Richardson, Fielding, Burney and others), and their own writings (including poems, essays, literary criticism, and conduct books on virtue, love, marriage and friendship).

Whether it be the travel utopias of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, the community of friends in Sarah Robinson Scott's *Millenium Hall*, or Anna Laetitia Barbauld's pamphlets urging every individual (regardless of gender) to participate in a national political discourse, many works of the period seem to map a way out of the expected role for women, towards a more egalitarian subjectivity. My project will also explore the way postmodernists have viewed women's subjectivity and where the discussion is headed. Some of the questions I consider are: What do female friendships reveal about a woman's interiority? How is subjectivity filtered through the epistolary form? How does the erasure of feminine identity contribute to colonial

domination at home and abroad? And to what extent is the role of the female figure in eighteenth-century literary culture a voice for the author and to what extent is she a commodity in the burgeoning literary marketplace? In my dissertation, I hope to address these issues in a way that encompasses the complexities of female friendship and opens a dialogue between postmodern feminism and the groundbreaking earlier writing of Mary Astell, Mary Wollstonecraft and Catharine Macaulay.

### Reflections on the Portfolio Exam

My current area of specialization is how and why British women form friendships and communities in the eighteenth-century. I feel that the portfolio exam, along with the classes I've taken at the GC during my first year, have broadened this interest, while building on it, in various ways. For example, my annotated bibliography explores sensibility and gender in late eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century British novels. The idea of female community was not my focus in these works though I noticed that by entering public spaces for pleasure, women begin to transform previous alignments of gender. Though sensibility is often self-focused it is usually performed in relation to another person and linked to the desire to understand that person's feelings, which is a central objective of friendship. Previously, I had solely focused on women's thoughts, motivations and actions. Men in the novels concerned me only in relation to the effect they had on women. The annotated bibliography forced me to give men, masculinity and male sensibility equal attention. Through various novels and scholarly criticism, I was able to examine how excessive sensibility (weeping, fainting, palpitations of the heart, melancholy, incoherence, etc.) is often interpreted differently for women than for men and related to larger concerns about human subjectivity, without privileging one gender over another.

My conference paper, "How Could She Forsee that such a Friend was Worth Cultivating": Female Friendship and Social Class in *The House of Mirth*," also pushed me in new directions. This is a new area of study for me, both because it concentrates on the American tradition of female friendship and represents a different chronological period, the early twentieth-century, particularly in the context of Old New York. (I had already begun exploring transatlantic connections in my Doctoral Studies class by conducting archival research at The New York Historical Society in the Causeries du Lundi collection (MS 104), comprising 19

boxes. The group, which means “Monday chattering,” was founded in 1880 when Elizabeth Hamilton Cullum, granddaughter of Alexander Hamilton, invited 50 of her prominent women friends to lunch at her Fifth Avenue apartment to present a paper that they had researched on a topic of their choosing). Nearly 150 years after Sarah Scott and the Bluestockings, and 25 years after Cullum, social class and labor play important roles in the way friendships are portrayed and defined in Wharton’s novel. By tailoring the paper to a specific conference, this project helped me focus on the relevancy of my topic. It forced me to confront what is “new” about what I have to say and how I can add to the scholarly conversation. To that end, I make connections between female friendship in *The House of Mirth* and female friendship in *The Shadow of a Doubt*, a Wharton play from 1901 that was discovered in the archives of the University of Texas, in Austin, last year. I also connect Wharton’s portrayal of friendship as labor to her own fraught relationship with her governess, Anna Bahlmann, through letters Wharton wrote to Bahlmann that were published in 2012.

Homosociality also plays a key role in a course I am teaching at Queens College called “Literature and Place.” Though I had previously connected the concept of place, such as Scott’s utopian community, to female relationships, I had never studied theories about the significance of place in literature and how they may connect to my scholarly interests, until now. Reading and teaching Edgar Casey’s *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History*, has enabled me to contextualize my understanding of female community in new ways. Casey defines the idea of place, discusses the obscuration of place in Western culture, examines how displacement affects people of various nations, genders and races, reflects on how technology and the sameness of place on a global scale has helped make the world a placeless place, and ties place to the idea of community.

Building on the latter point, I have my students consider the ways in which place affects not only the narrative and characters in the novels, short stories, plays and poems we read in the class, but how it impacts the overall sense of community in each work. For instance, women are either placed into or form hierarchical communities in Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*. After reading Elizabeth Abel's "(E)merging Identities: the Dynamics of Female Friendship in Contemporary Fiction by Women," students discuss the ways in which female relationships in the novel are impacted by the characters' ability or inability to survive the trauma of an oppressive, misogynistic, dystopian society. Atwood's novel, begun in 1984 while she was living in West Berlin, chronicles the impossibility of female friendship in a world where women have been reduced to wombs for the benefit of the patriarchy.

I also feel that the portfolio exam has helped me to clarify my teaching philosophy (while enabling me to realize that I do indeed have one). It is helpful to articulate my pedagogical beliefs and goals, and to see how my philosophy is itself a work in progress – subject to ongoing change and revision. Sometimes when I'm teaching I get so caught up in the readings, the lesson plans, and even grading, that it's hard to look at the big picture: what I hope to accomplish during the course of the semester, how the class is responding to my methodology, and so forth. This portfolio has forced me to take a step back and evaluate my approach to teaching English and particularly, my approach to ENGL 162W, "Literature and Place."

I hope that as I continue through the program I will be able to keep exploring my primary interest in different chronological periods, "national traditions," genres, and theoretical approaches. There are so many areas to pursue – transgressive friendships in Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*, the role of affect theory in female friendships, how gender and race affect friendship in nineteenth-century slave narratives, the way friendship figures in postmodern



graphic memoirs – to name a few. I view this portfolio as the first step in a longer process of expanding the scope and breadth of my scholarly research.

## **PART 1: CONFERENCE PAPER**

### **ABSTRACT**

“How Could She Foresee that Such a Friend was Worth Cultivating”: Female Friendship  
and Social Class in *The House of Mirth*

Social class in literature (and life) has many permutations and affects different areas of people's lives, including work, marriage and interpersonal relationships. It can and does also play a decisive role in the way friendships are formed, maintained or even rejected. In Edith Wharton's *The House of Mirth*, class plays a decisive role as the heroine, Lily Bart, finds herself caught between two polarities – the high society New York world of wealth and privilege and the working class shop girls who must earn their keep. Interestingly, Lily is unable to form genuine friendships with women in either group although she performs friendship with her upper class friends. While scholars have examined female friendships in the novel (Lidoff faults Wharton for fostering feelings of resentment and revenge among women; Goodman sees Lily as struggling to define herself through positive connections with them), none have focused on the way class impacts friendship or the impossibility of forming emotional connections when all human relations are commodified. I argue that in *The House of Mirth*, friendship becomes a bargaining chip based on a system of exchange between women that is inextricably tied to one's place in the hierarchy of the New York social scene. Friends can help you rise or drag you down, like living, breathing rungs on an ever shifting social ladder.

**Call for Papers**

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2018 (/cfp/2018/05

**Pacific Ancient and Modern Language Association (PAMLA)**

**Conference CFP, “Playing Our Part:**

**Social Hierarchy and the Performance of Class in Literature”**

**deadline for submissions:** May 30,2018

**full name / name of organization:**

John D. Schwetman / University of Minnesota Duluth

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While historically a product of birthright, and more recently associated with merit, social class has always presented itself as a set of expectations setting the stage for encounters between unfamiliar people. Whether sincerely or in masquerade, everyone adopts a social class as a role to be played before an audience. In line with this year’s conference theme “Acting, Roles, and Stages,” this panel examines social class as performance and focuses on literary works across genres and eras that present class accordingly. From estates satire to minstrel show, from social realism to the theater of the absurd, we will consider ways that literature either enacts the performance of class or dramatizes its enactment.

This panel invites proposals for presentations that examine the performance of social class as represented in literature or enacted by literature from different genres, cultures, and time periods.

Submissions will be welcome in the following topic areas:

Social class as masquerade

Class satire

The physical trappings of class  
Class consciousness in literature

Class and literary regionalism

The intellectual class

The performance of class as a linguistic phenomenon

Present-day performances of social class in literature and politics

Any other mode of engagement with class as performance in literature

Paper proposals must be made via our online system found here:

<http://pamla.org/2018/topic-areas> (<http://pamla.org/2018/topic-areas>)

Note: The PAMLA Conference will take place over the November 9-11, 2018 weekend at Western Washington University in Bellingham, Washington. All presenters must become members of PAMLA to present at the conference.

“How Could She Foresee that Such a Friend was Worth Cultivating”: Female Friendship  
and Social Class in *The House of Mirth*

Edith Wharton spent much of her career chronicling the foibles and fractiousness of Old New York, an upper class segment of society for whom wealth and privilege was a time honored birthright. Many of her heroines strive to penetrate this enclosed world, with varying degrees of success. In *The House of Mirth*, Lily Bart struggles to find her footing among the rich and socially connected people she encounters at home and abroad. Her entrée falls under the guise of “friendship” and she plays the role of ‘friend’ to various society wives who inhabit this gilded world. But Wharton depicts female friendship here as part of a process that commodifies human relations. I argue that what Lily actually performs is work, as friendship becomes a bargaining chip based on a system of exchange between women. The patriarchal order makes it impossible to create genuine bonds; instead, men get in the way of friendship and even triangulate relationships among women. These ties, however, are part of a system of barter and labor (sometimes paid, sometimes unpaid) that exist in the world of the novel. Friendship is also inextricably tied to one’s place in the hierarchy of the New York social scene. Friends can help you rise or drag you down, like living, breathing rungs on an ever shifting social ladder.

Scholars are quick to point out the nature of the relationships, ranging from supportive to contentious, that exist between female friends in the novel. They fall into one of two camps. Some, like Joan Lidoff, fault Wharton for fostering feelings of resentment and revenge among women. Others, like Susan Goodman, author of *Edith Wharton’s Women: Friends and Rivals*, sees her heroine struggling to define herself through positive connections with other women. The truth lies somewhere in between these two polarities. In a novel about purity – Lily’s name, for

instance signifies innocence and pure-heartedness – there is no pure depiction of friendship.

Rather friendship becomes a bargaining chip based on a system of exchange between women of all social classes.

Historically, female friendship has played an important role in literature. In mid-to-late-British eighteenth-century novels, the heroine often seeks out one close female friend with whom she forms a strong emotional bond, receiving support and solace as she navigates the precarious road towards marriage. While fending off unwanted advances from rakes and coping with fathers who are absent or emotionally distant, her bosom friend serves as a sounding board and confidante. As Sharon Marcus has illustrated in nineteenth-century novels like *Middlemarch* and *David Copperfield*, female friends can even help to facilitate the marriage plot. Meanwhile, in America, Ivy Schweitzer's exploration of early American literature posits that friendship is situated as a path to the promise of democratic equality. Later, in the nineteenth-century, Carroll Smith-Rosenberg notes that female friendship is often characterized by closeness, freedom of emotional expression, and uninhibited physical contact that lasts a lifetime.

In *The House of Mirth*, however, this is clearly not the case. The word “friend” is mentioned 205 times over the course of the novel. But friendship is not, for the most part, presented as a sympathetic attachment between two women. In the introduction to my edition of the novel, Jeffrey Meyers writes that Lily “presciently admits that her best friends, despite generous invitations, don't really care what happens to her.” Indeed, it's fair to ask if Lily has *any* friends and what the term indicates to her and those around her, as well as to Wharton. Scholars often focus on the significance of the *tableau vivant* scene, where Lily dresses as Mrs. Lloyd and is the focus of male attention. But Lily is often ‘performing’ friendship for women when she is not in costume. Judy Trenor, one of the rich society wives, is described as a friend

though Lily's relationship to Judy is that of an unpaid social secretary. During her stay as a houseguest at Bellomont, Lily rises early to help Judy with her correspondence and other necessary, time-consuming matters that are a quid pro quo for Lily's bed and board at the country estate. Indeed, friendship often takes the form of labor in the novel. When Lily is invited to accompany the Dorsets on a cruise as their friend, her role is actually to keep George Dorset occupied so Bertha can safely carry on her affair with Ned Silverton. Lily is severely punished not for falling in love with George, but for failing to do her job when the affair becomes public knowledge.

Though the labor of friendship is both paid and unpaid, the distinctions between the two are often blurry. Carrie Fisher, for instance, acts as a guide for *nouveau riche* American women who wish to make the right social connections in Europe. The reader gets the sense that Mrs. Fisher, who is unmarried and has no other means of financial support, is largely doing this as a way to obtain free room and board though towards the end of the novel, she refers to Mrs. Bry as a "stern task-master" and notes that she received "a handsome cheque when the season was over!" Lily, contrastingly, is not paid for her service to any of her friends, including the Dorsets. She is expected to use her beauty (her greatest asset) and her charm to distract George Dorset so that Bertha can carry on an illicit affair behind his back. But none of this is spelled out in a job description or communicated to her verbally. It is supposed to be tacitly understood. Moreover, Lily does not seem to realize this is the sole reason the Dorsets have invited her aboard their yacht. Mrs. Fisher tells Selden that "Lily has been a tremendous success," in Europe, admired by royalty and nobility alike. However, the trip is not a success at all. When Bertha gives her the cold shoulder, Lily doesn't understand that she has not completed the task required of her and will now be made into a scapegoat as Bertha begins spreading rumors that Lily and George were

the ones having an affair. She initially views this usage as a position of voluntary helpmate, a gift of her friendship, not recognizing what she really is: unpaid labor.

In “Debasing Exchange: Edith Wharton’s *The House of Mirth*, Wai-Chee Dimock discusses the commodification of social intercourse in the novel, arguing that Lily is caught up in a system of exchange. “Within the orbits of exchange, power resides in the ability to define the terms of exchange, to make one thing ‘equal’ to another.” Dimock is primarily talking about romantic attachments in her article, but the same principles apply to friendship patterns. Bertha, for instance, has set the terms of exchange on the yacht, terms that Lily does not comply with. The price she pays is being ostracized from New York society, which consequently leads to isolation and impoverishment. Dimock notes that “‘Payment in kind,’ the most primitive form of barter economy, has no place in a highly developed social marketplace.” It’s fair to ask if friendship can ever be paid in kind and what that transaction would consist of. Who sets the terms of the agreement? Who wields the power? Who is the employer versus the employee? The exchange is never shown to be equal.

Friendships are not elective in the novel; they are not based on the recognition of finding a kindred spirit with whom to share mutual confidences and connections. Rather, they are ways to perform services and tasks. For Lily, “friendship” with Bertha Dorset and Judy Trenor also place her in their social set, if only temporarily. Sociability itself is entangled in a series of formalized rounds of dinners, teas, card playing gatherings, and other group oriented social occasions. Intimate moments between female friends are few and far between. Even against this forced social background, it is not surprising that Lily is largely incapable of forming friendships at all, given her upbringing. Her parents are portrayed as distant and it is clear that she never experienced close attachments to them. After Lily’s father dies and there is little money left, her



mother isolates them both because “she detected a note of condescension in the friendliest advances.” And after that, her aunt, Mrs. Peniston, decides “I’ll try her for a year,” as if she is a servant. Indeed, Mrs. Peniston regards her niece as a burdensome charity case and there is no possibility of forming a bond there either.

It is intriguing to compare the portrayal of friendship in *The House of Mirth* to the relationships between women in *The Shadow of a Doubt*, Wharton’s unpublished play from 1901, written four years earlier and discovered last year in the archives at The University of Texas, in Austin. In the play, the heroine, Kate, can depend on her friend Clodagh and family friend, Lady Uske, when she is penniless, living alone, and abandoned by her husband. These relationships, between women in two different social classes, are in pointed contrast to the men in her life: Lord Osterleigh, who wants to get rid of her by any means necessary and her husband, John, whose distrust erodes their marriage. Lady Uske has tried to befriend her by giving her advice – to resist acting impulsively and to stay with John. Later on, though Kate never asks for help, she gets it anyway from these two women who are sympathetic to her plight. Clodagh even sacrifices her own happiness and her relationship with her fiancé, Mazaret, to aid Kate. She inadvertently intercepts a blackmail letter meant for Kate and pays off the blackmailer with her own money. Kate calls the gesture “heroic” but Clodagh simply says: “I knew I could help. What more does one need to know when one’s friends are in trouble?” Wharton imagines female solidarity in the play – but not the novel. Perhaps this is because Kate is not performing friendship. She genuinely values her bonds with Clodagh and Lady Uske.

Blackmail also figures in the friendship dynamic in *The House of Mirth* as Lily decides not to blackmail Bertha Dorset with the incriminating letters she possesses, throwing them in the fire at the end, and opting out of the transactional paradigm that “friendship” creates in the book.

Bertha has done nothing to deserve such magnanimity; she has spread rumors and outright lies about Lily at every turn, helping to sabotage Lily's relationships with Percy Gryce and Lawrence Selden. But at the close of the novel, Lily finally refuses to trade on her friendship and cash in on its value, knowing it would hurt Selden in the process. The check that she leaves by her bedside after her death is not money acquired by providing services in kind. Rather, it is money bequeathed to her by Mrs. Peniston that she has made over to Gus Trenor, so that all her accounts will be paid in full. She is no longer a commodity in the marketplace though some critics have argued that even in death she continues to be objectified under Selden's penetrating gaze. Perhaps Lily has an ideal of friendship that cannot be realized, especially in the kind of inversion in which a friend is also an employee.

Lily's one possibility for friendship resides in her relationship with Gerty Farish, who besides being the kindest character in the novel is a part of the working class. Gerty is open to the possibility of friendship; she admires Lily immensely although her feelings are often tinged with envy. After Lily is nearly raped by Gus Trenor, she goes straight to Gerty's flat, seeking comfort. The two share an embrace that in the world of Smith-Rosenberg would lead to a sympathetic attachment lasting a lifetime. "Hold me, Gerty, hold me, or I shall think of things, she moaned; and Gerty silently slipped an arm under her, pillowing her head in its hollow as a nest for a tossing child." It's a maternal moment and one that could have conceivably led to increased intimacy between the two women. But the next morning, Lily begins distancing herself from Gerty, partly as a way of separating herself from what she perceives as the poverty of Gerty's lower class existence, which Lily has been trying to escape since she was a teenager. She is physically uncomfortable from sleeping in Gerty's narrow bed and she describes the flat thusly: "The outer air, penned between high buildings brought no freshness through the window;

steam-heat was beginning to sing in a coil of dingy pipes, and a smell of cooking permeated the crack of the door.” When Gerty brings her a cup of tea she is described in an unattractive manner: “Her face looked sallow and swollen in the dreary light, and her dull hair shaded imperceptibly into the tones of her skin.” The closeness of the previous evening has passed and no deeper bond between the women is established. The narrator relates: “the two kissed silently, but without a trace of the previous night’s emotion.”

Lily’s resistance to Gerty’s friendship, one of the few women who genuinely likes her and wishes her well, has to do with perceived class differences. Gerty lives in a small flat and works for a living, two important distinctions that immediately make her beneath Lily’s notice, though by the end Lily has fallen below Gerty in the social scheme. The same paradigm holds true for Miss Kilroy, a fellow worker in the millinery shop, whose friendship Lily also rejects. Miss Kilroy, with her ungrammatical speech, is a working class woman and as such, is beneath Lily’s notice, even after Lily has fallen on hard times. When the women at the shop make overtures to her, she rejects them, as well. “She did not care to be mingled in their noisy dispersal; once in the street; she always felt an irresistible return to her old standpoint, an instinctive shrinking from all that was unpolished and promiscuous.”

Lily also does not care for Grace Stepney, who lacks class and social graces and who ultimately inherits the bulk of Mrs. Peniston’s fortune. The omniscient narrator ominously warns that such an attitude could be wrongheaded, for “how could she foresee that such a friend was worth cultivating.” I think the verb “worth” is important here, with its connotations of wealth and capital gains. Friends are useful in so far as they can help you achieve money and status. Their emotional value, as confidantes or someone to form strong bonds or shared experiences with, or to receive support and solace from, is nil. Giving becomes swallowed up by a barter economy

that proves resistant to friendship. At one point, in the novel, Lily gives \$300 (which she can ill afford) to Gerty Farish's Girls Club and then "collects a lot of money from her friends," \$500 from Mrs. Bry and \$1,000 from Rosedale. This largesse helps place Lily temporarily on the same social footing as her wealthy associates. Currency and 'friendship' are constantly intertwined, a transactional relationship.

Wharton herself valued her friendships immensely and had a wide circle of friends, corresponding with editors and publishers, businesspeople, intellectuals, artists, society figures, and other novelists, men and women alike. According to her biographer, R.W. B. Lewis, she wrote at least 6 letters a day and once found 65 waiting for her. One of the most interesting friendships Wharton had is with Anna Bahlmann, who served the writer for 40 years, first as a German tutor, then as a governess and chaperone, as a companion, and finally as personal secretary. Though Bahlmann is only mentioned cursorily in *A Backward Glance*, Wharton's official autobiography, she played an important role in Wharton's life, helping to encourage the author's literary tastes when she was young and acting as a confidante later on. Wharton's letters to her reveal a deep affection and trust. (Initially, she signed them from "Your devoted "Herz," which means "heart" in German.) "There is a sort of friendship," Wharton wrote, "which makes itself felt less by personal intercourse, than by those shocks of intellectual sympathy which seem to bridge over silence and space and make two minds as one – and it is for that reason that in certain moments I feel as strongly [united with you] as if you were in the room and talking to me."

But in addition to being a friend, Bahlmann was first and foremost Wharton's employee, not part of her social circle. Irene Goldman-Price, who edited the collection of letters, notes that Bahlmann "had a way with Teddy," Wharton's mentally ill husband, and was frequently called

in to keep him calm. Later, she was engaged to housesit for the Whartons in Newport, to type the manuscript for *The Decoration of Houses* and to proofread galleys of *The Custom of the Country*, among other responsibilities. It is a transactional relationship (she was paid for all of these duties) echoed throughout *The House of Mirth*, but one where the terms of the transaction (salary, expectations, hours, etc.) are made clear. When Balhmann was 66 and beginning to become ill from the breast cancer that would kill her, Wharton complained to other friends that she took too long at dictation, did not record the names of donors to various charities properly, and was frustrated by how slowly Anna worked. Still, upon hearing of Balhmann's death in 1916, Wharton wrote ". . . what Anna has been to me for so many years, what a friend & helper & companion . . . I shall never have a friend like her, so devoted, so unselfish, so upright, so sensitive & fine in every thought and feeling."

Though Wharton herself prized friendship and was enmeshed in various social networks, in *The House of Mirth*, there are no figures of solidarity, only gradations of friendship that are as fragile as tissue paper and as easily torn. Men are presented as another impediment to female friendships. For instance, Selden comes between Bertha and Lily; Bertha has a crush on him and views Lily as a rival. Gus Trenor sabotages Lily's relationship with his wife, Judy, by offering to make Lily some quick money in the market; the other women all seem to know that Judy is adverse to Gus investing money for any of their friends, though it's unclear whether this is because it ruins the supposedly carefree air at Bellomont or whether she doesn't want their finances drained. And Ned Silverton inadvertently ruins any ties between Lily and Bertha when he becomes Bertha's lover. Men have the financial power in the novel; they are seen socializing at clubs and on the streets of New York, talking with one another in a free, unrestrained manner. But male-female friendships are not possible. When Lily agrees to go up to Selden's flat

unchaperoned at the beginning of the novel, the decision smacks of impropriety and is the first in a series of steps that leads to her downfall. Throughout, male-female relationships have a sexual connotation, as when Rosedale propositions Lily and she counters: “What is your idea of being good friends? Making love to me without asking me to marry you?” If Lily’s friends are “false” it doesn’t seem to bother her. She seeks these friendships out in order to secure her place in society, a social plateau that usually eludes her reach.

Lily’s “friends” circulate false rumors about her that affect both her homosocial relationships and her prospects for marriage. Gossip operates in the transactional world of the novel as a form of social currency, which helps people rise and fall within the closed confines of the social world. Lily seems powerless to stop the spread of negative rumors about her (all started by women) and it costs her love, marriage, happiness and health. Interestingly, her one powerful symbol of gossip, Selden’s letters to Bertha (a written record of love that is presumably stronger than any words actually spoken in the novel), is ultimately tossed into the flames. By destroying this bargaining chip (Lily has after all been described as a gambler throughout the book), she refuses to participate in the commodification going on around her.

Schweitzer talks about friendship having “various ideological deployments and transformations and contradictory effects – at once inclusive and exclusive, oppressive and empowering.” This can be seen in *The House of Mirth* where Lily is outside the communal bond that link the various society women together; friendships are viewed as fractured and fragile, exclusionary and elusive. Lily uses the term loosely, as does the omniscient narrator. Rather than signifying affective personal ties, the word seems to indicate an unspoken business arrangement in line with the increasing commercialization of New York’s Gilded Age.

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### **PART 3: ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

#### Sensibility and Gender in late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth-Centuries Novels

Sensibility has been examined, critiqued, attacked and studied in novels throughout the eighteenth-century and continuing to the present day. Critics have ridiculed excess emotionality, lambasting the tendency of characters (and authors who created them) to shed tears over trivial issues while simultaneously ignoring pressing social matters. Even defining the term proves contentious. It has been variously referred to as a physical response of a reactive body (blushing, fainting, swooning, crying, palpitations of the heart) and as an emotional response, encompassing sympathy, melancholy, distress and irritability. Other scholars link it to a belief in natural goodness, enhanced aesthetic appreciation, benevolence and compassion. Overall, sensibility is often perceived as negative. It can be viewed as excessive, helping to substitute simulated feelings for genuine ones and distancing its subject from authentic, lived experiences. From the start, gender has played an important role in the way sensibility in novels is perceived and received. For instance, scholars note that the man of feeling is often lauded for fainting, blushing or weeping as this renders him more refined and sympathetic, while women are criticized as weak for engaging in these same behaviors.

The purpose of the annotated bibliography is to aid in my research process and to lay the groundwork for a longer scholarly article on this topic. The bibliography explores the meaning of sensibility and the way leading scholars have interpreted the term in regard to gender differences. I intend to argue that heroines are not the victims of their heightened emotions, but rather use this emotional state as an imaginative response to socially confining situations. Men of feeling, contrastingly, either employ sensibility as a self-protective shield or as a way of navigating the complexities of homosocial relationships. I have included three primary texts – Austen's *Sense*



*and Sensibility*, Godwin's *Caleb Williams* and Inchbald's *A Simple Story* – each for different reasons.

Austen's novel is a key text when it comes to the issue of gender and sensibility. Critics often create a binary in the novel, linking Marianne with sensibility and Elinor with sense. However, I will make the case that each of the characters is suffused with emotion, including the men. Although he admits to knowing "nothing of the picturesque" (Austen 71), Edward blushes and stammers frequently and gets upset when Marianne accuses him of being reserved. Colonel Brandon is overcome with emotion when relating Eliza's story and has to stop several times to compose himself. In his impassioned defense of his actions, Willoughby admits to having strong feelings for Marianne; "his head and heart [was] full of" her (232). As for Elinor, she represses her feelings at key moments. When she parts from Edward, for instance, it "left an uncomfortable impression on [her] feelings, especially, which required some trouble and time to subdue" (76). In her many conversations with the overbearing Lucy, she commands her sensibility, at one point pasting on a smile, "which concealed very agitated feelings" (107). Despite how close she is to Marianne the two do not communicate verbally about important family matters such as whether or not Marianne is engaged or whether Elinor is in love with Edward. Instead, Marianne communicates her distress by sighing, weeping and eventually falling ill and Elinor strives to present a calm, collected front, an effort that requires "constant and painful exertion" (186). There is a tendency for some scholars to view the expressive Marianne as a victim of her own heightened emotional state. As Gibson puts it, "Marianne lives in a world of self-created delusion" (*Passionate Encounters in a Time of Sensibility* 252). However, Marianne's ability to see what others overlook in nature and art and to fall wildly in love with the

rake Willoughby allows her to break free of the mundane predictability of life at Barton cottage and her reduced circumstances, if only temporarily.

The view that sensibility ultimately undermines women's health and happiness was put forth forcibly in the eighteenth-century by Mary Wollstonecraft, who argues in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* that excessive sensibility is tied to women's physical, mental and moral decline. "Ever restless and anxious, their over exercised sensibility not only renders them uncomfortable themselves, but troublesome to others . . . their conduct is unstable" (Wollstonecraft 131). Wollstonecraft gives examples of how over-sensitized bodies are prey to fever, fragility and consumption, as well as madness. Today, scholars continue to link sensibility to female physiology. Erin Wilson, author of "The End of Sensibility: The Nervous Body in the Early Nineteenth Century," notes that in literature, women inevitably suffer from nerves because of romantic disappointments or tragedies, often contracting fevers following an emotional shock. And in "Sensibility as Epistemology in *Caleb Williams*, *Waverley* and *Frankenstein*," Isabelle Bour positions *Caleb Williams*' Emily, who suffers from hysteria and eventually dies, as a victim, resulting from the "failure" of sensibility. I disagree with Bour. Building on Ildiko Csengei's argument in *Sympathy, Sensibility and the Literature of Feeling*, who insists that for women, sensibility is a response to restrictive social circumstances, I maintain that Emily's heightened sensibility is actually a necessity, given that she has no money, rights or power in Tyrrell's household and her status is scarcely above that of a servant. Her romantic attachment to Faulkland, which is a fiercely imaginative act, is preferable to the alternative: a forced marriage to the brutish Grimes, who abducts her with the intention of raping her.

Caleb's excessive sensibility is also linked to imagination at several points in the novel. When he is confined in prison, he designs "imaginary adventures" (Godwin 193) until his mind

“glowed with enthusiasm” (192). His attempts to know the enigmatic Faulkland represents a desire to create a homosocial bond between two men of similar sensibilities. In my reading, the contents of Faulkland’s mysterious trunk, which are never revealed to the reader, symbolize the inner workings of the aristocrat’s mind and his tortured soul, which Caleb is forever trying to unlock in an attempt to figure out the motivations and thoughts of his employer and therefore why he has been unfairly persecuted. While the subjects of power, ethics, justice and commerce have been studied in this novel, not as much has been written about the themes of sensibility and gender.

The third primary text I’ve selected is Inchbald’s *A Simple Story*. Scholars have tended to create a binary here as well, positioning Miss Milner as the quasi-feminist woman of feeling and her daughter Matilda as yet another passive victim of sensibility. I view the novel differently, arguing that both women use sensibility to convey thoughts, motivations and desires that cannot be articulated in a repressive, patriarchal society. Instead of verbally trying to stop the duel between Dorriforth and Lord Frederick, which Miss Milner knows could prove fatal, she faints, conveying her fear and distress with this physical gesture. Using her imagination, Matilda substitutes items from material culture, such as a pen, a portrait and a carriage for her absent father and weeping, is transported into feeling that she has made a connection with him. “A hat, lying on one of the tables, gave her a sensation beyond any other” (Inchbald 246). As the central ‘man of feeling’ in the novel, Dorriforth represents a departure from earlier prominent male sensibility figures such as Harley in MacKenzie’s *The Man of Feeling*. Stephen Ahern, author of *Romantic Excess: Sensibility and the Genealogy of the Novel, 1680-1810*, explains that Harley seeks out fleeting moments of emotionality but is not really affected by them. “His sentimental aesthetic demands a succession of new scenes of suffering to provoke the kind of exhilarating

catharsis that is the payoff for participating in the drama of another's distress" (Ahern 137).

Dorriforth, contrastingly, appears to be deeply affected by the anger, shame, and love he feels and by the emotions of those around him. He "trembled for [Miss Milner's] happiness" (Inchbald 19), and when she defies his wishes, "his bosom is torn by excruciating sensations" (62).

According to G.J. Barker-Benfield, author of *The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, Dorriforth's "exquisite sensibility makes him deeply susceptible to 'love' – in effect, susceptible to women and to sexuality" (Barker-Benfield 256). While he closes himself off from the women in his life, he uses his sensibility to form homosocial connections with the priest Sandford and his nephew, Rushbrook, who act in a similar manner. Rushbrook says of Sandford, "he could scarce look at his companion without his eyes swimming in tears of gratitude and whenever he attempted to speak to him, gratitude choked his utterance" (294).

Barbara Benedict demonstrates in *Framing Feeling: Sentiment and Style in English Prose Fiction, 1745-1800*, how "the cult of feeling" has shaped novels in the second half of the eighteenth-century. She claims that sentimental literature does not simply advocate feeling; it also warns the reader against emotions associated with female culture, especially dangerously excessive sympathy. "Sentimental fictions portray feeling yet they use conventions that modify this portrayal by criticizing, satirizing, or moralizing this feeling within a conjured set of social values" (Benedict 213). In *Eighteenth-Century Sensibility and the Novel*, Ann Van Sant concurs that sensibility is often understood to be a form of moral superiority, a type of perception resulting from specialized internal powers. She adds that for both genders it is also associated with pain in psychological contexts.

Janet Todd's *Sensibility: An Introduction* is part of the bibliography because it is one of the earliest and most comprehensive studies of the subject. Todd notes that the woman of feeling

is generally submissive, passive and sweet while the man of feeling is a feminized man who is sensitive, fallible and vulnerable. In an unfeeling world, he has “avoided manly power and assumed the womanly qualities of tenderness and susceptibility but [he] cannot be raped and abandoned” (Todd 89). Claudia Johnson’s *Equivocal Beings: Politics, Gender and Sentimentality* is another book that contributes to the conversation about gender and sensibility. A chapter on Wollstonecraft explores the feminist’s aversion to feminized men, a culture of manly virtue that has been lost, and “a critical determination to detach female weakness from male sentimentality” (Johnson 32). Throughout, Johnson insists that sensibility is intimately connected to politics. “During the 1790s ‘men of feeling’ were decidedly conservative types, country gentlemen who resisted needed change, who had an aversion to newfangled social ideas, and who exemplified the gallant ways of Old England” (8). Johnson notes that the Jacobins were criticized for helping to unsex women and make them less feminine. “Sentimental man, having taken over once-feminine attributes, leaves to women only two choices: either the equivocal or the hyperfeminine” (12).

I have included one work of historiography in the annotated bibliography, Thompson’s *The Making of the English Working Class*. This social history will help link the reform agitation of the 1790s in England and its attendant climate of suspicion and surveillance to the inability of characters in the three novels I’ve selected to speak openly with one another, relying instead on a signification of non-verbal gestures such as weeping, fainting, blushing and swooning. Apart from the socially restrictive culture of the late eighteenth-century, authors (most obviously Godwin but also Inchbald and Austen) could have been using sensibility to comment on Jacobin life and aristocratic concerns about a more egalitarian society during and after the Terror.

### Annotated Bibliography

Ahern, Stephen. *Affected Sensibilities: Romantic Excess and the Genealogy of the Novel, 1680-1810*. New York: AMS Press, Inc., 2007. Ahern defines sensibility in the broadest sense as a capacity for living intensely that is demonstrated by a heightened sensitivity to one's environment. The passions also impact characters' sense of agency and contribute to an impression that all knowledge of self and the world derives from the senses, which may or may not be reliable. He points out that in the philosophical writings of Hume and others, sensibility is equated with an enhanced spirit of benevolence. Men of feeling "continue to be a better sort than the brutish people they meet" (18). Ahern also maintains that sensibility is "coded according to unstable categories of class and gender difference" (12). For men, it becomes a mark of social distinction, reflecting tensions between passion and reason, and between private desire and public duty. Eighteenth-century heroes proceed from one emotionally affecting scene to the next, adding "to his (and the reader's) store of vicariously experienced affective titillation" (132). Men's heightened emotions are often in response to the spectacle of virtue in distress. This is related to the fact that sensibility narratives are concerned with suffering, for example in Fielding's *David Simple* or Mackenzie's *The Man of Feeling*, in which "the protagonist is depicted as too good for a corrupt world and becomes a martyr to his or her sensibility" (20).

Austen, Jane. *Sense and Sensibility*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 2002. The Dashwood sisters, Marianne and Elinor, are forced out of their family home when their greedy half-brother inherits the estate. They experience romance, love and heartbreak and after a series of revelations involving the ne'er do well rake, Willoughby, they end up in companionate marriages. Marianne is a heroine who embodies sensibility. She sighs,

weeps, faints, and enthuses over the landscape. Her nervous body eventually causes her to stop eating and sleeping and to become ill. Yet Austen always portrays her as being warmhearted and genuine. “It was impossible for her to say what she did not feel, however trivial the occasion” (89). While Marianne criticizes Edward for reading Cowper with “so little sensibility” (16), Elinor pronounces his taste “delicate and pure” (17) and his emotional reactions, particularly embarrassment, are easily apparent through his blushing and stammering. Willoughby, ironically, expresses the most emotion of all the men in the novel in his confession scene with Elinor, although his motives appear solely self-interested. It is debatable to what extent Austen, through Marianne, is criticizing the culture of sensibility and its excesses and to what extent she is lamenting the fact that women are not able to express their emotions without being silenced or punished for doing so.

Barker-Benfield. G.J., *The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain*.

Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992. Barker-Benfield ties sensibility to material bases of consciousness developed by Newton and Locke. He states that men cultivate politeness and sensibility in the interests of commerce, associating it “with greater heterosociality abroad and at home” (xxv). For women, however, the literature of sensibility gave birth to the figure of virtue in distress and the ensuing anxiety is usually caused by a man. This sometimes leaves females in a morally superior position to men, including the promise of eventually reforming their rakish ways. “Paradoxically, perhaps, the gendering of sensibility sexualized it, associating desire with the rake/victim dyad” (xxvii). Leading doctors of the period, such as George Cheyne, determined that women had greater sensibility than men and men reported finding that sensibility a source of

attraction. For men, sensibility does not always equal emotional honesty. Barker-Benfield notes that in *Caleb Williams*, Faulkland shows signs of “poignant sensibility,” including shedding tears, but then “turns out to be a consummate hypocrite” (244). Barker-Benfield also discusses how Dorriforth represses his sensibility in *A Simple Story* and contrasts the priest’s knack for self-control to Miss Millner’s inability to repress her own feelings, even in the interests of marriage (256).

Benedict, Barbara M. *Framing Feeling: Sentiment and Style in English Prose Fiction, 1745-1800*. New York: AMS Press, 1994. Beginning in the eighteenth-century, Benedict claims, feeling has been at the center of English prose fiction, encompassing physical, mental and emotional sensations as well as the emotions of the reading audience. Moreover, “the literature of sensibility presents sensual and moral feelings as private, experienced alone; the physical divisions of the skin enforce the separation of human from human and represent the separation of heart from heart” (10). Both men and women of feeling seem unable to articulate emotion “in the social coinage of words,” and the narrative instead relies on interruptions, fractures, silences, digressions and “highly stylized exclamatory rhetoric” (13). For men, by the end of the eighteenth-century, the quality of vital responsiveness associated with sensibility was viewed as opposed to the individual’s duty to law and accepted norms of behavior. Thus, the man of feeling is increasingly separated from society, an isolated figure whose emotions are described but unspoken. For women, an excess of feeling is primarily linked to negative characteristics, including “passivity, gratitude, quiescence, and conformity” (14). In discussing *Sense and Sensibility*, Benedict establishes a binary between emotion and self-discipline, “the choice represented by [Austen’s] title” (196). “Self-disciplined Elinor



Dashwood models the control of emotion, while her ebullient sister Marianne demonstrates the hazards of uncontrolled feeling” (196).

Bour, Isabelle. “Sensibility as Epistemology in *Caleb Williams*, *Waverley* and *Frankenstein*.” *Studies in English Literature*. 45.5. (2005): 813-827. PROJECT MUSE. This article encapsulates the sensibility-as-failure argument or, as Bour puts it, sensibility is “an obstacle to a new representation of the human subject” (813). As such, she insists that the three works she studies be read as end-of-sensibility novels, meaning it has become “insufficient” as an account of the human mind. She positions sensibility as an “obstacle” and talks of its eventual “erosion” as a paradigm. Her discussion of *Caleb Williams* positions Emily as a victim, highlighting “the limitations of sensibility both as psychological account of the workings of the human mind and as a ‘sociological’ tool explaining moral behavior” (816). Sensibility is no match for a society in which selfish passions prevail. Bour states that Faulkland is gendered female by his sensibility, which she terms “dangerous” since she claims it devolves into an uncontrollable passion. Sensibility leads to magnetic sympathy, akin to the reader’s identification with the fictional characters, becoming a “sort of fuel for hermeneutic understanding” (816). “Sensibility,” Bour argues, “in its association with romance and chivalry, anchors psychological life in the past, and through its valorization of immediacy, of the first impression, is rooted in the present” (823).

Csengei, Ildiko. *Sympathy, Sensibility and the Literature of Feeling*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012. This study investigates the various ways in which the eighteenth-century understood the culture of feeling. Csengei echoes the belief, expressed by William Reddy and others, that eighteenth-century sentimentalism was a “form of

emotional navigation in response to restrictive social constructions . . . a product of the period's emotional regime" (11). She also links discourses of sensibility to psychoanalysis, scrutinizing the underlying neuroses and defense mechanisms of sighs, fainting, palpitations, distraction, melancholy and indisposition. In a chapter on the "sentimental swoon," she addresses the loss of consciousness, speech and sensation in women, "the least understood and most neglected" (24) symptom of sensibility. When Miss Milner of *A Simple Story* loses consciousness it is because social restrictions do not allow her to admit and express her true feelings. Women faint when they cannot communicate emotions, thoughts or desires openly. Csengei argues that Harley, the classic man of feeling in Mackenzie's eponymous novel, is surprisingly tearless at many critical moments in the story and that tears for men mark "ambivalent moments of sympathy" (124). The last section examines Godwin's erasure of Mary Wollstonecraft when writing her memorial autobiography, an act of ambivalent mourning created "in the vortex of overwhelming emotions induced by loss" (170).

Godwin, William. *Things as They are or the Adventures of Caleb Williams*. London: Penguin Books Ltd., 2005. The eponymous hero is convinced that his employer, Faulkland, has murdered his tyrannical neighbor, Barnabas Tyrrel, who has indirectly caused the death of Tyrrel's niece, Emily. When Faulkland confesses, Caleb flees the estate, is arrested, sent to prison, and escapes. His life becomes a series of attempts to evade recapture and silencing. Faulkland is a man of heightened sensibility, described by Caleb as having "a mind so tremblingly alive" (115). Yet Faulkland also is in command of his emotions in a way that puzzles and amazes Caleb, who wonders how a murderer can exhibit such "calmness of behavior" and "mildness of language" (143). Caleb's desire to know

Faulkland's heart and mind is part of what motivates him to keep Faulkland's secret for as long as he does. The man is a puzzle to both Caleb and the reader, morphing from a virtuous, rational aristocrat to a vengeful miscreant who torments Caleb ceaselessly. Even before falling in love with Faulkland, Emily "displayed an uncommon degree of sensibility" (41) and a "refined sense" (42). When she narrowly escapes rape and abduction by Tyrrel's henchman, Grimes, her nervous body becomes exhausted, delirious and feverish and she eventually dies.

Inchbald, Elizabeth. *A Simple Story*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. In the first two volumes of this novel, Miss Milner falls in love with her guardian, the Catholic priest, Dorriforth, who later renounces his holy orders on inheriting an aristocratic title and marries her. The second two volumes, set 17 years later, follow the fraught relationship of Dorriforth (now Lord Elmwood) and his daughter Matilda, who he has banished from his life following Miss Milner's adulterous affair and death. As a man of exquisite sensibility, Lord Elmwood's emotions are always visible – he trembles, weeps, sighs, and is described as being ashamed of having such strong feelings. At several points, his emotional responses act as a substitute for articulating those feelings. "You must either banish your thoughts or conceal them," he directs the priest, Sanford (318). Miss Milner's tears are elicited by the travails of love, whether it result in heartbreak or joy. She answers her long awaited marriage proposal not with words, but with a torrent of sobs. For her daughter, Matilda, heightened sensibility triggers an imaginative response. Hidden away in the back recesses of Lord Elmwood's estate, the tears stream down her face as she connects material culture (a portrait, a pen, a hat) to the father who refuses to acknowledge her presence.

Johnson, Claudia L. *Equivocal Beings: Politics, Gender and Sentimentality in the 1790s*.

Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1995. Johnson argues that in the 1790s a host of novels were produced that blended sentimentalism and Gothicism and were characterized by “egregious affectivity” (1). This depiction of a heightened emotional state is not solely limited to the private sphere; rather, sensibility is a matter of public consequence, such that “the welfare of the nation and the tearfulness of private citizens – actual as well as fictional – were understood . . . to be urgently interconnected” (2). From the belabored manfulness of Burke’s sensitivity to Wollstonecraft’s critique of feminized men, Johnson explores how gender impacts emotional affect. She concludes that in literature and in life it is not only socially acceptable but prestigious for men to engage in fainting, blushing and weeping. When women engage in these same displays, however, it is viewed as “inferior, unconscious, unruly, or even criminal” (14). The chapter on Burney discusses the veneration of men of feeling, who elicit loyalty, gratitude and deference over subordinates, while women of feeling are suspect. In *Camilla*, for instance, women are urged to exercise self-control and self-indulgence is viewed as shameful. “Male sentimentality throws female feeling, indeed female subjectivity into doubt – as faked, frivolous, undutiful, wayward” (142).

*Passionate Encounters in a Time of Sensibility*. Maximillian E. Novak and Anne Mellor, ed.

Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, Inc., 2000. The ten essays in this book attempt to answer a basic, yet complex question: is sensibility a male or a female attribute? Does the supposedly more refined nervous system of a woman enable her to “achieve both a delicacy of feeling and a spiritual purity” (11) beyond what men can aspire to? Or is sensibility found primarily in the male body, exuding benevolence,

civility and homosocial affection? The answer is both. The editors note that in the late eighteenth-century feminist writers engaged in a fierce debate over whether sensibility was a positive or negative attribute for women. One key essay is written by Ann Van Sant, who focuses on the feminized body of sensibility as a place of eroticism, physiology and restraint. At the same time, she insists that it is a constructed body and thus, in fact, no one's body, relating this concept to Miss Milner in Inchbald's *A Simple Story*. George E. Haggerty's essay explores to what extent sensibility involves a feminization of masculine behavior and to what extent it involves homosexuality, combining both friendship and eroticism. Andrew Gibson applies Levinas' theories, where "the ego is always a hostage" (249) to Marianne in *Sense and Sensibility*, noting that Marianne's heightened emotional state results in "an unproductive expenditure" that must be regulated in "her proper socialization" (251).

Thompson, E.P. *The Making of the English Working Class*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1963.

This work of English social history is written by a Marxist historian who attempts to trace the growth of a working-class consciousness in England. Thompson discusses solidarity, political radicalism, Methodism, Parliamentary reform and the yearning for communitarian ideals. The book outlines the steady repression of reformers, or "Jacobins," by the British Government in response to fears surrounding the status of the monarchy and the aristocracy during the French Revolution. By the end of the 1790s, meetings of Jacobin societies were prohibited, Paine's *Rights of Man* was banned, dissenters had been tried for treason, and a culture of surveillance and suspicion had been cultivated in the country. "Church and king" mobs were employed from 1792 onwards to terrorize the English Jacobins and "were sometimes directed against wealthy and

prominent reformers” (75). (Resistance to an effective police force continued well into the nineteenth-century). Radical egalitarianism threatened the landed aristocracy and “the notion of the parasitic aristocratic estate” (99) and fear of revolution spread throughout England like a contagion. Spies were posted in Jacobin societies and quasi-legal forms of intimidation were employed in London. “Reformers must be watched and intimidated, the societies isolated and ringed round with suspicion, the prejudices of the ignorant whipped up and given licence” (116).

Todd, Janet. *Sensibility: An Introduction*. London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1986. Todd’s seminal study defines sensibility as “the faculty of feeling, the capacity for extremely refined emotion and a quickness to display compassion for suffering” (7) She clearly delineates this fictional state of being in the mid-eighteenth-century along gender lines. The man of feeling is sensitive, benevolent, and passive, a man whose emotions “are too exquisite for the acquisitiveness, vulgarity and selfishness of this world” (4). He cries easily, is largely asexual and is isolated from those around him, becoming a vulnerable hero in a hostile society. Female distress arises in the plot but is not permitted to dominate the storyline. Contrastingly, where women of feeling are concerned, plots tend to highlight “some male aggression and sexual power,” (112) which threaten females. Both plots encourage the social fantasy of loyal service to employers. Todd writes that the woman of feeling is a passive figure too, possessing sympathy and emotionalism. Sensibilities are conveyed through “meaningful bodies, and the most authentic emotions are signaled not by words but by tears, blushes, palpitations and fainting fits” (120). When plots lack social purpose and persecution of the heroine, female sensibility “comes perilously close to the self-indulgence of a willful victim, with no redemptive influence and no power of cure” (123).

Van Sant, Ann. *Eighteenth-century Sensibility and the Novel*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993. Van Sant maintains that there has been a continual effort since the eighteenth-century to define sensibility. She believes it represents three basic things: “a) delicate moral and aesthetic perception; b) acuteness of feeling, both emotional and physical; and c) susceptibility to delicate passional arousal” (1). According to Van Sant, the man of feeling has a “specialized body” (102) that separates him from the ordinary world. His heightened sensory powers allow him to see what others overlook and to delve more deeply into experiences and events. This male body is also feminized, privileging the heart over the brain, and creating a “tension with the idealized, feminized body that it underlies” (107). There is a sexual suggestiveness in the man of feeling but it is rarely acted upon. Instead, “delicate sexual impulse is part of sensibility’s heightening of responses” (387). At other times, as in *The Man of Feeling*, the title character hardly has a body. Instead, his delicate nature is upset whenever his physiology is disturbed. Van Sant believes that sensibility represents a new male rather than female character type. She naturally equates the word *woman* with *woman of sensibility* “while for a man to be so defined by delicacy was noticeable enough to require a label” (115).

Wilson, Erin. “The End of Sensibility: The Nervous Body in the Early Nineteenth Century.” *Literature and Medicine*. 30.2. (2012): 276-291. Web. PROJECT MUSE. Wilson is part of a wave of recent scholarship that views sensibility as a medical, pathological problem mainly affecting women. She quotes extensively from Thomas Trotter, a physician who published a widely read book written in 1808, linking heightened emotions to nervous disorders. Trotter reports that nervous men suffer shocks from financial and business disappointments, while women suffer from nerves because of romantic tragedies. He

believes (and Wilson concurs) that illnesses brought on by an excess of sensibility are only lethal for women. Wilson primarily focuses on Austen's *Sense and Sensibility* to help make her case, noting that Marianne's sensibility and her "nervous body" imperils her physically and is "less ideological than it is corporeal" (281). It also blinds her to Willoughby's many flaws, allowing her "to become potential prey to a scoundrel simply because he . . . "feels" like a superior match (281). When Marianne's fever finally breaks it represents a transformation of sorts and indicates that Marianne has been inoculated against sensibility and can finally become more rational. Wilson concludes by stating that sensibility, "cured by rationalism," is increasingly transformed in the nineteenth century, replaced by "an understated and self-sacrificial Victorian" mode of feeling. (288).

Wollstonecraft, Mary. *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman and a Vindication of the Rights of Men*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. In *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, Wollstonecraft addresses the transitory nature of love, the importance of education for women, her sex's subjection by men, and how to be a good mother, among other topics. She views sensibility as a trap, worrying about its misuses and its effects on women's minds and bodies. "Their senses are inflamed, and their understandings neglected, consequently they become the prey of their senses, delicately termed sensibility, and are blown about by every momentary gust of feeling" (130). The trait is also to be deplored in feminized men, while in both sexes, cultivating sensibility seems most damaging when it is not accompanied by the cultivation of reason. "This overstretched sensibility naturally relaxes the other powers of the mind, and prevents intellect from attaining that sovereignty, which it ought to attain to render a rational creature useful to others . . ." (131). Wollstonecraft takes issue with philosophers who argue that women were made to



feel (“I discern not a trace of the image of God in either sensation or matter”) while men were made to reason, yet she believes that women’s conduct and manners would be improved if they were educated “to reason.” Throughout, she critiques the feminization of sensibility and the way men view emotionality as a virtue.

## **PART 4: SYLLABUS**

### Philosophy of Teaching Statement

My overall teaching philosophy is centered on breaking down hierarchical structures typically found in writing courses. Each student should be recognized as a writer and an author in their own right and I always stress that there is no one “correct” way to analyze a text. (To support this assertion, I show the class various articles on the Queens College database that approach a text from very different perspectives and come to very different conclusions about it). This is also why I never give quizzes, midterms, or final exams in any English class I teach. I find that students frequently seem to be searching for the “right” answer or the “right” thesis statement for a paper and testing (even using essay questions) re-enforces the concept of there being one overarching “right” way to look at literature. When I do pose a question to the class, it’s often used as a springboard for in-class writing. These are low stakes assignments, which are not collected. Students either choose to share what they’ve written with the class or to share with the person sitting next to them, thereby jumpstarting an exchange of ideas about the text.

My approach focuses on inquiry-based writing strategies, which I feel allows students to explore *their own* questions and concerns, instead of those generated by the person standing at the front of the room. Typically, students come to class with either a specific (non-obvious) question about a text, a section of the text that interests or confuses them, and a passage of the text that they would like to explore in more depth. We share some of these thoughts on a class blog, where students interact with one another by responding to various posts. Other questions and comments are written down as part of the homework and constitute an exchange with fellow students in small group discussions. This also allows students who are hesitant about speaking up in front of the class a way to participate and share their thoughts more comfortably.

We do group work in every class because I think it helps students become better communicators and active participants in a larger network of discourse. Often, new questions arise from the small discussions that are then posed to the entire class. We also sometimes have debates. I will pick one of the questions students generate, for example, whether the fence in Steinbeck's "The Chrysanthemums" serves to protect Elissa from the dominant patriarchal culture or whether it confines her in her garden and keeps her from realizing her true potential. Students will then form two groups and try to gather evidence from the text to support their points of view. After about 15-20 minutes, each group nominates a debater who synthesizes the information and the two students debate each other, offering rebuttals and summations. Three students serve as a panel of "judges," who decide which side made the stronger case. The debate idea emerged from an anonymous survey I hand out midway through the semester, designed to determine how students feel they can become stronger writers and communicators.

A similar group-oriented methodology is used for their essays. Writing does not occur in a vacuum. Therefore, it's important to share one's writing with others in order to gain insights that might not be possible from working alone. The class is divided into groups based on what they're writing about, so students whose essay focuses on *Wide Sargasso Sea* would be in the same group, students working on "To Penshurst" would be in a second group, and so on. The goal is for students to be respectful reviewers of their peers' work and respectful recipients of critique. My broader goal is that students recognize the importance of writing and its place as a field of study rather than as a set of fixed rules. In addition, close reading and critical inquiry skills can often be transferred to other disciplines and other academic pursuits. I want students to realize that communicating effectively, making strong written arguments, sharing ideas, and

joining a critical conversation can be useful in their development as writers in the world outside the academy, as well as in their English class.

ENGL 162W, Literature and Place  
Spring 2018  
Mondays and Wednesdays 7:45 – 9:00 a.m.

Office: Klapper 532

Office Hours: Mondays, 10:40 – 11:40 a.m. and by appointment

**Course Description:**

This course explores literature to deepen the understanding of the rich, complex and varied engagement between human beings and the places they inhabit and imagine. In particular, we will be interested in how authors of various backgrounds define, interact with and describe their environment. Specific readings – including novels, poems, short stories and a play – will focus on the natural world, the concept of home, dystopia, urban life and the immigrant experience. We will examine such questions as: Who has a right to speak for or about a place? How does one person's voice impact history? What literary strategies are used to convey a sense of place?

This is a general education course that satisfies the Literature requirement (LIT) for the Queens Core under the CUNY General Education structure called Pathways. The course also satisfies the Reading Literature requirement under the Perspectives curriculum that was in effect at Queens before CUNY introduced Pathways. This class will also count as one of your two required writing intensive courses.

**Course Goals:**

- Create arguable theses about literary texts
- Support arguments with close reading and quotation
- Discover patterns and connections between texts via comparison
- Find, cite, and evaluate sources using appropriate research tools
- Consider the effects of place on character development, subjectivity and ideology
- Analyze one's own and other students' writing for clarity, focus and rhetorical effectiveness and understand oneself as a writer developing a voice

**Texts: Please obtain the books listed below, in the exact editions listed:**

*Wide Sargasso Sea* by Jean Rhys (ISBN: 978-0-393-35256--6)

*The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood (ISBN: 978-0-525-43500-6)

*M. Butterfly* by David Henry Hwang (ISBN: 978-0-452-27259-0)  
(Other readings listed on our schedule will be handed out to you in class or available on Blackboard.)

**Assignments:**

- Essay 1: Close reading of a text using selected literary terms. (4 – 5 pgs)
- Annotated Bibliography with at least five relevant sources, produced en route to Essay 2 (5 – 7 pgs)
- Essay 2: Research Assignment (6 – 8 pgs)

**Grading:**

Essay 1	20%
Annotated Bibliography	20%
Essay 2	20%
Class blog on Blackboard	20%
Participation	20%

**Participation:**

Participation includes your individual level of engagement and verbal participation in overall class discussions, as well as presenting your thoughts and ideas with a partner or in small groups. In order to participate in and benefit from the class discussion, you not only need to be present, but also prepared. That means **you need to have done the assigned reading prior to class** and show evidence of this by voicing your thoughts and opinions, as well as actively listening and asking questions. If you want to participate, but struggle to speak up in a large group, please email me or come talk to me so that we can discuss alternative ways to participate and/or ways to help you begin to feel more comfortable with this particular skill.

**Class blog on Blackboard:**

You will write a response to the readings each week on Blackboard, based on questions I've posted. Each response should be 200-350 words long and must include a question you have about the reading at the bottom. In addition, you will respond to at least one of your peers' posts and/or answer the question they've posed. **Responses are due by 11:59 p.m. on the Saturday before the Monday that the readings will be discussed in class.**

**Resources:**

If you would like additional help, please feel free to see me during my office hour, schedule an alternative meeting if you have a conflict with my office hour, or visit the Writing Center ([qcpages.qc.edu/qcsw/](http://qcpages.qc.edu/qcsw/)), which offers both scheduled and drop-in tutoring. I would strongly encourage setting up regular appointments right away if you know that writing is particularly difficult for you. There are also various writing resources available at [www.writingatqueens.org](http://www.writingatqueens.org).

### **Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty:**

Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated. A student who has plagiarized will automatically fail the paper and possibly the class. Plagiarism consists of:

- Turning in any work written in part or in full by another person. This includes not only published authors and pieces found on the internet, but also family and friends who may try to help. Your work must be your own.
- Not properly citing external sources used to reinforce your original argument. Give credit to other authors when you use their work within the context of your own.
- Collaboration with other students without the permission of the professor. If you find yourself unsure about issues regarding plagiarism, please feel free to ask me questions or consult the “Writing at Queens” website. (<http://writingatqueens.org/for-students/what-is-plagiarism>).

### **Policy Regarding Late Papers:**

Papers must be printed out and handed in on the day they are due. All papers are written in MLA style format. To format papers correctly, consult the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL), at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu>. Late essays will be penalized by half a grade for every day that they are overdue.

### **Special Assistance:**

Any student with particular needs should contact the Office of Special Services in 171 Kiely Hall, (718- 997-5420), at the start of the semester. They will forward the necessary information to me and then you and I can work out the details of any accommodations needed for this course.

### **Academic Help and/or Counseling:**

If you feel you need help understanding the class reading assignments, or are having trouble in any of your other courses, make use of the Academic Support Center, located in Kiely 131 (718-997-5677). If you're feeling stressed, please visit the Counseling and Resource Center on the first floor of Frese Hall (718-997-5420). Visits are free and confidential.

### Course Schedule:

(Reading assignments are listed for the day they are due.)

- 1/29:** Introduction to ENGL 162W. Syllabus overview. Brooks, "We Real Cool"
- 1/31:** Jonson, "To Penshurst" and Williams, excerpt from *The Country and the City*
- 2/5:** Shelley, "Ozymandias," Dickinson, "I Started Early – Took my Dog" and Wordsworth, "The World is Too Much with Us"
- 2/7:** Clare, "Helpstone," Darwish, "The Cypress Broke" and Casey, excerpt from *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History*
- 2/12:** (No class scheduled). Lincoln's Birthday.
- 2/14:** Crane, "The Open Boat." **First draft of Essay 1 due for Peer Review.**
- 2/19:** (No class scheduled). President's Day.
- 2/20:** (Classes follow a Monday schedule) Poe, "The Fall of the House of Usher"
- 2/21:** Joyce, "Eveline." **Essay 1 due.**
- 2/26:** Steinbeck, "The Chrysanthemums"
- 2/28:** Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea* (Part One)
- 3/5:** Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea* (Part Two, pp. 59-110)
- 3/7:** Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea* (Part Two, pp. 110-171) and Adjarian, "Between and Beyond Boundaries in *Wide Sargasso Sea*"
- 3/12:** Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale* (pp. 3-66)
- 3/14:** Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale* (pp. 69-127)
- 3/19:** Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale* (pp. 128-188)



**3/21:** Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale* (pp. 191-250) and Abel, "(E)merging Identities: The Dynamics of Female Friendship in Contemporary Fiction by Women"

**3/26: Thesis Statement Workshop for Annotated Bibliography.**

**3/28:** Library Session

**4/2:** (No class scheduled). Spring Break.

**4/4:** (No class scheduled). Spring Break.

**4/9: First draft of Annotated Bibliography due for Peer Review.**

**4/11:** (No class scheduled). Classes follow a Friday schedule.

**4/16:** Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale* (pp. 251-311)

**4/18:** Hwang, *M. Butterfly* (Act One). **Annotated Bibliography due.**

**4/23:** Hwang, *M. Butterfly* (Acts Two and Act Three)

**4/25:** Toomer, "Georgia Dusk," Corral, "In Colorado, My Father Scoured and Stacked Dishes" and Simpson, "Lines Written Near San Francisco"

**4/30:** Lahiri, "When Mr. Pirzada Came to Dine"

**5//2:** LeGuin, "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas"

**5/7:** O'Brien, "The Things They Carried"

**5/9:** Diaz, "Ysrael." **First Drat of Essay 2 due for Peer Review.**

**5/14:** Danticat, "Night Talkers."

**5/16:** Walker, "Roselily" and Williams, "The Red Wheelbarrow." **Essay 2 due.**

### Analytical Explanation of an Assigned Text

The overall design of ENGL 162, “Literature and Place,” is to present students with a range of work, including novels, short stories, a play, theory, and poems, that examine the role and the significance of place in literature. While some instructors choose to limit the course readings to one historical period – say, New York in the 1920s or Victorian England – I select texts that span 400 years, from Ben Jonson’s “To Penshurst,” published in 1616, to Eduardo Corral’s “In Colorado, My Father Scoured and Stacked Dishes,” from 2012. I also deliberately choose texts from several different national traditions (American, British, Irish, Haitian, Canadian, etc.). I do this because I want to be as expansive as possible with the theme, to show, in effect, that the notion of place transcends one particular culture, nationality, or fixed point in time. I also select texts, such as John Clare’s “Helpstone” and Mahmoud Darwish’s “The Cypress Broke” that illustrate the theme of displacement and marginalization, when home is a place one is forced to leave. For the most part, the syllabus is organized chronologically, though I’m not strict about it and take into consideration the lengths of course readings and how this relates to various assignments that are due.

The text that I am going to focus on here is Margaret Atwood’s *The Handmaid’s Tale*. I include this novel because I want students to think of “place” in the broadest terms possible and to realize that in literature, a given place does not have to be somewhere that actually exists in physical space and time. That means incorporating either a utopian or dystopian work and I chose *The Handmaid’s Tale* both for its link to my research interests of friendship and community and its relevance to real events going on across the globe today. For instance, I ask students to do some in-class research on their phones and/or laptops to determine which real life places in 2018 echo some of the ways Atwood describes the status of women in the dystopian

society of Gilead. Students bring up places like Congo, known as the “rape capital of the world,” Pakistan, where acid attacks and honor killings of women and girls are a frequent occurrence, Yemen, where women do not have the same rights as men when it comes to divorce, inheritance or child custody, and Iraq, where a recent report showed that one in five women were subjected to domestic violence. Other students compare Gilead to present day America – including the fact that in many companies women are still paid less than men, the ongoing fight for reproductive rights, and the violence and misogyny at the root of the #metoo movement.

In another in-class exercise, I have students group the different classes of women in the text in order, from most powerful to least powerful. The hierarchy usually looks something like this: Wives, Handmaids, Aunts, Marthas, Econowives, and Unwomen. We discuss why the handmaids are valued above their trainers, the aunts (because they’re younger and can still reproduce, providing a commodity that is valued in Gilead). We also talk about why the Unwomen have the least value (because many of them choose to defy the patriarchal leadership of Gideon, even if it means collecting radioactive waste in the Colonies).

One passage I have students close read is the scene in the gymnasium where the handmaids are being instructed by the aunts on their future duties. We talk about how a relatively innocuous place, a school gym, has been transformed into a space of terror where the women are verbally and physically abused. We also discuss how the women try, with varying degrees of success, to build friendships and a sense of community even within their captivity. “We learned to whisper almost without sound. In the semidarkness we could stretch out our arms, when the Aunts weren’t looking, and touch each other’s hands across space” (Atwood 4). With the help of the Oxford English Dictionary, we attempt to determine why Atwood uses

words like “sound,” “semidarkness” and “space” and what feelings she is trying to evoke. They read Elizabeth Abel’s “(E)merging Identities: The Dynamics of Female Friendship in Contemporary Fiction by Women” and are able to draw connections between female relationships in the novel and Abel’s definition of friendship as a vehicle of “self-definition for women, clarifying identity through relation to an other who embodies and reflects an essential aspect of the self” (Abel 416). Later, I have them contrast this early section in the gymnasium with the part towards the end of the novel where Offred has embarked on a sexual affair with Nick. She says, “For this one, I’d wear pink feathers, purple stars, if that were what he wanted; or anything else, even the tail of a rabbit . . . Being with him is safety; it’s a cave, where we huddle together while the storm goes on outside” (Atwood 269). The last time she sees her friend Ofglen alive, Offred tells her: “The fact is that I no longer want to leave, escape, cross the border to freedom. I want to be here, with Nick, where I can get at him” (271). The class discusses how female friendship has been supplanted by a traditional hetero-normative romance plot. Indeed, many students feel that Atwood forsakes feminism and community building entirely and replaces them with a clichéd rescue fantasy, as Nick helps Offred to escape Gilead.

I also have students do an in-class writing assignment, comparing the way Offred is situated in her surroundings in Gilead with one of the other main female characters we’ve read about during the semester, such as Antoinette in Jamaica in *Wide Sargasso Sea* or Joyce’s Eveline in Dublin. Students note how Offred is virtually obsessed with the objects in her room – the window, the pillow, the place in the ceiling where the chandelier used to be – describing them over and over, both as a way to normalize her situation and as a way to try to gain some control over her captivity. One theme that often emerges from this assignment is that place can

be a state of mind, as well as a physical space occupied by a character, an important concept in the frame work of this class.

#### Works Cited

Abel, Elizabeth. "The Dynamics of Female Friendship in Contemporary Fiction by Women."

*Signs*. 6.3. (1981): 413-435. JSTOR.

Atwood, Margaret. *The Handmaid's Tale*. New York: Anchor Books, 1986. Print.