

CECILIA KONCHAR FARR, Ph.D.

West Liberty University

208 University Drive CUBox 134

West Liberty WV 26074

cecilia.konchar-farr@westliberty.edu

Present Position **West Liberty University**
Dean of the College of Liberal and Creative Arts
Professor of English

Publications

Books Authored:

The Ulysses Delusion: Rethinking Standards of Literary Merit (Palgrave 2016)

Reading Oprah: How Oprah's Book Club Changed the Way America Reads (SUNY 2004)

"'As I Was Saying': A Companion to Gertrude Stein's *The Making of Americans*," co-authored with Janie Sisson (completed mss)

Books Edited:

Open at the Close: Literary Essays on Harry Potter (University of Mississippi Press 2022)

This Book is an Action: Feminist Print Culture and Activist Aesthetics (University of Illinois 2015), edited collection with Jaime Harker

A Wizard of Their Age: Critical Essays from the Harry Potter Generation (SUNY 2015), edited collection with seven undergraduate students

The Oprah Affect: Critical Essays on Oprah's Book Club (SUNY 2008), edited collection with Jaime Harker, University of Mississippi

Scholarly Journal:

Post45 Special Issue: Inventing the Middlebrow, co-edited with Tom Perrin, Huntingdon University (Summer 2016)

For St. Catherine University:

The Confidence of a Noun: Award-winning Works from the Mary McCahill Denny Prize for Excellence in Writing at St. Catherine University, In Honor of Charles M. Denny (Copley 2015)

The Catherine Core Reader (Copley 2014), lead editor

The anthology for the baccalaureate Catherine Core Curriculum

The Reflective Woman Reader, 3rd edition (Copley 2000)

Selected Peer-reviewed Articles:

"Inventing the Middlebrow: Introduction"

Post45 Special Issue Summer 2016

"The Canonical Apple Cart: Reloaded"

J19: The Journal of Nineteenth-Century Americanists. Vol 4.1, Spring 2016, 150-155.

"Faulkner Novels of Our OWN: Oprah's Middlebrow Book Club Meets the Classics"

Mississippi Quarterly 66.3 (Summer 2013 special issue on Oprah's Summer of Faulkner)

- "Communion With Books: The Double Life of Literature at the College of St. Catherine"
Liberating Sanctuary: 100 Years of Women's Education at the College of St. Catherine, Jane Lamm Carroll, Joanne Cavallaro and Sharon Doherty, eds. (Lexington Books 2011).
- "It was Chick Lit All Along: The Gendering of a Genre"
You've Come a Long Way Baby: Women, Politics, and Popular Culture. Lilly Goren, ed., (U of KY 2009). 201-214.
- "The Feminist Critique: Four Questions for Theorizing Across Disciplines"
The Global Search for Justice Reader, College of St. Catherine (Copley 2009). 88-98.
 (This essay also won Abigail Quigley McCarthy Scholarly and Creative Work Award, 2009)
- "Doubting Nick: Reading Nick Reading Gatsby Reading Daisy"
Approaches to Teaching Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby. Jackson R. Bryer and Nancy P. VanArsdale, eds. New York: MLA, 2009. 175-180.
- "Book Club Ladies: Marshaled by Oprah, Guerilla Fighters in the Culture Wars"
 (with student researcher Rebecca Kurtzahn-Beach)
Reader 55 (Fall 2006): 56-69
- "Her Mother's Language"
Narrating Mothers. Maureen T. Reddy and Brenda O. Daly, eds. Nashville: U of Tennessee Press, 1991.
- "Melville's Quarrel with Mormonism in *The Confidence Man*."
American Transcendental Quarterly Winter 1990: 353-361.
- "On the Necessity of a Feminist Perspective in Literature Classes."
Re-Visions 3.2 (Winter 1990): 12-16.
- "She's Bad *Because* She's Drawn That Way: Women, Representation and Jessica Rabbit."
Re-Visions 2.2 (Winter 1989): 5-7.
 (Reprinted with permission by *Hurricane Alice, a feminist quarterly* 6.2 [Spring 1989]: 6-7.)
- "Lust for a Story: Cynthia Ozick's 'Usurpation' as Fabulation."
Studies in American Jewish Literature vol. 6 (Fall 1987): 87-95.

Selected Reviews:

- Review of *Modernism: The Basics*, by Laura Winkiel. (London: Routledge, 2017)
 Forthcoming in *Feminist Modernist Studies* (Fall 2020)
- Review of *Out of Context: The Uses of Modernist Fiction*, by Michaela Bronstein. (New York: Oxford UP, 2018.)
Reception (Summer 2019)
- Review of *The Critics and Hemingway, 1924-2014: Shaping an American Literary Icon*, by Laurence W. Mazzeno, in the series "Studies in American Literature and Culture: Literary Criticism in Perspective," Brian Yothers, series editor (Rochester: Camden House, 2015)
Reception (Summer 2017)

Selected Conference Papers

- "Hogwarts Faculty Meeting: Potter Pedagogies"
 Harry Potter Conference at Chestnut Hill College, Philadelphia (October 2019)
- The Making of Americans* and the U.S. Women's Novel"
 American Literature Association, Gertrude Stein Society Panel, San Francisco (May 2018)
 (an earlier version presented at Society for the Study of American Women Writers, Bordeaux, France, June 2017)
- "Gertrude Stein's Challenge to Canonicity: *The Making of Americans* as the Most Modernist of Modernist Novels"
 Feminist Inter/Modernist Association/Space Between Conference, Greeley CO (June 2018)

- “Pedagogies of Oprah” Special panel on Oprah’s Book Club
American Studies Association, Chicago IL (November 2017)
- “Aesthetic Value and the Middlebrow”
Inventing the Middlebrow Conference, St. Paul (June 2014)
- “Bestselling and Consciousness-raising: Novels, Women and the Practices of Passionate Reading”
Reception Studies Conference, Milwaukee (September 2013)
- “A Middlebrow Novel of Our OWN: After Oprah’s Book Club”
Society for the Study of American Women Writers, Denver (October 2013)
- “Mary McCarthy’s *The Group* and Early Second Wave Feminism”
Protest on the Page Conference, Madison (September 2012)
(a more developed version presented in London, July 2017)
- “Oprah’s Summer of Faulkner” (invited presentation)
Modern Language Association Panel, Los Angeles (January 2011)
- “Let’s Talk About Texts: The Evaluative Language of Everyday Readers”
Midwest Modern Language Association (M/MLA), Chicago (November 2010)
- “Oprah’s Reading Revolution” (invited presentation)
International Conference on the Book, Boston MA (October 2006)

Lectures and Public Scholarship

- “It’s Complicated: The *Harry Potter* Novels and Their Avid Readers,” Keynote Address
Chestnut Hill *Harry Potter* Conference, October 2017 (St. Kate’s Colloquium, March 2018)
- “Judge a Book: Confronting the Myth of Intellectual Neutrality,” Keynote Address
Graduate Conference in Literature, Politics and Aesthetics, SUNY Binghamton (April 2017)
- “Better Read,” Invited Lecture
Utah Valley University, October 2016, and St. Mary’s University, Winona, September 2016
- “The Feminist Critique: Four Questions for Theorizing Across Disciplines,” Essay
The Catherine Core Reader, August 2014
- “Let’s Talk About Texts: The Evaluative Language of Everyday Readers”
Scholars’ Circle presentation (Minneapolis campus February 2011/St. Paul campus March 2011)
- “Ah January!: Why Faculty Should Love Study Abroad”
Colleagues, December 2009
- “Taming the Publishing Beast: The College of St. Catherine Scholars’ Retreat”
Article with Joanne Cavallaro, Gabrielle Civil and Susan Cochrane, in *Change*, May/June 2009.

Readings and book discussions (including Minnesota Library Association, Ramsey and Dakota County Libraries, Reader Advisory Groups, Milkweed Books, Subtext Books, Content Books (Northfield MN), Moon Palace Books, Borders Books, Bound to be Read, Amazon Books (the original feminist one in Minneapolis!), CSC Friends of the Library, Critical Thinking Society, Jewish Community Center, AAUW, CSC Alumnae Association—Philadelphia, Boston, Kansas City, San Francisco, Phoenix, Mesa, South Metro, and Washington DC chapters about Oprah’s Book Club, 2005-08, and *The Ulysses Delusion*, 2017-18.

Editorials and commentary (*Pioneer Press* and *Star Tribune*) and **blogs** at ceciliakoncharfarr.net

Employment

- 1994-2021 **St. Catherine University**
Professor of English and Women's Studies (Tenured in 1997), **Carondelet Scholar Chair of English and International Languages (2015-2020)**
 Brought together three humanities departments in a mutually-beneficial union
 Led a curriculum revision in English to enact our commitment to a more diverse major
 Instilled practices of inclusion in hiring, gaining four new faculty members of color
 Moved budget and scheduling practices toward more efficiency
Sr. Mona Riley Endowed Chair in the Humanities (2011-2014)
 Strengthened interdisciplinary programming in the Humanities
 Sponsored an international conference, "Inventing the Middlebrow," June 2014
 Instituted faculty development initiatives, including reading groups and book celebrations
Core Curriculum Co-Director (2010-2012)
 Revised first-year seminar: *The Reflective Woman*
 Focused on re-engaging full-time faculty in teaching first-years
 Developed and edited the *Catherine Core Reader*
Faculty Council Co-Chair (2010-2011)
 Initiated governance restructuring
 Enhanced shared governance by encouraging regular review of administrators
 Presented talks (with provost) on principles of academic freedom and shared governance
Faculty Associate, Academic Affairs (2005-06)
 Led review of college excellence initiatives (SIFAX)
 Authored two reports: "SIFAX" and "Recommendations on Faculty Leadership"
 Chaired Core Curriculum Vision Committee (CCVC)
Chair of English (2002-2005)
 Directed Bush Grant-funded departmental curriculum revision
 Instituted Department Chairs Leadership Team in Liberal Arts and Sciences
 Worked for fair treatment of adjuncts, increasing part-time contracts
Interim Director of Women's Studies (2001)
 Introduced midlevel "Feminist Theory" course requirement
 Set up Brown Bag Lunch lecture series
 Founded Women's Studies writing and theory groups
Director of Core Curriculum (1997-2000)
 Initiated undergraduate Teaching Assistant Program (now "AMP")
 Headed revision of *The Reflective Woman Reader* and *The Reflective Woman* course
 Established assessment procedures and organized standing committees
- 1990-94 **Brigham Young University**
Assistant Professor
- 1988-90 **Michigan State University**
Teaching Assistant
Editor of *RE-VISIONS, Journal of the Women's Studies Program at MSU*
- 1985-87 **Brigham Young University**
Graduate Instructor
Research Intern for Dr. Gloria Cronin (Editor, *Saul Bellow Journal*)
- 1982-84 **Journalist**
 In the Pittsburgh area (*Uniontown Herald-Standard, Brownsville Telegraph, Butler Eagle*)

Education

- 1990 **Ph.D. Michigan State University**, East Lansing, MI
 Dissertation: "Emphasis Mine: Autobiographical Fiction and the Modernist Woman Writer"
 Advisor: Dr. Katherine Fishburn
- Summer 1989 **School of Criticism and Theory** at Dartmouth College
 Seminars with Stanley Fish and Barbara Herrnstein Smith
 Colloquia or discussion groups with Toril Moi, Jane Tompkins, Geoffrey Hartman, and Terry Eagleton
- 1987 **M.A. Brigham Young University**, Provo, UT
 Thesis: "There is Another Sky: On the Importance of a Feminist Perspective in Literature Classes"
 Advisor: Dr. Gloria Cronin
- 1982 **B.A. Slippery Rock State College** (now University), Slippery Rock, PA
 Magna cum laude graduate in English, with journalism emphasis, French minor

Professional Organizations

Modern Language Association (and Women's Caucus)
 Reception Studies Society
 Feminist inter/Modernist Association
 The Space Between: Literature and Culture, 1914-1945
 American Association of University Professors

Reference available upon request.

Cecilia Konchar Farr, Ph.D.
cecilia.konchar-farr@westliberty.edu
 651-261-1890