

ENG 255 Women in Literature  
Spring 2016 Midterm Exam Quotes

QUOTE: "The conduct and manners of women, in fact, evidently prove that their minds are not in a healthy state; for like the flowers which are planted in too rich a soil, strength and usefulness are sacrificed to beauty; and the flaunting leaves, after having pleased a fastidious eye, fade, disregarded on the stalk, long before the season when they ought to have arrived at maturity."

SOURCE: Mary Wollstonecraft. *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*. Pg 373, Vol A.

QUOTE: -- a profound conviction that the neglected education of my fellow-creatures is the grand source of the misery I deplore;

SOURCE: Mary Wollstonecraft, *From A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, page 373

QUOTE: I wish to persuade women to endeavor to acquire strength, both of mind and body, and to convince them that the soft phrases, susceptibility of heart, delicacy of sentiment, and refinement of taste, are almost synonymous with epithets of weaknesses,

SOURCE: Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication on the Rights of Women*, P375

QUOTE: My own sex, I hope, will excuse me, if I treat them like rational creatures, instead of flattering their *fascinating* graces, and viewing them as if they were in a state of perpetual childhood, unable to stand alone.

SOURCE: Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, p. 375

QUOTE: Many are the causes that, in the present corrupt state of society, contribute to enslave women by cramping their understandings and sharpening their senses.

SOURCE: Mary Wollstonecraft. *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*. Pg.379.

QUOTE: As a proof that that education give this appearance of weakness of females, we may instance the example of military men, who are, like them, sent into the world before their minds have been stored with knowledge or fortified by principles.

SOURCE: Mary Wollstonecraft. *A Vindicatin of the Rights of Women*. Vol A. P381

QUOTE: Women subjected by ignorance to their sensations, and only taught to look for happiness in love, refine on sensual feelings and adopt metaphysical notions respecting that passion, which lead them shamefully to neglect the duties of life...

SOURCE: Mary Wollstonecraft *A Vindication of the Rights of a Woman*. Vol A. Pg. 388

QUOTE: Another instance of that feminine weakness of character, often produced by a confined education, is a romantic twist of the mind, which has been very properly termed *sentimental*.

SOURCE: Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, page 388

QUOTE: Ignorant women, forced to be chaste to preserve their reputation, allow their imagination to revel in the unnatural and meretricious scenes sketched by the novel writers of the day, slighting the same vitiated taste into life, and fly for amusement to the wanton, from the unsophisticated charms of virtue, and the grave respectability of sense.

SOURCE: Mary Wollstonecraft. From *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*. Chapter XII. Pg. 390

QUOTE: I am obnoxious to each carping tongue / Who says my hand a needle better fits;

SOURCE: Anne Bradstreet, "The Prologue", P147

QUOTE: For such despite they cast on female wits; if what I do prove well, it won't advance,  
They'll say it's stolen, or else it was by chance

SOURCE: Anne Bradstreet, "The Prologue," P148

QUOTE: But sure the antique Greeks were far more mild, Else of our sex why feigned they those  
nine, And poesy made Calliope's own child?

SOURCE: Anne Bradstreet, "The Prologue," page 148

QUOTE: The house which is not often swept makes the cleanly inhabitant soon loathe it, and  
that heart which is not continually purifying itself is no fit temple for the spirit of God to dwell  
in.

SOURCE: Anne Bradstreet, *Meditations Divine and Moral*, p. 158

QUOTE:

If ever two were one, then surely we.  
If ever man were loved by wife, then thee;  
If ever wife was happy in a man,  
Compare with me ye women if you can.

SOURCE: Anne Bradstreet *To my Dear and Loving Husband*. Vol A. Pg. 153

QUOTE: "For I am a slave to thee; Let my griefs thy pity move, Heal them with the balm of  
love."

SOURCE: Sarah Wentworth Morton. "Ouabi: or The Virtues of Nature" Pg 394 VolA.

QUOTE:

I ask thy aid, O potent Rum!  
To charm these wrangling toppers dumb.  
Thou hast their giddy brains possessed—  
The man confounded with the beast—  
And I, poor I, can get no rest.  
Intoxicate them with thy fumes:  
O still their tongues' till morning comes!

SOURCE: Sarah Kimble Knight, *The Private Journal of a Journey from Boston to New York* (254-255)

QUOTE: “We may observe here the great necessity and benefit both of education and conversation; for these people have as large a portion of mother wit, and sometimes a larger, than those who have been brought up in cities, but for want of improvements render themselves almost ridiculous, as above.”

SOURCE: Sarah Kemble Knight. *The Private Journal of a Journey*. Pg 258 Vol A.

QUOTE: I am more and more convinced that Man is a dangerous creature, and that power whether vested in many or few is ever grasping, and like the grave cries give, give. The great fish swallow up the small, and he is most strenuous for the Rights of the people, when vested with power, is as eager after the prerogatives of government.

SOURCE: Abigail Adams, Letters to John Adams, (Man Is a Dangerous Creative)(316-317)

QUOTE: But you must remember that Arbitrary power is like most other things which are very hard, very liable to be broken— and notwithstanding all your wise Laws and Maxims we have it in our power not only to free ourselves but to subdue our Masters, and without violence throw both your natural and legal authority at our feet—

SOURCE: Abigail Adams, “Absolute Power over Wives”, P319

QUOTE: I can not say that I think you very generous to the Ladies, for whilst you are proclaiming peace and good will to Men, Emancipating all Nations, you insist upon retaining an absolute power over Wives.

SOURCE: Abigail Adams, Letter to John Adams [Absolute Power over Wives], p.320

QUOTE: - and by the way in the new Code of Laws which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make I desire you would Remember the Ladies, and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors.

SOURCE: Abigail Adams Letter to John Addams [*Remember the Ladies*]. Vol. A. Pg. 318

QUOTE:

“Their color is a diabolic dye.”  
Remember, Christians, Negroes black as Cain  
May be refined and join the angelic train.

SOURCE: Phillis Wheatley, “On brought from Africa to America” (359)

QUOTE: That man over there says that women need to be helped into carriages, and lifted over ditches, and to have the best place everywhere. Nobody ever helps me into carriages, or over mud-puddles, or gives me any best place! And ain’t I a woman?

SOURCE: Sojourner Truth, “Ain’t I a Woman?” page 510

QUOTE: Nobody ever helps me into carriages, or over mud-puddles, or gives me any best place! And ain’t I a woman?

SOURCE: Sojourner Truth, “Ain’t I a Woman?” P510

QUOTE: Then that little man in the black there, he says women can’t have as much rights as men, ‘cause Christ wasn’t a woman! Where did your Christ come from? Where did your Christ come from? From God and a woman! Man had nothing to do with Him.

SOURCE: Sojourner Truth, “Ain’t I a Woman?”, P510

QUOTE: If the first woman God ever made was strong enough to turn the world upside down all alone, these women together ought to be able to turn it back, and get it right side up again! And now they is asking to do it, the men better let them.

SOURCE: Sojourner Truth, “Ain’t I a Woman?” p. 511

QUOTE: “... Queen Esther come forth, for she was oppressed, and felt there was a great wrong, and she said I will die or I will bring my complaint before the king.”

SOURCE: Sojourner Truth. “What Time of Night is It.” Pg 511.

QUOTE: They go out washing, which is about as high as a colored woman gets, and their men go about idle, strutting up and down; and when the women come home, they ask for their money and take it all, and then scold because there is no food. I want you to consider on that, chil’n. I call you chil’n; you are somebody’s chil’n and I am old enough to be mother of all that is here. I want women to have their rights.

SOURCE: Sojourner Truth, “Keeping the Thing Going while Things Are Stirring” (512)

QUOTE: They have got their liberty—so much good luck to have slavery partly destroyed; not entirely. I want it root and branch destroyed. Then we will all be free indeed. I feel that if I have

to answer for the deeds done in my body just as much as a man, I have a right to have just as much as a man.

SOURCE: Sojourner Truth. From *Keeping the Thing Going while Things Are Stirring*. Pg. 512

QUOTE: I feel that if I have to answer for the deeds done in my body just as much as a man, I have a right to have just as much as a man. There is a great stir about colored men getting their rights, but not a word about the colored women; and if colored men get their rights, and not colored women theirs, you see the colored men will be the masters over the women, and it will be just as bad as before.

SOURCE: Sojourner Truth, *Keeping the Thing Going while Things Are Stirring*, (P512)

QUOTE: We can only reason from what we know, and if an opportunity of acquiring knowledge hath been denied us, the inferiority of our sex cannot fairly be deduced from thence.

SOURCE: Judith Sargent Murray, *On the Equality of the Sexes*, P337

QUOTE: “And by the lordly sex to us consigned. They rob us of the power t’improve, and then declare we only trifles love. Yet haste the era when the world shall know. That such distinctions only dwell below.”

SOURCE: Judith Sargent Murray. *On Equality of the Sexes*. Pg 338 Vol A.

QUOTE: Now was she permitted the same instructors as her brother (with an eye however to their particular departments) for the employment of a rational mind an ample field would be opened.

SOURCE: Judith Sargent Murray. “On the Equality of Sexes.” Pg.339

QUOTE: Is she united to a person whose soul nature made equal to her own, education hath set him so far above her that in those entertainments which are productive of such rational felicity she is not qualified to accompany him.

SOURCE: Judith Sargent Murray. *On the Equality of the Sexes*. Vol A P339

QUOTE: Knowing that there exists in the mind of men a tone of feeling towards women as toward slaves.

SOURCE: Margaret Fuller. *Women in the Nineteenth Century*. Vol A. P560

QUOTE: Woman can express publicly the fullness of thought and creation, without losing any of the peculiar beauty of her sex.

SOURCE: Margaret Fuller. From *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*. Pg. 560

QUOTE: When they admired any woman, they were inclined to speak of her as ‘above her sex.’

SOURCE: Margaret Fuller, *From Woman in the Nineteenth Century*, page 563

QUOTE: Here now, the very being of woman, like that of a slave, is absorbed in her master. All contracts made with her, like those made with slaves by their owners, are a mere nullity.

SOURCE: Sarah Grimké, “Letter from Sara Grimké to Angelina Grimké, 1837” no page

QUOTE: ...but place her where her Maker placed her, on the same high level of human rights with man, side by side with him, and difficulties vanish, the mountains of perplexity flow down at the presence of this grand equalizing principle. Measure her rights and duties by the unerring standard of *moral being*, not by the false weights and measures of a mere circumstance of her human existence, and then the truth will be self-evident, that whatever it is *morally* right for a man to do, it is *morally* right for a woman to do.

SOURCE: Angelina E. Grimke, “Human Rights Not Founded on Sex”, Letters to Catherine Beecher

QUOTE: You who have read the history of nations from Moses down to our nations last election where have you ever seen one class looking after the interest of another?

SOURCE: Elizabeth Cady Stanton *From Address to the New York State Legislature, 1860*. Vol. A. Pg. 630

QUOTE: The negro has no name. He is Cuffy Douglas or Cuffy Brooks, just whose Cuffy he may chance to be. The woman has no name. She is Mrs. Richard Roe or Mrs. John Doe, just whose Mrs. she may chance to be. Cuffy has no right to his earnings; he cannot buy or sell, or lay up anything that he can call his own. \*Mrs. Roe has no right to her earnings; she can neither buy nor sell, make contracts, nor lay up anything that she can call her own. Cuffy has no right to his children; they can be sold from him at any time. \*Mrs. Roe has no right to her children; they may be bound out to cancel a father's debts of honor. The unborn child, even by the last will of the father, may be placed under the guardianship of a stranger and a foreigner. Cuffy has no legal existence; he is subject to restraint and moderate chastisement. Mrs. Roe has no legal existence; she has not the best right to her own person. The husband has the power to restrain, and administer moderate chastisement.

SOURCE: Elizabeth Cady Stanton, “Address to the New York State Legislature, 1860,” page 631

QUOTE: The Negro’s skin and the woman’s sex are both prima facie evidence that they were intended to be in subjection to the white Saxon man. The few social privileges which the man gives the woman, he makes up to the Negro in civil rights.

SOURCE: Elizabeth Cady Stanton, “From Address to the New York State Legislature, 1860” p. 631

QUOTE: You call it an altogether serious thing to be alive: to these men it is a drunken jest, a joke,—horrible to angels perhaps, to them commonplace enough.

SOURCE: Rebecca Harding Davis, *Life in the Iron-Mills*, P1106

QUOTE: It was far, and she was weak, aching from standing twelve hours at the spools. Yet it was her almost nightly walk to take this man his supper, though at every square she sat down to rest, and she knew she should receive small words of thanks.

SOURCE: Rebecca Harding Davis, *Life in the Iron-Mills*, page 1109

QUOTE: My restlessness increased. I had lived too long in bodily pain and anguish of spirit. Always I was in dread that by some accident, or some contrivance, slavery would succeed in snatching my children from me. This thought drove me nearly frantic, and I determined to steer for the North Star at all hazards.

SOURCE: Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents In The Life of a Slave Girl*, (620)

QUOTE: I would ten thousand times rather that my children should be half-starved paupers of Ireland than to be the most pampered among the slaves of America.

SOURCE: Harriet Jacobs. *Incidents In The Life of a Slave Girl*. Vol A. Pg. 621

QUOTE: He had never punished me himself, and he would not allow any body else to punish me. In that respect, she was never satisfied...

SOURCE: Harriet Jacobs *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*. Vol. A. Pg. 622

QUOTE: Have I ever treated you like a negro? I have never allowed you to be punished, not even to please your mistress. And this is the recompense I get, you ungrateful girl!

SOURCE: Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, (P624)

QUOTE: The West refused them, and the East abhorred. No anchorage the known world could afford.

SOURCE: Emma Lazarus. *1492*. Vol A. Pg.1239

QUOTE: A mighty woman with a torch,

SOURCE: Emma Lazarus. *Venus of the Louvre*. Vol A. P1240

QUOTE: Then you shall be courteously entreated to call and examine, and shall find an abundance of husbands, wives, brothers, sisters, fathers, mothers, and young children, to be “sold separately, or in lots to suit the convenience of the purchaser.”

SOURCE: Harriet Beecher Stowe. *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. Vol A. P602

QUOTE: So speaks the poor soul, the sore discouragement; for she knows that tomorrow any man, however vile and brutal, however godless and merciless, if he only has money to pay for her, may become owner of her daughter, body and soul; and then, how is the child to be faithful? She thinks of all of this, as she holds her daughter in her arms, and wishes that she were not handsome and attractive.

SOURCE: Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (605)

QUOTE: " 'No dear,' says the minister, 'but ill-natured folks will talk; but there is one way we can stop it, Huldy- if you will marry me. You'll make me very happy, and I'll do all I can to make you happy. Will you?'

SOURCE: Harriet Beecher Stowe, *The Minister's Housekeeper*, (P617)

QUOTE: Meanwhile woman's millennium is yet a great way off; and while it slowly progresses, conservatism and indifference gaze through their spectacles at the seething elements of to-day, and wonder "what ails all our women?"

SOURCE: Fanny Fern, *The Working-Girls of New York*, (P595)

QUOTE: A man ought to provide for his folks he’s got to leave behind him, specially if they’re women.

SOURCE: Sarah Orne Jewett. *The Town Poor*. Vol A. P1246

QUOTE: It was an unwelcome thought to Mrs. Trimble that the well-to-do town of Hampden could provide no better for its poor than this, and her round face flushed with resentment and the shame of personal responsibility.

SOURCE: Sarah Orne Jewett, “The Town Poor,” P1249

QUOTE: Unsolicited opportunities are the guide-posts of the Lord to the new roads of life,

SOURCE: Mary E. Wilkins Freeman, “The Revolt of ‘Mother,’” P1353

QUOTE: I’ve got my own mind an’ my own feet, an’ I’m goin’ to think my own thoughts an’ go my own ways, an’ nobody but the Lord is goin’ to dictate to me unless I’ve a mind to have him.

SOURCE: Mary E. Wilkins Freeman. “The Revolt of ‘Mother.’” Pg.1355



. QUOTE: Adoniram was like a fortress whose walls had no active resistance, and went down the instant the right besieging tools were used.

SOURCE: Mary E. Wilkins Freeman. The Revolt of 'Mother.'” Pg. 1357

QUOTE:

I heard a Fly buzz – when I died –  
The Stillness in the Room  
Was like the Stillness in the Air –  
Between the Heaves of Storm –

The Eyes around – had wrung them dry –  
And Breaths were gathering firm  
For that last Onset – when the King  
Be witnessed – in the Room –

SOURCE: Emily Dickinson [I heard a Fly buzz] (#465) page -(1056)

QUOTE: While my thought is undressed—I can make the distinction, but when I put them in the Gown—they look alike, and numb.

SOURCE: Emily Dickinson. 26 I/[My “Companions”]. Vol A. Pg.1073

QUOTE: “No, my lad: give me a hearty English welcome, and God bless you!” I answered, as we shook hands, manfully, and walked away together, laughing over the adventure with my mysterious mademoiselle.

SOURCE: Louisa May Alcott. “My Mysterious Mademioselle.” Pg.1141

QUOTE: If doing this work hurts my respectability, I wouldn't give much for it. My aristocratic ancestors don't feed or clothe me and my democratic ideas of honesty and honor won't let me be idle or dependent. You need not know me if you are ashamed of me, and I won't ask you for a penny; so if I never do succeed in anything, I shall have the immense satisfaction of knowing I am under no obligation to any one.

SOURCE: Louisa May Alcott. From *How I Went Out to Service*. Pg. 1143

QUOTE: The boots remained untouched; and another pair soon came to keep them company, whereat I smiled wickedly as I chopped just kindling enough for my own use.

SOURCE: Louisa May Alcott. *How I Went Out to Service*. Vol A. Pg.1147

QUOTE: She walketh veiled and sleeping / For she knoweth not her power.

SOURCE: Charlotte Perkins Gilman, “She Walketh Veiled and Sleeping”, P1390

QUOTE: If a physician of high standing, and one's own husband, assures friends and relatives that there is really nothing the matter with one but temporary nervous depression – a slight hysterical tendency – what is one to do?

SOURCE: Charlotte Perkins Gilman. "The Yellow Wallpaper." Pg.1392.

QUOTE: Of course, if you were in any danger, I could and would, but you really are better, dear, whether you can see it or not. I am a doctor, dear, and I know.

SOURCE: Charlotte Perkins Gilman, The Yellow Wallpaper, (1398)

QUOTE: Now why should that man have fainted? But he did, and right across my path by the wall, so that I had to creep over him every time!

SOURCE: Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "The Yellow Wallpaper," P1403

QUOTE: It was not intended to drive people crazy, but to save people from being driven crazy, and it worked.

SOURCE: Charlotte Perkins Gillman, "Why I Wrote the Yellow Wallpaper." Vol. A. Pg. 1404

QUOTE: She died, as all her mothers died before. Her daughter died in turn, and made one more.

SOURCE: Charlotte Perkins Gilman. "The Mother's Charge" Vol A. Pg.1392

QUOTE: Law? My people have *no* priest, and my nation cringes not to law. Our priest is purity, and our law is honour.

SOURCE: E. Pauline Johnson (Tekahionwake.) "A Red Girl's Reasoning" Pg. 1422

QUOTE: How do I know when another nation will come and conquer you as you white men conquered us? And they will have another marriage rite to preform, and they will tell us another truth, that you are not my husband, that you are but disgracing and dishonouring me, that you are keeping me here, not as your wife, but as your- your *squaw*.

SOURCE: E.Pauline Johnson (Tekahionwake), A Red Girl's Reasoning, (P1422-P1423)

QUOTE: She was conscious of but two things, the vengeful lie in her soul, and a little space on her arm that his wet lashes had brushed.

SOURCE: E. Pauline Johnson (Tekahionwake). "A Red Girl's Reasoning". Vol A. Pg.1425

QUOTE: Purity, considered as a moral imperative, set up a dilemma which was hard to resolve. Woman must preserve her virtue until marriage and marriage was necessary for happiness. Yet, marriage was, literally, an end to innocence.

SOURCE: Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820- 1860" p. 158