

FIELD XI: BRITISH AND AMERICAN WOMEN'S LITERATURE SINCE 1750
STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS
Revised: December 2018
Effective: January 2020

The committee expects the examinee to demonstrate scholarly expertise and acumen as well as cogent and cohesive argumentative skills. The examinee's written arguments should highlight an awareness of critical issues while also exhibiting detailed knowledge of the texts on which they choose to focus. Potential approaches the examinee may wish to consider include:

- The difference between sex and gender; shifting definitions of "woman"
- Women's contributions to literature; historical, cultural, and political contexts for these contributions
- The canon and the canonization process
- Variation in women's experiences across nations, cultures, time, class, race, sexual orientation, etc., including the experiences of indigenous women and those in colonized or formerly colonized places.
- Intersectionality of race, class, gender, ethnicity, sexuality; interlocking oppressions and identities
- Standpoint theory; importance of location; situated knowledge
- Social construction of gender and sexuality
- Gendered construction of knowledge and social institutions
- White privilege, male privilege, heterosexual privilege, cisgender privilege
- Feminism/Womanism/*mestizaje*
- the history of feminism and women's movements
- Major issues or "big questions" pertaining to women's writing, eg. domestic violence, abortion, redefining motherhood
- Key figures and concepts in feminist literary theory, eg. Audre Lorde and Adrienne Rich
- The relationship between women's literature and women's activism/efforts for social change.

The examinee's essays should include responses to each part of the exam questions and should demonstrate the following qualities:

- Clear and logical organization (introduction with thesis statement(s), presentation of argument and evidence, conclusion)
- Clear and grammatical prose
- Accurate information about primary texts, relevant literary criticism and theory, and historical contexts
- Logical and persuasive argumentation
- Engagement with and response to current issues in literary criticism

FIELD XI: BRITISH AND AMERICAN WOMEN'S LITERATURE SINCE 1750
READING LIST
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PRIMARY WORKS

Selections from the work of many of the authors listed below may be found in *The Norton Anthology of Literature by Women*, S. Gilbert and S. Gubar, eds., a work that also contains useful background information, biographies, and bibliographies.

1750 – 1800

Adams, Abigail. Letters
Barbauld, Anna Letitia. Selected poems
Burney, Fanny. *Evelina*
Edgeworth, Maria. *Belinda*
Lennox, Charlotte. *The Female Quixote*
Murray, Judith Sargent. "On the Equality of the Sexes"
Radcliffe, Ann. *The Romance of the Forest*
Rowson, Susanna. *Charlotte Temple*
Smith, Charlotte. Selected poems
Wheatley, Phillis. Selected poems ~~in Norton~~
Wollstonecraft, Mary. *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*
Wordsworth, Dorothy. Selected writings

1800 – 1900

Alcott, Louisa M. *Little Women*
Austen, Jane. *Emma* or *Pride and Prejudice*
Brontë, Charlotte. *Jane Eyre*
Brontë, Emily. *Wuthering Heights*
Browning, Elizabeth Barrett. *Aurora Leigh*
Chopin, Kate. *The Awakening*
Dickinson, Emily. Selected poems
Eliot, George. *Middlemarch*
Fuller, Margaret. *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*
Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. "The Yellow Wallpaper" and "Why I Wrote the Yellow Wallpaper"
Harper, Frances Ellen Watkins. *Iola LeRoy* or selected short stories
Hopkins, Sarah Winnemucca. *Life Among the Paiutes*
Jacobs, Harriet. *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*
Jewett, Sarah Orne. *Country of the Pointed Firs* or "The White Heron"
Schoolcraft, Jane Johnston. *The Sound the Stars Make Rushing Through the Sky*
Sedgwick, Catherine Maria. *Hope Leslie*
Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein*
Stanton, Elizabeth Cady. "Address to the New York State Legislature, 1860" and "The Solitude of Self"
Stowe, Harriet Beecher. *Uncle Tom's Cabin*
Truth, Sojourner. Selections
Wilson, Harriet. *Our Nig*

Zitkala-Sa. *American Indian Stories*

Since 1900

Abu-Jaber, Diana. *Arabian Jazz* or *Crescent*

Allison, Dorothy. *Bastard Out of Carolina*

Alvarez, Julia. *In the Time of the Butterflies*, *Saving the World*, or *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*

Bechdel, Alison. *Fun Home*

Bishop, Elizabeth. Selected poems

Boland, Eavan. Selected poems

Brooks, Gwendolyn. Selected poems

Butler, Octavia. *Kindred*

Byatt, A.S. *Possession*

Castillo, Ana. *So Far From God*

Cather, Willa. *My Antonia*

Churchill, Caryl. *Top Girls*

Cisneros, Sandra. *The House on Mango Street*

Danticat, Edwidge. *Breath, Eyes, Memory*

H.D. Selections

Far, Sui Sin. *Mrs. Spring Fragrance and Other Writings*

Glaspell, Susan. *Trifles* or "A Jury of Her Peers"

Hansberry, Lorraine. *Raisin in the Sun*

Harjo, Joy. Selected poems

Hurston, Zora Neale. *Their Eyes Were Watching God*

Jen, Gish. *Mona in the Promised Land*

Kingston, Maxine Hong. *The Woman Warrior*

Larsen, Nella. *Passing*

Lorde, Audre. *Selected Poems* or *Zami*

Marshall, Paule. *Brown Girl, Brownstones* or *Praisesong for the Widow*

Morrison, Toni. *The Bluest Eye*, *Beloved*, or *Jazz*

Naylor, Gloria. *Mama Day*

Nottage, Lynne. *Ruined* or *Sweat*

Nye, Naomi Shihab. Selections

O'Connor, Flannery. Selections

Plath, Sylvia. Selections

Rankine, Claudia. *Citizen*

Rich, Adrienne. *The Fact of a Door Frame: Poems 1950-2001* (2002 publication, new edition of earlier collection)

Rhys, Jean. *Wide Sargasso Sea* or *Voyage in the Dark*

See, Lisa. *Shanghai Girls*

Smith, Zadie. *White Teeth* or *On Beauty*

Silko, Leslie Marmon. *Ceremony* or *Almanac of the Dead*

Stein, Gertrude. *Tender Buttons* or *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*

Tan, Amy. *The Joy Luck Club*

Walker, Alice. *The Color Purple* or *In Love and Trouble*

Wharton, Edith. *The House of Mirth* or *The Custom of the Country*

Winterson, Jeanette. *Written on the Body* or *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*
Woolf, Virginia. *Mrs. Dalloway*, *To the Lighthouse*, or *Orlando*
Yeziarska, Anzia. "My Own People" and "The Fat of the Land"

Each student must also choose **ten** additional works from the list below.

1750-1900

Brontë, Anne. *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* or *Agnes Grey*
Child, Lydia Maria. "Slavery's Pleasant Home" and Hobomok
Cooper, Anna Julia. *A Voice from the South*
Davis, Rebecca Harding. *Life in the Iron Mills*
Edgeworth, Maria. *Castle Rackrent*
Field, Michael (Katherine Harris Bradley and Edith Cooper). Selected poems
Freeman, Mary Wilkins. "Revolt of Mother," "Old Woman Magoun," "A New England Nun"
Gaskell, Elizabeth. *Cranford* or *Wives and Daughters*
Johnson, E. Pauline. Selected works
Prince, Mary. *The History of Mary Prince*
Rossetti, Christina. Selected works

Since 1900

Adichie, Chimamanda. *We Should All Be Feminists* or *Americanah*
Ali, Monica. *Brick Lane: A Novel*
Allen, Paula Gunn, ed. *Spider Woman's Granddaughters: Traditional Tales and Contemporary Writing by Native American Women*
Angelou, Maya. *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* and selected poems
Atwood, Margaret. *The Handmaid's Tale*
Carter, Angela. *Nights at the Circus*
Edson, Margaret. *Wit*
Erdrich, Louise. *Love Medicine* or *Plague of Doves* or *The Painted Drum*
Ferrante, Elena. *The Days of Abandonment* or *The Neapolitan Novels*
Forna, Aminatta. *Ancestor Stones*
Hacker, Marilyn. *Love, Death, and the Changing of the Seasons*
Hall, Radclyffe. *The Well of Loneliness*
Hogan, Linda. *Dwellings*
Jones, Gayle. *Corregidora*
Kincaid, Jamaica. *The Autobiography of My Mother* or *Lucy*
Kingsolver, Barbara. *The Poisonwood Bible*
Lahiri, Jhumpa. *Interpreter of Maladies*
Le Guin, Ursula. *Left Hand of Darkness*
Lessing, Doris. "To Room Nineteen"
Lispector, Clarice. *The Hour of the Star*
Lively, Penelope. *Moon Tiger*
Lowell, Amy. Selected poems
Macdonald, Sandra. *Diana Comet and Other Improbable Stories*
Mansfield, Katherine. Selected stories
Miranda, Deborah. *Bad Indians*
Norman, Marsha. *Night Mother*
Obejas, Achy. *Memory Mambo*

Parker, Pat. Selected poems
 Parks, Suzan-Lori. *In the Blood*
 Petry, Anne. *The Street*
 Piercy, Marge. *Woman on the Edge of Time*
 Robinson, Marilynne. *Housekeeping*
 Satrapi, Marjane. *Persepolis*
 Schwartz, Christina. *Drowning Ruth*
 Sexton, Anne. Selected poems
 Shange, Ntozake. *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow is Enuf*
 Smiley, Jane. *A Thousand Acres* or *Ordinary Love and Good Will*.
 Smith, Anna Deavere. *Twilight: Los Angeles* or *Notes from the Field*
 Trethewey, Natasha. *Native Guard*.
 Van Clief-Stafanon, Lyrae. *Black Swan*.
 Vogel, Paula. *Indecent*
 Warner, Sylvia Townsend. *Summer Will Show* or *Lolly Willowses* or selected poems
 Wasserstein, Wendy. *The Heidi Chronicles*
 Welty, Eudora. Selection in ~~Norton~~
 Wertenbaker, Timberlake. *Our Country's Good*.
 Williams, Sherley Anne. *Dessa Rose*

SECONDARY WORKS

Students should consult with a faculty member in this area in choosing a representative sample of the criticism in this list. In addition, students are responsible for familiarity with the articles in *Feminism(s)*, ed. Warhol and Prince, a work that also contains useful background information. A *History of Feminist Literary Criticism*, edited by Gill Plain and Susan Sellers, is also useful.

“Introduction,” “Spiritual *Bildung*: The Beautiful Soul as Paradigm” (Hirsch), and “The Novel of Awakening” (Rosnowski) in Abel, Elizabeth, et al, ed. *The Voyage In: Fictions of Female Development*
 Allen, Paula Gunn. “Kochinnenako in Academe,” in *Feminism(s)*
 Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*
 Baym, Nina. *Woman's Fiction: A Guide to Novels by and about Women in America. 1820-1870* and “Melodramas of Beset Manhood”
 Boehmer, Elleke. *Stories of Women: Gender and Narrative in the Postcolonial Nation*
 Bow, Leslie. *Betrayal and Other Acts of Subversion: Feminism, Sexual Politics, Asian-American Women's Literature*
 Badia, Janet and Jennifer Phegley. *Reading Women Literary Figures and Cultural Icons from the Victorian Age to the Present*
 Berlant, Lauren. *The Female Complaint*
 Butler, Judith. “Performative Acts and Gender Constitution” and “Imitation and Gender Insubordination”
 Carby, Hazel. *Reconstructing Womanhood: The Emergence of the Afro-American Novelist*
 Castillo, Debra. *Talking Back: Toward a Latin American Feminist Literary Criticism*
 Castle, Terry. *The Apparitional Lesbian: Female Homosexuality and Modern Culture*

Christian, Barbara. *New Black Feminist Criticism, 1985-2000*. Edited by Bowles, Fabi, and Keizer

David, Deirdre. *Rule Britannia: Women, Empire, and Victorian Writing*

Davidson, Cathy. *Revolution and the Word: The Rise of the Novel in America*

Davidson, Cathy N., and Jessamyn Hatcher, eds. *No More Separate Spheres! A Next Wave American Studies Reader*

DuPlessis, Rachel Blau. *The Pink Guitar; Writing as Feminist Practice and/or Writing Beyond the Ending*

Farwell, Marilyn. *Heterosexual Plots and Lesbian Narratives*

Fetterley, Judith. *The Resisting Reader: A Feminist Approach to American Fiction*

Garner, Shirley Nelson, Claire Kahane, Madelon Sprengnether eds. *The Mother Tongue: essays in feminist psychoanalytic interpretation*: “The Father’s Seduction” (Gallop), “The Hand That Rocks the Cradle” (Kahn), “A Map for Rereading” (Kolodny)

Gates, Henry Louis, Jr, ed. *Reading Black, Reading Feminist*

Gay, Roxann. *Bad Feminist*

Gilbert, Sandra, and Susan Gubar. *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer in the Nineteenth-Century Imagination*

Goeman, Mishuana. *Mark My Words: Native Women Mapping Our Nations*

Haggerty, George E. and Bonnie Zimmerman. *Professions of Desire: Lesbian and Gay Studies in Literature*

Haraway, Donna. *The Haraway Reader*, selections

Heilbrun, Carolyn. *Reinventing Womanhood*

Howe, Susan. *My Emily Dickinson*

Kelly, Mary. Revised (2002) introduction to *Private Woman, Public Stage*

Lenz, Brooke. “Postcolonial Fiction and the Outsider Within: Toward a Literary Practice of Feminist Standpoint Theory.” *NWSA Journal* 16.2 (2004)

Lockwood, J. Samaine. *Archives of Desire: The Queer Historical Work of New England Regionalism*

Lorde, Audre. *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*

Mann, Susan Archer. *Doing Feminist Theory: From Modernity to Postmodernity*

Miller, Nancy K., ed. *The Poetics of Gender or Subject to Change: Reading Feminist Writing*

Morrison, Toni. *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination*

Newton, Judith and Deborah Rosenfeld, eds. *Feminist Criticism and Social Change: Sex, Class, and Race in Literature and Culture*

Ostriker, Alicia. *Stealing the Language: The Emergence of Women's Poetry in America*

Radway, Janice. *Reading the Romance*

Rich, Adrienne. “When We Dead Awaken,” “Vesuvius at Home: The Power of Emily Dickinson,” in *On Lies, Secrets, and Silence*; “Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence,” “Toward a More Feminist Criticism,” “Notes Toward a Politics of Location” in *Blood, Bread, and Poetry*

Rody, Caroline. *The Daughter’s Return: African-American and Caribbean Women’s Fictions in History*

Saldívar-Hull, Sonia. *Feminism on the Border: Chicana Gender Politics and Literature*

Showalter, Elaine. *Sister's Choice: Tradition and Change in American Women's Writing or A Literature of Their Own*

Smith, Sidonie. *A Poetics of Women's Autobiography*

Smith, Sidonie and Julia Watson. *Women, Autobiography, Theory: A Reader*
Smith-Rosenberg, Carroll. *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America*
Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. "Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism"
Spencer, Jane. *The Rise of the Woman Novelist: From Aphra Behn to Jane Austen*
Tompkins, Jane. *Sensational Designs: The Cultural Work of American Fiction. 1790-1860*
Walker, Alice. *In Search of Our Mother's Gardens: Womanist Prose*
Woolf, Virginia *A Room of One's Own*