

SPRING 2020 wmst 20095

WITCHES: THE MONSTROUS FEMININE

100% Online

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Introduction.

The Witch. The Monstrous Feminine. Pandemic. These are all words with screams built in—darkness, danger, fear ... and history. There's something very old here that's somehow hung on. And so, our course will pursue a dig into the telling past. But the real past knows no expiration date—and why would it? The present is always a breather and a feeder; it literally incorporates history—its settledness, laws, written and unwritten chapters, its so-called truths, the weight of its miseries, the energy of its dreams, its questions—beggars. We must also study the very time we're in—and how gender melds with monstrous, how constructions of femininity sit precariously on edges of witch, bitch, whore, shewolf, how female agency triggers alarm and accusation. We must consider how the phenomenon of a pandemic alters permissions, disrupts but at once reinforces order. 100% Online-

Pandemics are inherently dangerous; they know no boundaries;
they command; they overrule. They have no guaranteed exit from our lives.

The witch is but one key element in the drama of a pandemic.

There is the pandemic - the fear, the danger, the looming spread of
something wrong, perhaps sick, perhaps evil.

We control what we can--or what we will.

And there is the drama of pandemic.

Within it, we are creators and players.

The acts, scenes, plots, words and meanings, props and special effects

run alongside the actual pandemic like a shadow, sometimes like

a spirit that moves us, sometimes like a demon that energizes and animates,
sometimes like a master.

We might imagine it our servant.

The Itinerary. Our TOPICS OF INQUIRY, LECTURE and DISCUSSION per week(s).

All Course Materials (Readings, Audio, Video) on Blackboard

All Assignments on Blackboard

*(Please note: On these very basic point-of-entry themes and/or questions—
you are ALWAYS welcome to conduct your own Googling-and other searches.)*

WEEK ONE The Context of Pandemic

& TWO. Where Gender and Monstrosity Converge

What is a Monster? & then ... What is a Gendered Monster?

Week Two.

Difference, Imagination, Sex & Monstrosity – In Mind, Self, Society

WEEK THREE. More or Less Ancient Origins

Desire, Fear, Anxiety—and *Woman*. Women Bound & Women's Liberation
What's Witchcraft got to do with it? How long has this been going on?

WEEK FOUR Transgressions of Unruly Women

Eye, Hand, Head: The Optics of Conformity and Transgression. "The Wounding" Woman does.

WEEK FIVE & SIX. Hunts/Trials and Their Rediscovery by Feminism

Week 5 Get 'em!: Prosecution/Persecution of Witches—Hunts for and Trials of the Diabolical.

Week 6 Power, Knowledge, Naming: Interfaces of feminism and Witchery.

WEEK SEVEN Words, Ideas and The Logic of Ascription

Ideas and Ideology: Fictions Truths Preferences

Witch The Word—Personal, political [mis]Translations

WEEK EIGHT & NINE. The Monstrous Feminine & Misogyny

That Misogyny Thing: Tell us how you really feel.

Week Eight: Abjection and the Monstrous Feminine

Week Nine Atwood's Handmaiden and the Half-Hanged Hadley Witch & Witches according to witches

WEEK TEN. Making Monsters: Mary Shelley's Frankenstein

MonsterMaker Mary Shelley & Frankenstein, The Female Gothic.

WEEK ELEVEN. The Sci-Fi Monster—Alien

ALIEN. Alien-ation. Ellen Ripley & the Monster Mother

Nature, Birth, Mating, Primal Powers:: Are there Female Domains?

WEEK TWELVE Worldwide Witchery

Global Scenery: Demons, Ghosts, Hags, Crones: Cunning, Wisdom, Magic.

WEEK THIRTEEN. Popularizing, Culturing Feminine Monstrosity

POP Culture: Its Inheritance and Menu

WEEK FOURTEEN. The Still Points & The Turning World

Feeling the continuity; finding the pauses: Past, Present, Future: The women we call witches

WEEK FIFTEEN. "The People" vs. The Witch: The "Us" Factor

And then there's ... US: Looking On, Imagining, Desiring, Feeling.

What's Changed Unchanged Mutated since the days of hunting, stoning, hanging&burning?

FINAL ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS.

Online Participation 25%, (Primarily Discussion Boards but may include other Blackboard Forums)

Notebook/Journal (Blackboard) 25%

Individual Report / Online Share: 25%

Final Reflections: an unconventional Take Home Exam (Read, View & Respond): 25%