Final Master's Portfolio

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FINAL MASTER’S PORTFOLIO

Stephanie Jo Thompson
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A Final Portfolio

Submitted to the English Department of Bowling Green State University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts in the field of English

July 5, 2022

Dr. Chad Duffy, Portfolio Advisor
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Final Master’s Portfolio Analytical Narrative

I am grateful for the opportunity to study at Bowling Green State University and pursue a degree of Master of Arts in English, Individualized track over the past three years. In my time with Bowling Green State University, I took a variety of courses that appear in both the English Teaching track and the Professional Writing and Rhetoric track. However, I found my “home” in two areas of inquiry that I connected with the most: teaching of writing and late nineteenth century feminist rhetoric and literature. In the first area of inquiry, teaching of writing, I took several courses: Teaching of Writing, Teaching Grammar in the Context of Writing, Teaching Writing Online, Graduate Writing, and Composition Instructor’s Workshop. In the second area of inquiry, nineteenth century feminist rhetoric and literature, I encountered this topic in Theories and Methods of Literary Criticism, Seminar in English Studies: Convincing Women, and Graduate Writing.

My main goal in my first area of inquiry was to study scholarship and learn skills that could help me in future employment opportunities. I am currently in my sixth-year teaching as a contract instructor at a university in South Korea. Without a master’s degree it would be difficult to move to a more permanent position or to secure a position at a different institution. The bulk of the courses I was responsible for teaching in past years were focused on general English communication, but I wanted to better prepare myself to be able to teach writing in South Korea in the future. Furthermore, if I leave South Korea one day, I felt that this program and my inquiry into the teaching of writing would give me opportunities to work at an institution of higher education in the United States, whether it is a first-year writing program instructor, or in some other capacity.
My second area of inquiry came about based on a personal interest and fascination with the lives and experiences of activist women and women writers in the United States in the tumultuous antebellum era. I have always been interested in feminist theory since my time as an undergraduate English and Sociology major. My first paper in this BGSU graduate program was a deep dive into feminist theory and literature through the lens of Charlotte Perkins Gilman and Virginia Woolf in the course, Theories and Methods of Literary Criticism. I was happy to revisit this paper again and feel that spark of curiosity as I had the chance to revise this paper for a project in Graduate Writing, one of the last courses I took in my time at BGSU. I was again able to visit this concept in Seminar in English Studies: Convincing Women, where our class took a long and detailed journey into the rhetoric of the women’s movement for equal rights in the mid-to-late nineteenth century America. It was there that I was inspired by the bold work of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and chose her as the subject of my final project in the course. I believe I will continue to read and learn about this historical period and study the influential words of women from this era throughout my life.

While I wrote many pieces during my time at BGSU, I chose two pieces that I felt best represented my passion and growth in the program. They are the two pieces that show how this program has influenced my life for the better. My first piece, “Basic English Writing Reimagined: A Theoretical Approach to Syllabus Design in an EFL Writing Class in South Korea” represents the most meaningful impact this program has had on my professional life. Although I did not specialize in English Teaching, I incorporated this piece to serve as an example of a teaching-based project. I learned so much throughout my courses on teaching writing that I feel I improved as a teacher over the past three years, even though I have not yet obtained my degree. This project had the most direct effect on my teaching as it was based on a
real course that I teach. Other projects I developed in this program, while interesting and useful, were not as applicable to my professional life. I especially found the idea of threshold concepts a new and challenging thing to grasp at first. Deeply rooted in theory and based on the hard work of scholars in the field, threshold concepts were a theme that ran through a few of my courses. Much of what I learned from threshold concepts I have incorporated into my course design and teaching philosophy.

When I revised this teaching-based project, I first updated the syllabus to look cleaner and more professional, incorporating what I had learned in my time between taking Teaching of Writing in the summer of 2020 and the composition of this master’s portfolio in the summer of 2022. I was able to develop each section of the syllabus more thoroughly and fill out areas that were missing in the previous version. I then redeveloped the teaching materials and added some more materials to give more of an idea of what this course would look like when it is fully developed. Finally, I created PowerPoint slides that I would use to introduce the course to students. When I teach this course, I plan to give students access to both the Word document file of the syllabus and a PDF of the presentation of the syllabus so that they can access the information in two different modalities, another method I learned about in my time in this program.

After updating the syllabus and teaching materials, I edited the text portion of the project. When I read it again for the first time after two years, I felt that the tone of this paper was much less mature and formal than my more recent papers done in 2021 or 2022. I hesitated for a moment, considering if this was an appropriate project to include in my portfolio if the tone was less formal and the research not as strong as some of my other projects. However, I decided to move forward and include it because it was the project that had the biggest impact on my time in
this master’s program. I revised some passages and checked my sources again to strengthen my overall claims. However, as this project is not intended to serve as the “substantive research” project in my portfolio, I did not build the research section much more with additional sources.

The second piece I chose for my portfolio is “Exact Equilibrium: Elizabeth Cady Stanton’s Quest to Liberate Woman from Religion” from an English Studies Seminar entitled “Convincing Women: US Women’s Rhetorical Tactics and Practices” that I took in the fall semester of 2019. This course was rather early in my career at BGSU, but it made a huge impact on me. I learned things about history, rhetoric, feminism, and social activism that I did not know about before. I was inspired by the female figures themselves and the types of rhetorical work they did even though they had so many limits placed upon them. I chose this piece as my example of “substantive research” because I felt that it was the project that I most enthusiastically and passionately researched. I was intrigued by Elizabeth Cady Stanton’s boldness at pointing out religion as a root cause of women’s unequal political status and I wanted to find out more about how her views on religion influenced her work through the decades spanning her life and career.

When I revised this piece, I incorporated some excellent peer reviews that I received, which helped me improve it greatly. I made my thesis stronger and tied it together throughout the entire paper by improving transitions from idea to idea. I added more context describing who Elizabeth Cady Stanton was and revisited my sources to support my interpretation of her words and work more clearly. I added more analysis of the strategies and rhetoric Elizabeth Cady Stanton used in her work. Finally, I rearranged some sections and deleted the headings between ideas in the paper to improve the flow. Through the Seminar in English Studies course and the creation and revision of this project, I learned a lot about how to construct words in a way that is
logical, persuasive, and effective. I am indebted to the professors and peers in this program for helping me along the way.

While it was hard to choose only two pieces for this final portfolio, I feel I have chosen the two works that had the most impact on me academically, professionally, and personally. I will continue to pursue my career goals of teaching writing and keep coming back to my academic and personal interest in the rhetoric of women writers and activists of nineteenth century first-wave feminism. Perhaps one day I can merge these two areas of interest into one and pass along the knowledge I have gained to students in the future.
“Basic English Writing” Reimagined: A Theoretical Approach to Syllabus Design in an EFL Writing Class in South Korea

Introduction

Writing is a powerful tool that many English language learners struggle to master and comprehend on a mechanical and grammatical level, as well as on a rhetorical level. With language and cultural barriers, it can be difficult for learners to grasp the writing conventions and concepts that are expected in institutions of higher education and the professional world. Most of the students I teach have not had many chances to develop their writing skills in English before coming to my course. I aim to use what I have learned in Teaching of Writing, a BGSU graduate course in the department of English, to inform and enhance my teaching methodology and materials at my current place of employment. The following project is the redevelopment of a course entitled “Basic English Writing,” which I teach at the Language Education Center of the University of Ulsan in Ulsan, South Korea. I have taught this course two times previously, but upon study and reflection during my time at BGSU, I have decided to strengthen it so that students could have an improved, more dynamic experience with writing. This project includes research supporting proposed changes to the class followed by a fully redefined syllabus, teaching materials, and a newly designed PowerPoint syllabus presentation. In the new syllabus I establish threshold concepts, integrate small group work, peer reviews, and give details about the response and feedback styles I will use in the class. With scholarship from sources such as (Re)Considering What We Know and TESOL Quarterly, I have laid down a solid theoretical foundation for a revamped course which will greatly enrich the experience of writing for my students.
The typical students who enroll in Basic English Writing are of various writing abilities. Some students need step by step guidance while there are others who have a firm grasp of the basics of writing in English already. As there is an intense focus on English language skills for academic purposes, future employment qualifications, and general communication in Korea, I chose the student textbook, *Trio Writing 2* as the basis for the course. It is designed to teach students the building blocks for basic writing and “weaves together contextualized vocabulary words, grammar skills, and writing strategies to provide students with the tools they need for successful academic writing at the earliest stages of language acquisition” (Savage vi). There are numerous helpful examples and exercises to assist students to construct sentences and paragraphs from the ground up. To enrich the classroom experience I will supplement the nine built-in units with an extra unit on creative writing and a unit on professional email writing. I chose the second level textbook out of a series of three books so that I could hopefully meet both beginning students and more advanced students where they are at.

In past semesters, Basic English Writing was primarily lecture based and employed single-draft assignments. I followed a class structure that was familiar to students but did not challenge them in new ways. I did not plan collaborative activities and I focused my time on teacher-centered informational delivery. I did not attempt to employ peer review the previous semesters. My experience instructing students on peer review in the past was not met with success. The concept of peer review was difficult for students as they tend to be uncomfortable with what they perceive as evaluating each other. When I tried peer review with students in a different course it did not seem to be valuable to them at the time. They read their peers’ paper and gave very few comments and just said “good job” to all their peers. Because of this I assumed that Korean students are uncomfortable with peer review and do not enjoy getting
feedback from classmates. I realize now that perhaps it was my own approach that made the strategy unsuccessful. At the time I did not have the theoretical background to teach more successfully using peer review. I aim to fix this next semester.

Additionally, in this newly revamped course I will change how I give feedback to my students in Basic English Writing. I aim to notify students in advance what I will not correct and what I will correct on their papers. I would like the bulk of my feedback to students to be positive and encouraging. Most of my comments will be in the form of questions to get students to engage and think more deeply into what they are writing. This will be a big change in my response scheme. In past semesters of the course my teacher feedback was primarily focused on error and format correction. However, by the end of the semester I had little evidence that my time spent correcting their errors had any effect on the improvement of their writing. Therefore, I will give them more holistic feedback in the form of suggestions, prompts, and questions.

**Significance**

This project is significant because it offers another voice on the teaching of writing in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) setting. It will give a unique look into direct improvements made to a course based on researched methods. Additionally, my project serves to extend English education in Korean universities by offering students a more engaging experience writing in English. Most models of instruction in EFL settings in Asia still employ the older standards of teacher-as-authority and judge rather than a teacher as a guide who gives reflective feedback on student’s writing and encourages them to make revisions. It may be time to get our students acquainted with more updated methods in the field.
The improvement of the Basic English Writing course will be an important milestone in my development as an instructor at the University of Ulsan. It will demonstrate my growth over the past five years and show my dedication to improving my classes and my pedagogical approaches. I believe that reconstructing my course from the ground up, with a research-based foundation, will help me feel more confident in the classroom and be better able to help my students on their learning journey. I would like what students learn in class to help them in their overall intellectual growth as well as their English language development. I also see this project as an opportunity to further examine my role as a foreign instructor in a Korean university. How can I be sensitive to the cultural background and language skill of students while still teaching them standard conventions of writing in English? I need to balance my own expectations based on my background experience and try to imagine how my students would react to this course and the work that is expected from them.

Methodology

Readers of this project will be BGSU classmates and faculty, colleagues at the University of Ulsan, and potentially instructors of writing at other Korean universities. Pending further research this project could potentially be read by scholars in the EFL writing field in the future. Colleagues who teach English as a Second Language (ESL) in English-language dominant countries could interpret this project differently than colleagues who teach EFL in the students’ native language-dominant countries. My project is specific to teaching EFL in non-English dominant countries. I draw much of my basis for this paper on the theories of threshold concepts, teacher feedback and EFL peer review from two main texts: (Re)Considering What We Know, Introduction, Chapters 1, 3, and 8, as well as two articles that appeared in the journal, TESOL Quarterly. I also draw from an Oregon State University Writing Center video, “Writing Across
Borders.” I see this project filling a gap in the readings undertaken in the graduate course ENG 6200 “Teaching of Writing” by giving a unique perspective of teaching English writing in an EFL setting.

**Areas of Inquiry**

(1) *Threshold Concepts*

Threshold concepts are defined as “concepts crucial for epistemological participation in the disciplines, the lenses learners must see through and see with to be successful” (Adler-Kassner 3). By choosing threshold concepts to adopt into my course I will ensure that my students know the reason why we are writing and sharing our work and have a lens through which they can view all activities in the class. I feel it is imperative that my students have a foundational understanding of what writing is and why we write. They need a baseline from which to understand the purpose of practice assignments and peer review throughout the semester. I establish threshold concepts in my syllabus intended to communicate to students the underlying ideas driving everything we will do in the semester. Chapter 3 of *(Re)Considering What We Know* “Thinking Like a Writer: Threshold Concepts for First-Year Writers in Open-Admissions Classrooms” considers the place of threshold concepts in a first-year writing classroom of non-traditional students. As my current teaching situation could be considered a non-traditional classroom, I felt the threshold concepts outlined in that chapter would serve the needs of my students well. I considered the following threshold concepts for possible integration into my course: 1. Writing can be taught and learned. 2. Writers write for different purposes and audiences, and often in genres with predictable conventions. 3. Reading and writing are interconnected activities. 4. Writing processes are individualized, require readers, and require
These four threshold concepts align well with the students I teach and the learning outcomes I employ in my course. By using a well-structured textbook that teaches students how to integrate grammar and vocabulary into effective sentences, students will discover that they can learn how to write. By imagining different audiences for their writing and showing their writing to a variety of peers, they can see the different purposes and audiences writers write for. Through the examination of readings in the textbook and reading peer’s writing they will understand that reading and writing are interconnected. Finally, through our frequent peer review activities and subsequent revision, students will understand that everyone has a different writing process, their work must be written for someone to read, and their work must be revised.

I also found the six threshold concepts in Chapter 8 of the same text “Doors Between Disciplines: Threshold Concepts and the Community College Writing Program” to be relevant to my students as well: 1. Writing is a social and rhetorical activity. 2. Writing speaks to situations through recognizable forms. 3. All writers have more to learn. 4. Text is an object outside of oneself that can be improved and developed. 5. Revision is central to developing writing. 6. Reflection is critical for writer’s development (Blaauw-Hara 161). These threshold concepts are also applicable to my students, and I can share them on my syllabus as pedagogical goals that will guide our class activities. Some of these threshold concepts may slightly overlap with the previously mentioned ones, but I found them to also bring to the forefront other concepts that I hope students can come away with from my course. First, that writing is social and rhetorical. By sharing their work with others and using their writing as communication in telling a story to an audience, I hope students can come to understand a little better this important concept of writing. Furthermore, I feel that the concept “All writers have more to learn” is vital to my students
because lower-level students may feel they will never be able to learn more difficult concepts, and higher-level students may feel they are already highly skilled and never make mistakes. With this concept I feel I can even the playing field between different skill levels in my class. “Text is an object outside of oneself” and “revision is central to developing writing” go hand-in-hand. I aim for students to understand that even if they produce work that they are not satisfied with, it does not reflect back on them as to their character or intelligence level. They can learn that through revision and reflection they can improve the text that they have created. Finally, I want to introduce my students to the idea of reflection on their writing. It is not a concept that I have previously introduced to students in other classes, but it is something I plan to incorporate in this newly redesigned course.

I adopted and condensed the threshold concepts outlined from these two chapters, and then reordered them so I could make an acronym. The acronym I created is RAWWRR:

1. Reading and writing are connected
2. All writers have more to learn
3. Writing requires readers
4. Written text is an object outside of oneself
5. Revision is central to developing writing
6. Reflection is critical for writer’s development

These are the concepts that I will share with students on the syllabus and throughout the semester. In my first and second lessons I plan to explain these concepts to students and encourage them to memorize them as our “class concepts.” I hope that connecting an image of a cute dinosaur roaring with “RAWWRR” they can more easily remember and internalize these core concepts of writing in our course. I may ask them to informally reflect on these concepts from time to time. I do not expect students to fully connect with all aspects of these threshold
concepts but I believe having these in place will give my course a new structure and theoretical foundation from which to base the lessons and assignments.

(2) Teacher feedback

Teacher feedback is another area that I aim to redevelop in future sections of Basic English Writing. I drew inspiration from the video “Writing Across Borders” where an instructor, Vicki, details how she meets with her international students individually and asks them about their experience writing in English. She asks them, “How do you want me to respond on your papers? Do you want me to mark lots of errors? Or do you want me to just mark your papers the way I do any other student in the class?” Here Vicki is establishing the teacher response protocol that her students communicate would be the best way for them. This has been an effective practice in my classes because it establishes a basis of communication of needs between the students and the instructor, something that is difficult for students to initiate. In future sections of Basic English Writing, I will inquire what students feel is the best way they would like to receive beneficial feedback on their writing. We will discuss the different options and I will tell them what I think, and they can reciprocate. Vicki’s comments about teacher feedback on the work of José, an international student, supports the idea that for students, seeing a paper marked up with a lot of corrections can be very discouraging. José notes that instead of correcting small errors, suggestions would be more helpful. At the beginning of the semester, I will ask students this question through a poll or through an in-class reflection. I will also offer one or two follow-up polls on their feelings about the role of teacher feedback in the course.

Icy Lee explores teacher feedback in the context of EFL writing and notes that typically, students “are not required to revise their work, they “play a passive role” and “focus mainly on
scores in the EFL writing classes” (202-203). While Lee’s context is Hong Kong, I can see some similarities in my EFL students in Korea. The students often do not know how to go about revising their work and appear uninterested in going back to something they had considered “finished.” They are often passive participants in classroom discussions and activities and are very often overly focused on scores and grades with a lesser focus on retaining the information they have learned. However, Lee presents some theories that can attempt to combat these challenges in the EFL writing classroom: mediated learning experience (MLE) and activity theory (AT). These theories can “shed new light on teacher feedback in English as a foreign language...writing classrooms” (Lee 202). Lee argues for the need to replace focus on errors and single draft submissions to more effective practices so that “feedback can mediate student learning” (202). Without receiving feedback and the chance to revise their work, students will not internalize what they have learned in the classroom.

I intend to employ what I have learned in this course at BGSU and in my subsequent research to establish an MLE approach in the classroom. To be considered MLE, three criteria must be met: intentionality/reciprocity, transcendence, and meaning, all of which when working in conjunction, stress the interactive and collaborative nature of learning (204). It is this interactive and collaborative focus that makes the biggest change in the redevelopment of my course syllabus. When this approach is employed, the typical “teacher-dominated, product-oriented writing classroom in EFL contexts” will “inevitably fall short” (204). I aim to end the old way of conducting my class and incorporate a more interactive and collaborative MLE approach into my course. By changing my class from a teacher-dominated atmosphere to one of collaboration, I believe I will enhance the students’ learning experience and understanding of
writing as a rhetorical activity. It is the goal that with these changes students can learn to value revision and collaboration as integral parts of their learning experience.

(3) Peer Review in EFL Writing Classrooms

The final aspect of research I explore with the aim of adding to my redeveloped course is peer review of student writing in an EFL classroom. Shulin and Lee outline several concerns regarding peer review in the EFL classroom. Namely, that “students may not be able to identify and correct language and rhetorical problems in writing,” and “students’ limited L2 proficiency may prevent them from providing constructive comments to their peers,” and the fact that many students consider “feedback provided by the teacher” to be “more creditable than that given by peers” (Shulin 483-484). These are all concerns that I must take into consideration when I employ peer review activities into my writing classes.

Shulin and Lee conducted a study on peer review in an EFL classroom that was helpful to the redevelopment of my writing course. They aimed to find out if lower English proficient students could contribute to group peer feedback and what factors may influence their contribution to that feedback (Shulin 484-485). There were a few valuable takeaways for me from the results of this study. First, low English proficient students participated in meaningful small group peer review when they were provided with peer review training and a supportive atmosphere amongst their classmates. Second, low proficiency students provided their peers with valuable advice despite their weaker grasp of the language. Third, students would much rather use their L1 when giving feedback to their peers rather than L2 (English) because they could better express themselves and prevent misunderstanding (Shulin 489).
Overall, this study gives me confidence that a similar method could work in my classroom in future sections of the course. In my class materials section, I have created a peer review worksheet that the student can fill out in Korean and give to their classmate for peer review. I believe that students will appreciate the opportunity to use their L1 to better convey their ideas to their classmates. To receive credit for their peer review I will ask students to fill out a summary and reflection of the peer review process in English and submit it to me on the peer review workshop day. In the peer review introduction class, I will reiterate to students that peer review is not only for the benefit of their classmates but also helps them learn as well. They can practice their L2 critical reading skills, and they will be able to develop their communicative skills when consulting with peers in the class. I hope that frequent opportunities for peer review and collaboration will help students in numerous ways. I believe they will benefit from having a real audience for their writing, a chance for social collaboration, and the opportunity to mutually benefit from other students regardless of whether they have a higher or lower proficiency in English.

Conclusion

By considering threshold concepts, teacher response, and peer review in my classroom I feel that I have made Basic English Writing a more meaningful and engaging course for my students. I look forward to trying this approach in Fall 2022 and beyond. The following class syllabus, materials, and PowerPoint slides were developed in response to the readings and research undertaken in ENG 6200 and my own previously designed syllabus. As I undertake this newly revised approach, I will note what works and does not work and make changes and adjustments along the way. I will record student responses to this approach and consider it in future research.
BASIC ENGLISH WRITING

Syllabus Fall 2022

INSTRUCTOR: STEPHANIE THOMPSON
OFFICE: 43-322 EMAIL: STHOMP@BGSU.EDU
OFFICE HOURS: WED 2:00 – 2:50; AND BY APPOINTMENT
COURSE MEETS: MON 9:00 – 10:50 CLASSROOM: INTERNATIONAL BUILDING ROOM 304

COURSE DESCRIPTION

ENG 100: Basic English Writing is an introduction to personal, professional, and creative writing in English. In our class we will explore basic principles of the construction of sentences and paragraphs. We will move forward and learn creative and descriptive writing techniques. Finally, we will end the course with a look at some basic principles of business emails and letters. Through peer classroom discussions, writing activities, and peer review workshops we will work on developing a better understanding of writing and communicating in English. This course is not just about writing an assignment and getting a grade, but about exploring our writing and communication skills within the classroom and wider world. Revising and improving our work is central to this class! We will be workshopping every week. Below you can see some basic concepts driving our course. We will consider these concepts as the basis of why we are learning how to write. Our goals in this class are to understand how writing works and to practice the process of writing.

Graded A+, A0, B+, B0, C+, C0, D+, D0, F

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

- Textbook: Trio Writing 2, Oxford
- Regular access to our Learning Management System (LMS): UCLASS
- A paper notebook, writing tools, access to laptop or computer, and printer, as needed

COURSE LEARNING GOALS

- Students will be able to understand principles of written English.
- Students will be able to produce basic communication in English.
- Students will be able to review and revise their writing to improve it.
COURSE CONCEPTS

RAWWR!

Reading and writing are connected
We must read each other’s work to improve our own writing.

All writers have more to learn
We can always keep learning and we can never be 100% perfect.

Writing requires readers
Written words are meant to be read by someone. We must think about who is reading our writing.

Written text is an object outside of oneself
What we write can be developed and improved. It is separate from us.

Revision is central to developing writing
We must always look at our writing after we write it and change or fix parts of it.

Reflection is critical for writer’s development
We need time to think about what we write to improve.

ASSESSMENT

Your work this semester will be assessed according to criteria determined by the instructor for each individual assignment. I will provide feedback and grades on each writing project in the UClass gradebook.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Percent of Grade</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in Peer Review Workshops</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Assignments</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portfolio</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If you miss more than 6 classes without an excuse, it is the policy of the university that you should receive an F grade. Please notify me in a timely manner if you must miss the class for an excused reason.

ATTENDANCE 10%

Students should attend every class on time. For every class a student does not attend, he or she will receive minus 2 points. If a student wishes their absence to be excused, they must provide the instructor with an Absence Excuse Request Form with the accompanying evidence for a student’s absence. This form must be signed by the student’s major department head and a copy must be given to the instructor within two weeks of the missed class. If a student fails to do this their absence will not be excused. If a student is more than 20 minutes late to a class, they will receive a minus 1 point in their attendance score.

PARTICIPATION 10%

On most weeks students will participate in a peer review workshop with classmates. Students will prepare a complete copy of their writing that is ready to be shared with classmates. Students will offer suggestions for corrections and participate in a Describe, Assess, Suggest (DAS) model of peer review. Submission of the Peer Review Report will count for full participation points. Students who are absent from class will not be able to receive participation points on the days they are gone.

For each writing assignment, class members will work together to review one another’s writing. Peer reviews are an important part of the knowledge-making process in academia and beyond. For writers, it is helpful to get as much feedback as possible from thoughtful reviewers in order to revise substantively and to create a more rhetorically effective written text. Moreover, peer reviews have the added pedagogical benefit of encouraging substantive conversations about writing. Through critical reading and focused discussion, writers and reviewers articulate their knowledge and, in the process, become sharper readers and writers.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS 30%

Students will prepare a short practice writing assignment each week of the semester for a total of 11 assignments. Please use Microsoft Word processing software to compose your writing.
Prepare a printed copy of your writing for peer review workshopping each week. Submit your final draft electronically to Uclass a maximum of two days after the peer review workshop day. Papers should use double spacing, 1-inch margins and size 12 font. You can use Arial, Times New Roman, or Calibri for your fonts.

Assignments:

1. Page 26 “How do people meet?” (2)
2. Page 38 “Who has good social skills?” (2)
3. Page 50 “How do places change us?” (3)
4. Page 64 “What makes a strong community?” (3)
5. Page 76 “What did your city build?” (3)
6. Creative Writing (3)
7. Page 88 “How did a place surprise you?” (3)
8. Page 102 “Who are 21st-century teenagers?” (3)
9. Page 114 “What does your future look like?” (3)
10. Page 126 “Who is your country proud of?” (3)
11. Business emails (2)

PORTFOLIO 10%

At the end of the course, we will compile and submit a portfolio of your best work from the semester. Please choose 3 of your best pieces of writing throughout the semester and expand on your original ideas. Revise your previous assignment and increase the word count by 200 – 250 words. Write a reflection on why you chose these pieces for your portfolio. Reflect on your time spent in the class. The portfolio is worth 10 points and will be graded on effort, completion, professionalism, and depth of thought. The total portfolio assignment should be about 5-6 pages of writing, double spaced, size 12 font.

MIDTERM EXAM 20%

Students will take a written midterm exam in the classroom based on grammar, vocabulary and writing techniques learned in the textbook. There will be no essay writing in the midterm exam.

FINAL EXAM 20%

Students will take a written final exam in the classroom based on grammar, vocabulary and writing techniques learned in the textbook. The final exam will also include a writing prompt where a student must write an essay similar to the ones we did in our weekly assignments.
OTHER CLASS POLICIES

TEACHER FEEDBACK ON WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS

After you electronically submit your final drafts of weekly assignments to Uclass I will download your assignments and read them and give them a grade. I will not focus on fixing any small errors you may have. Please try to avoid errors through peer review and through your own review of your paper. Instead of fixing small errors, I will focus on larger issues. I will make comments on your document using the comment feature of Microsoft Word. I will ask questions and give suggestions there.

LATE WORK

All work must be submitted on time, in accordance with the deadlines listed on the course calendar. Assignments less than 2 working days late will receive a -5% penalty. More than 2 working days late will receive a -10% penalty. More than 5 working days late will receive a 0.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

Because this class is discussion-based and will sometimes address sensitive and personal topics, it is essential that students approach topics and peers with appropriate levels of care, sensitivity, and understanding to facilitate a conducive learning environment for all. Additionally, disruptive behavior will not be tolerated in class. Disruptive behavior is behavior that interferes with other class members and their access to an appropriate educational or work environment. Examples of disruptive behavior include yelling or screaming, persistent and unreasonable demands for time and attention, words or actions that have the effect of intimidating, threatening, or harassing another, and words or actions that cause another to fear for personal safety.

TOPIC SELECTION

For students to produce meaningful writing, it is important that they choose topics that are of interest to them. However, it is also important that those topics be suitable for academic inquiry and not be intimidating or harmful to other class members. Students are expected to select topics that admit of open inquiry and public discussion and that in no way hinder the learning experiences of other students.

PUBLIC NATURE OF YOUR WRITTEN WORK

As this is a workshop-style writing seminar, be aware that everything you write for this course may be read by peers and your instructor.
UNIVERSITY POLICIES

ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT
If you have a documented disability that requires accommodations to obtain equal access for your learning, please make your needs known to me, preferably during the first week of the semester.

SAFETY STATEMENT
The University of Ulsan (UOU) is committed to providing a safe learning environment for all students that is free of all forms of discrimination and harassment.

HOLIDAYS
It is the policy of the University to not have classes on recognized public holidays. Make-up classes will be held on a TBD schedule.

NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES
Students who engage in university-sanctioned non-academic activities are expected to provide the instructor with documentation from the university organization as well as reasonable notice of the dates he or she will be absent. Should you need to miss a class due to a university-sanctioned activity, understand that absence from classes, even if excused, does not relieve you of responsibility for completing required work. In such an event, you should consult with me well before you miss class to make alternative arrangements for completing any work missed.

COURSE CALENDAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wk</th>
<th>Workshop Task</th>
<th>Textbook Task</th>
<th>Prepare for Next time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>9.5  Meet your Peer Review Workshop group</td>
<td>Readiness Unit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.12 Brainstorm together</td>
<td>Unit 1 How do people meet?</td>
<td>Assignment 1: Page 26 “How do people meet?” (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>9.19 Peer Review 1: Assignment 1</td>
<td>Unit 2 Who has good social skills?</td>
<td>Assignment 2: Page 38 “Who has good social skills?” (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Final Draft Due: 9.21</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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<td>4</td>
<td>9.26 Peer Review 2: Assignment 2</td>
<td>Unit 3 How do places change us?</td>
<td>Assignment 3: Page 50 “How do places change us?” (3)</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Final Draft Due: 9.28</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Assignment</td>
<td>Due Date</td>
<td>Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 10.3</td>
<td>Peer Review 3: Assignment 3</td>
<td>Final Draft Due: 10.5</td>
<td>Unit 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 10.10</td>
<td>Peer Review 4: Assignment 4</td>
<td>Final Draft Due: 10.12</td>
<td>Unit 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 10.17</td>
<td>Peer Review 5: Assignment 5</td>
<td>Final Draft Due: 10.19</td>
<td>The Writer As Artist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 10.24</td>
<td><strong>Midterm Exam</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>9 10.31</td>
<td>Peer Review 6: Creative Writing</td>
<td>Final Draft Due: 11.2</td>
<td>Unit 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 11.7</td>
<td>Peer Review 7: Assignment 7</td>
<td>Final Draft Due: 11.9</td>
<td>Unit 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 11.14</td>
<td>Peer Review 8: Assignment 8</td>
<td>Final Draft Due: 11.16</td>
<td>Unit 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 11.21</td>
<td>Peer Review 9: Assignment 9</td>
<td>Final Draft Due: 11.23</td>
<td>Unit 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 11.28</td>
<td>Peer Review 10: Assignment 10</td>
<td>Final Draft Due: 11.30</td>
<td>Business Emails</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 12.5</td>
<td>About Portfolio Project Wrap-up and Review</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Prepare Portfolio Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 12.12</td>
<td>Make-up week, no class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 12.19</td>
<td><strong>Final Exam</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>


BASIC ENGLISH WRITING

PEER REVIEW FEEDBACK SHEET

You may give your feedback in Korean or English, or a mix of both, whatever you feel will communicate your ideas the best.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSIGNMENT NAME:</th>
<th>DATE:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NAME OF STUDENT BEING REVIEWED:</td>
<td>NAME OF REVIEWER:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Write your feedback and give this paper to your partner. After receiving this paper, you may keep it, you do not have to submit it.

**Describe:** What did you notice about this paper as you were reading it? How did it make you feel? Did you have any questions or confusion while reading? Were there any parts that were effective or good?

**Assess:** What is your assessment of this writing: Incomplete? Needs a lot of improvement? Needs some improvement? Good? Great? Excellent?

**Suggest:** What would help your partner improve? What could your partner potentially change in their writing?
Summarize the feedback you gave to your partner. (1-3 sentences each for D, A, S)

*Describe:*

*Assess:*

*Suggest:*

Summarize the feedback you got from your partner. (1-3 sentences each for D, A, S)

*Describe:*

*Assess:*

*Suggest:*

**Reflection**

How do you feel about today’s Peer Review Workshop? What did you learn? What will you change or not change in your final draft of this assignment? Please write 5 – 10 sentences.
ASSIGNMENT 2 INSTRUCTIONS

ASSIGNMENT 2: WHO IS A GOOD HOST YOU KNOW? WHAT DOES HE OR SHE DO?

2 points

**Paragraph One should consider these questions:** Who is the person you are talking about? How do you know him or her? Where is he or she from? Where does he or she live? When does he or she have guests? What kind of event is it?

**Paragraph Two should consider these questions:** What does he or she do? What do you do together? What details show that person is a good host? What interesting things can your reader learn about your host? What images do you want the reader to see in their mind when they read your writing?

*Look at pages 38-43 to guide your writing process.*

1. Make sure you include a topic sentence, a transition sentence, and a concluding sentence. Underline or highlight these sentences in your assignment.
2. Explain your story in a way your reader can clearly imagine the host you are talking about.
3. Use Microsoft Word to type your paragraphs.
4. Write a title.
5. Write about 150 - 200 words, a maximum 225 is okay if you desire.
6. Write your word count at the bottom of the page.
7. Use 1-inch margins, size 12 font, double spacing.
8. Use font style Times New Roman, Calibri, or Arial.
9. Write your name, Student ID number, Basic English Writing, and the due date on the top left of the page.
10. Save your file name with your name: "LASTNAME FIRSTNAME” Assignment 2" (PARK MINSU Assignment 2)
11. Attach your document and submit.
**BASIC ENGLISH WRITING**

**Portfolio Project Assignment Sheet (10% of your grade)**

IN THIS ASSIGNMENT YOU WILL COMPILE AND SUBMIT A PORTFOLIO OF YOUR BEST WORK FROM THE SEMESTER.

- Please choose 3 of your best pieces of writing throughout the semester and expand on your original ideas.
- Revise your previous assignment and increase the word count by 200 – 250 words.
- Each of the three chosen pieces should be 400 – 500 words.
- Write a reflection on why you chose these pieces for your portfolio. Reflect on your time spent in the class and what you have learned.
- The reflection should be 300 – 400 words, double spaced.
- The portfolio is worth 10 points and will be graded on effort, completion, professionalism, and depth of thought.
- The total portfolio assignment should be about 5-6 pages of writing, double spaced, size 12 font, 1-inch margins.
- Check for errors and mistakes before submitting your paper.
- Put your name, our class number, and the date in the upper left corner. No title page or cover page is needed.

**PROJECT RUBRICS**

20 points (10% of the final grade)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>5 points</th>
<th>4 points</th>
<th>3 points</th>
<th>2 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
<td>All revised and expanded projects are included</td>
<td>All projects are included but they have not been substantially revised and expanded</td>
<td>1 project is missing</td>
<td>2 projects are missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reflection</strong></td>
<td>A meaningful and well-written reflection of at least 300 words is included</td>
<td>A reflection of at least 300 words is included</td>
<td>A reflection is included</td>
<td>No reflection is included</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammar and Mechanics</strong></td>
<td>There were no or very few grammar or mechanical errors</td>
<td>There were a few errors that were noticeable but did not take away from the impact of the portfolio</td>
<td>A few errors took away from the impact of the portfolio</td>
<td>Many errors took away impact from the portfolio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presentation and neatness</strong></td>
<td>The portfolio followed all the composition conventions outlined in the instructions</td>
<td>The portfolio followed most of the composition outlines</td>
<td>The portfolio did not follow conventions well</td>
<td>The portfolio did not follow conventions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Basic English Writing
(기초영어글쓰기)

Fall 2022
Syllabus
Class meets: Mondays 9:00 a.m. – 10:50 a.m.
Classroom: International Building Room 304

University of Ulsan

Ms. Thompson

Contact Information

Stephanie Jo Thompson
(Ms. Thompson)

Office: 43-322
I am available by email and Uclass messenger
Email: thompson.stephaniej@gmail.com

Office Hours Wed. 2:00 – 2:50 p.m.; and by appointment
About the Course

Basic English Writing is an introduction to personal, professional, and creative writing in English. In our class we will explore basic principles of the construction of sentences and paragraphs. We will move forward and learn creative and descriptive writing techniques. Finally, we will end the course with a look at some basic principles of business emails and letters.

Through peer classroom discussions, writing activities, and peer review workshops we will work on developing a better understanding of writing and communicating in English. This course is not just about writing an assignment and getting a grade, but about exploring our writing and communication skills within the classroom and wider world.

Revising and improving our work is central to this class! We will be workshopping every week. Below you can see some basic concepts driving our course. We will consider these concepts as the basis of why we are learning how to write. Our goals in this class are to understand how writing works and to practice the process of writing.

Guiding Concepts

RAWWR!

Reading and writing are connected
We must read each other’s work to improve our own writing.

All writers have more to learn
We can always keep learning and we can never be 100% perfect.

Writing requires readers
Written words are meant to be read by someone. We must think about who is reading our writing.

Written text is an object outside of oneself
What we write can be developed and improved. It is separate from us.

Revision is central to developing writing
We must always look at our writing after we write it and change or fix parts of it.

Reflection is critical for writer’s development
We need time to think about what we write to improve.
Goals

- Students will be able to understand principles of written English.
- Students will be able to produce basic communication in English.
- Students will be able to review and revise their writing to improve it.

Rules

- Attend every class on time.
- Participate with classmates for peer review workshops.
- Treat everyone with kindness and respect.
- Follow academic integrity guidelines.
- Make a sincere effort on all class assignments.

Class Policies

Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portfolio</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grading Scale

- 94%-100% A+
- 90%-93.5% A0
- 84%-89.5% B+
- 80%-83.5% B0
- 74%-79.5% C+
- 70%-73.5% C0
- 64%-69.5% D+
- 60%-63% D0

Attendance 10%

Students should attend every class on time. For every class a student does not attend, he or she will receive minus 2 points. If a student wishes their absence to be excused, they must provide the instructor with an Absence Excuse Request Form with the accompanying evidence for a student's absence. This form must be signed by the student's major department head and a copy must be given to the instructor within two weeks of the missed class. If a student fails to do this, their absence will not be excused. If a student is more than 20 minutes late to a class, they will receive a minus 1 point in their attendance score.
Requirements

Participation 10%

On most weeks students will participate in a peer review workshop with classmates.

Students will prepare a complete copy of their writing that is ready to be shared with classmates.

Students will offer suggestions for corrections and participate in a Describe, Assess, Suggest (DAS) model of peer review.

Submission of the Peer Review Report will count for full participation points.

Students who are absent from class will not be able to receive participation points on the days they are gone.

Writing Assignments 30%

Students will prepare a short practice writing assignment each week of the semester for a total of 11 assignments.

Please use Microsoft Word processing software to compose your writing.

Prepare a printed copy of your writing for peer review workshop each week.

Submit your final draft electronically to Uclass a maximum of two days after the peer review workshop day.

Papers should use double spacing, 1-inch margins and size 12 font. You can use Arial, Times New Roman, or Calibri for your fonts.

Assignments:
1. Page 26 “How do people meet?” (2)
2. Page 36 “Who has good social skills?” (2)
3. Page 50 “How do places change us?” (3)
4. Page 64 “What makes a strong community?” (3)
5. Page 76 “What did your city build?” (3)
6. Creative Writing (3)
7. Page 88 “How did a place surprise you?” (3)
8. Page 102 “Who are 21st-century teenagers?” (3)
9. Page 114 “What does your future look like?” (3)
10. Page 126 “Who is your country proud of?” (3)
11. Business emails (2)

Evaluation

Midterm Exam 20%

Students will take a written midterm exam in the classroom based on grammar, vocabulary and writing techniques learned in the textbook.

There will be no essay writing in the midterm exam.

Portfolio 10%

At the end of the course, we will compile and submit a portfolio of your best work from the semester.

Please choose 3 of your best pieces of writing throughout the semester and expand on your original ideas.

Revise your previous assignment and increase the word count by 200 – 250 words.

Write a reflection on why you chose these pieces for your portfolio. Reflect on your time spent in the class.

The portfolio is worth 10 points and will be graded on effort completion, professionalism, and depth of thought.

The total portfolio assignment should be about 5 – 6 pages of writing, double spaced, size 12 font.

Final Exam 20%

Students will take a written final exam in the classroom based on grammar, vocabulary and writing techniques learned in the textbook.

The final exam will also include a writing prompt where a student must write an essay similar to the ones we did in our weekly assignments.
### Schedule: Weeks 1 - 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>1. Workshop Task</th>
<th>2. Textbook Task</th>
<th>3. Prepare for next time</th>
<th>Exam</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>Meet your first Peer Review Workshop group</td>
<td>Readiness Unit</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.12</td>
<td>Brainstorm together</td>
<td>Unit 1 How do people meet?</td>
<td>Assignment 1: Page 26 “How do people meet?” (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>9.19</td>
<td>Peer Review 1: Assignment 1 Final Draft Due: 9.21</td>
<td>Unit 2 Who has good social skills?</td>
<td>Assignment 2: Page 38 “Who has good social skills?” (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>Peer Review 3: Assignment 3 Final Draft Due: 10.5</td>
<td>Unit 4 What makes a strong community?</td>
<td>Assignment 4: Page 64 “What makes a strong community?” (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>10.10</td>
<td>Peer Review 4: Assignment 4 Final Draft Due: 10.12</td>
<td>Unit 5 What did your city build?</td>
<td>Assignment 5: Page 76 “What did your city build?” (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>10.17</td>
<td>Peer Review 5: Assignment 5 Final Draft Due: 10.19</td>
<td>The Writer As Artist</td>
<td>Assignment 6: Creative Writing (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>10.24</td>
<td>Keep working on Assignment 6: Creative Writing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
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</table>

### Schedule: Weeks 9 - 16

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>1. Workshop Task</th>
<th>2. Textbook Task</th>
<th>3. Prepare for next time</th>
<th>Exam</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>10.31</td>
<td>Peer Review 6: Creative Writing Final Draft Due: 11.2</td>
<td>Unit 6 How did a place surprise you?</td>
<td>Assignment 7: Page 88 “How did a place surprise you?” (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>Peer Review 7: Assignment 7 Final Draft Due: 11.9</td>
<td>Unit 7 Who are 21st-Century Teenagers?</td>
<td>Assignment 8: Page 102 “Who are 21st-century teenagers?” (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>11.14</td>
<td>Peer Review 8: Assignment 8 Final Draft Due: 11.16</td>
<td>Unit 8 What does your future look like?</td>
<td>Assignment 9: Page 114 “What does your future look like?” (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>11.21</td>
<td>Peer Review 9: Assignment 9 Final Draft Due: 11.23</td>
<td>Unit 9 Who is your country proud of?</td>
<td>Assignment 10: Page 128 “Who is your country proud of?” (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>11.28</td>
<td>Peer Review 10: Assignment 10 Final Draft Due: 11.30</td>
<td>Business Emails</td>
<td>Assignment 11: Business Emails</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>About Portfolio Project Wrap-up and Review</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Prepare Portfolio Project Due: December 16 submitted electronically to Uclass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>12.12</td>
<td>Make-up week, no class</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>12.19</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thank you for joining today's class.
Works Cited


Exact Equilibrium: Elizabeth Cady Stanton’s Quest to Liberate Woman from Religion

Born in Johnstown, N.Y. on November 12, 1815, Elizabeth Cady Stanton lived a long life and held a prolific career as a reformer, suffragist, and feminist (“Timeline”). Drawing inspiration from the World Anti-Slavery Convention she attended in London in 1840, Elizabeth Cady Stanton helped organize the first woman’s rights convention in 1848 Seneca Falls, N.Y., and coauthored the “Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions,” a demand for equal rights for women (Campbell, Vol II, 33). Throughout her lifelong campaign for women’s suffrage in America, Elizabeth Cady Stanton strengthened her belief in an innate and harmonious equilibrium between the sexes. She strongly believed that because of the subordinate civil and social status of women in American society, the progress of American civilization could not move forward. Cady Stanton posited that the two factors contributing to the disenfranchisement of women were the inequalities inherent in the traditional institutions of marriage and religion. In her early career, Cady Stanton was focused on the issues of marriage and divorce, and in her later years the issue of religion and the organized church played heavily on her work. This paper aims to explore Cady Stanton’s later journey to challenge the influence religion had on women’s subordination in all aspects of American society. From her early life experiences with evangelicalism and exploration of religious thought, to her lifelong work for the enfranchisement of women, Cady Stanton’s personal philosophical views on the root cause of civil and social oppression of women is analyzed. Through a close look at a few of Cady Stanton’s articles, speeches, and published works I aim to dive deeply into this early figure of first-wave feminism and show how her prescient views and convictions laid the foundation for later feminist work.

Several factors can be attributed to how Elizabeth Cady Stanton developed her views on religion and why she believed it was responsible for women’s unequal social status in nineteenth
century American society. Her exposure at a young age to Protestant revivalism, her eventual conversion to rationalism, and influential ideas from early figures like reformer Lucretia Mott and philosopher John Stuart Mill all played a role in the development of the beliefs about religion that would shape Cady Stanton’s views throughout her life.

While Elizabeth Cady Stanton was a teenager in the 1830s, American society experienced an “intense period of Protestant revivalism” that was known as the “Second Great Awakening” (Kern, Mrs. 41). In her years at Miss Willard’s Female Seminary, Elizabeth Cady Stanton said she “fell under the spell of Reverend Charles Grandison Finney,” whom she described as a “terrifier of human souls” (Kern, Mrs. 41). Through Finney’s intense preaching and a disturbing live performance of damnation to hell, Cady Stanton claims that she became overwhelmed with nightmares and fell terribly ill (Kern, Mrs. 41). The attempts at converting her to a form of evangelical Christianity did not make her a true believer, but instead she suffered an anxious episode where she “became ill, obsessed with judgement and damnation” (Stevenson-Miller 675). She stated in her personal writings “such preaching worked incalculable harm to the very soul he sought to save” (qtd in Stevenson-Miller 675). It appears that something in the intellectual make-up of Elizabeth Cady Stanton prevented her from accepting conversion to evangelical Christianity and instead disturbed her deeply.

For the rest of her life, she “chose skepticism” regarding religion, and eventually became critical of Finney (Stevenson-Moesnner 675). Cady Stanton’s memory of the “crisis of her failed conversion” set the tone for her future work and “played a shaping role in her politics” (Kern. Mrs. 42). Cady Stanton never again embraced radical religion and became more critical and skeptical of religion throughout her life. This skepticism of conservative religion and its
influences on society lead Cady Stanton to her numerous critiques on the clergy and their continued touting of the supposed natural subordinate status of women.

Soon after Cady Stanton’s terrifying attempted conversion experience, she retreated to nature in Niagara Falls with her family, where no mention of religion was allowed (Kern, Mrs. 42). Cady Stanton stated that “I found my way out of the darkness and into the clear sunlight of Truth. My religious superstitions gave place to rational ideas based on scientific facts, and... I grew more and more happy, day by day” (Eighty Years 28). She trusted rationalism so much that she stated in her pamphlet, “Bible and Church Degrade Woman,” that after her conversion to rationalism she was “endeavored to dissipate these religious superstitions from the minds of women” and she urged them to “base their faith on science and reason,” where she found “at last that peace and comfort I could never find in the Bible and church” (qtd in Kern, Free Woman 97). Thus forth, Cady Stanton felt driven to pursue science and reason and convince others to do away with the religious dogma that was keeping women from advancing in society. She made it her goal to expose the oppressive forces religion had on women’s freedoms and attempt to share her standards of rational thought.

Another early influence on Cady Stanton’s religious opinions was the Quaker activist Lucretia Mott, whom she met at the 1840 World Anti-Slavery Convention in London. Kern says that Cady Stanton was “no doubt influenced by the radical Quaker women who shaped her outlook as a young woman” (Free Woman 95). Lucretia Mott wrote to Cady Stanton in 1840 and said, “It is lamentable, that the simple & benign religion of Jesus should be so encumbered with the creeds & dogmas of sects – Its primitive beauty obscured by these gloomy appendages of man” (qtd in Kern, Free Woman 95). Both Mott and Cady Stanton believed that the purest ideas of religion and belief in a higher power had been sullied by the politics and dogmas of man.
Cady Stanton took these ideas from Mott in the 1840s and continued to modify them into the late nineteenth century, assigning a “pivotal role to ‘Intelligence or Supreme Law, Nature, God, or whatever one may choose to call the eternal forces that set all this in motion’” (qtd in Kern, *Free Woman* 96). While Cady Stanton clearly adopted the idea of a higher power of some kind, she did not believe in an “angry or vengeful” God, nor did she believe in the devil, and she asserted that “our sorrows in life” were due to our own “ignorance or indifference” rather than “caused by the direct fiat of a malevolent Being” (Kern, *Free Woman* 96). Kern presents further evidence that Elizabeth Cady Stanton “frequently acknowledged aspects of organized Christianity and Jesus and his teachings were worth preserving” if they could be accessed in an “uncontaminated form” (Kern, *Free Woman* 95). There were clearly some aspects of Christianity that Cady Stanton appreciated, likely influenced from the work and teachings of Mott, which she carried out into her rhetoric in future speeches and publications.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton is now well regarded as an important activist in the early women’s rights movement, but she has not yet garnered a place as an original theorist of feminist philosophy. Barbara Caine compares and contrasts the work and ideas of Elizabeth Cady Stanton with that of John Stuart Mill and concludes that it is Mill who “continues to be seen as the most important and influential theorist of feminism both in Britain and the United States,” rather than activist women like Cady Stanton, who were deep in the throes of the rights movement (Caine 50). Mill’s essay *The Subjection of Women*, published in 1869, “made his position as the women’s champion and as the foremost philosopher to support the cause absolutely unequivocal” (Caine 51). Mill was greatly admired by Stanton for his ideas, but feminist scholars have asserted that “Mill’s analysis of the oppression of women was considerably narrower in range and more limited in its extent than was that of a number of contemporary women” (Caine 50).
While Stanton likely drew strength from Mill’s recognition that equality was necessary economically and politically, she took it a step further and “encompassed within her feminist framework a range of discussions about sexual, moral, and religious questions that Mill rarely addressed” (Caine 51). Some of her philosophies reflect Mill’s, but there were several other issues that Cady Stanton worked for that Mill did not involve himself with. Cady Stanton was working on the cause from a standpoint of personal and direct experience, while Mill was more removed, thinking as an economist and philosopher who did not touch on some topics related to feminism and the women’s rights movement of the time. Nonetheless, Cady Stanton appreciated his egalitarian views on granting the right to vote to women.

The following quote from an 1885 article published in the *North American Review* by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and T. L. Spalding clearly outlines the driving themes of Cady Stanton’s lifelong quest to challenge the norms of nineteenth-century views on women. Here she asserts that the masculine and feminine are naturally equals as demanded by laws of science, that the religiously supported notion of women’s inferiority go against these natural laws, and that the accepted system of degradation of women reflects the previously accepted ideas of slavery based on race:

> The masculine and feminine elements of humanity, in exact equilibrium, are as necessary to the order and harmony of the world of morals as are the centripetal and centrifugal forces exactly balanced in the world of matter. As long as the religion of a nation teaches the subordination of woman, of the moral and spiritual elements of humanity to physical force, a pure civilization is impossible. Just as slavery in the South, with its lessons of obedience, degraded every black man in the Northern States, so does an accepted system
of prostitution, with its lessons of subjection and self-sacrifice, degrade the ideal womanhood everywhere (Cady Stanton, *Has Christianity* 394).

The choice of the words “equilibrium, centripetal, and centrifugal” evoke a deeply natural and scientific tone that supports Cady Stanton’s beliefs that equality of the sexes is natural and scientific, beyond the confines of the man-made. References comparing the condition of women in society to slavery and prostitution would be shocking to the readers of the text and cause them to consider the implications of this claim. Throughout her work, Cady Stanton would go on to criticize the status of women in society and continue to lay the main blame on the institution of religion.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton believed that equality between the sexes would lead to an equilibrium in society. She believed that the “feminine element” had been repressed and this repression was the reason society was not progressing. Kathi Kern explores Cady Stanton’s theological journey and shows that throughout her life’s work, Cady Stanton “routinely invoked the feminine element: as having power; as having been repressed; whose very existence—proven through the laws of centripetal forces and positive and negative electricity—offered scientific and divine proof of woman’s equality” (106). The existence of the feminine element as an opposite energy to the masculine proves scientifically, in Cady Stanton’s view, that the feminine element has its own equal power. Cady Stanton could see that the unequal status of women resulted in a kind of “chaos” sourced from “the violation of an immutable law every bit as valid as the law of gravity: the repression of the feminine element” (Kern, *Rereading* 106). From this perspective, it is this violation of immutable law, the restriction of women’s freedom and agency that caused social unrest and disharmony in society. If Cady Stanton could only make others see these truths as she saw it, the feminine element would cease to be repressed and the society could
reach new heights of advancement. Kern theorizes that “Stanton’s persistence in championing
the feminine element” shows that her “foundational belief” and her “greatest hope” was that “the
equilibrium of the sexes was the natural, immutable law unseen, resisted, repressed but a law that
would eventually triumph as sure as the law of gravity” (*Free Woman* 106). This is the creed that
Cady Stanton lived by. She spent her life working tirelessly to convince those around her of the
changes that needed to be made. She deeply believed that women were inherently and
scientifically equal to men and had hope that one day this truth would be realized by the
mainstream. She only had to tackle a few big hurdles: the intertwining issues of marriage and
religion.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton laid a lot of blame for the current subordinate position of women
directly on the powers of organized religion, specifically Protestantism and the canon law that
lingered on from centuries past in England. She stated that it is “through perversion of
(woman’s) religious sentiments that she has been so long held in a condition of slavery. All
religions thus far have taught the headship and superiority of man, the inferiority and
subordination of woman” (*Has Christianity* 395). The long-held beliefs that God is the head of
man and man is the head of woman is, in essence, a way of keeping women in a form of
domestic slavery as a non-autonomous person. In her view, this subordinated status is not only
man-made, but it is harmful to women and society as a whole. Stating that women’s religious
sentiments have been perverted suggests that it is women’s own beliefs in religion that have
played a part in her disenfranchisement. Cady Stanton realized the full weight of the harm
religious doctrine has had on what she sees as a true, equal, feminine element: “It was this
persecution, this crushing out of the feminine element in humanity, more than all other
influences combined, that plunged the world into the dark ages, shadowing the slowly rolling
centuries till now with woman's agonies and death...” (Has Christianity 395). With the vivid imagery of the “crushing” of the feminine, the centuries of the past rolling by, and the agony and deaths of millions of women throughout history, Cady Stanton’s words pull at the reader’s sentiments and attempt to persuade them to consider the implications of women’s subjugation throughout the unbalanced “dark ages” of the past. Cady Stanton further ascertains that “the masculine and feminine elements of humanity, in exact equilibrium... (are) necessary to the order and harmony of the world of morals” (Has Christianity 395). Here she employs the reader to compare a past of unequal status to a potential future where there is a balance of equality between men and women. Compared to the dark past, a society of exact equilibrium has potential for harmony and reduced suffering.

In the article, Cady Stanton digs deeper to find the roots of women’s subordinate status in the church by analyzing the old canon law of England and Original Sin, which placed enormous blame on women and was used as an excuse for their supposed inferiority and suffering. She refers to a 1632 document called “The Lawes and Resolutions of Woman's Rights,” which says, “The reason why women have no control in Parliament, why they make no laws, consent to none, abrogate none, is their Original Sin” (Has Christianity 395). Cady Stanton points out that the doctrine of Original Sin, which places blame on Eve (and thus all women) for the fall from grace and dooms her to a life of subordination to her husband and other forms of suffering, is responsible for the unequal status of women in the nineteenth century. She points to the adherence to the doctrine of Original Sin as “the chief block in the way of woman’s advancement at this hour” (Has Christianity 395). Cady Stanton is clearly disgusted with this notion and claims that this doctrine is not from God but was instead created by men to be used for their own benefit. “And all these monstrous ideas, emanating from the bewildered brains of men in the
dark ages, under an exclusively masculine religion, were declared to be the word of God, penned by writers specially inspired by his Spirit” (Has Christianity 396). Cady Stanton implores her readers to get rid of these old, corrupted notions of religion and embrace freedom in society. She tries to warn women that the institutions that they abide by and trust could be the very cause of their oppression. “The present position of woman...is far behind the civilization of the age... And now, as ever, the strongest adverse influence to her elevation comes from the church, judging from its Biblical expositions, the attitude of the clergy, and the insignificant status that woman holds in the various sectarian organizations” (397). It is clear that Cady Stanton holds the established church and religious dogmas to blame for unrelenting opposition to the elevation and emancipation of women in society. The only way to fix these injustices is to recognize them and then do something to change them. Cady Stanton says at the end of the article “Not one wrong has been righted until women themselves have made organized resistance against it” (Has Christianity 399). Elizabeth Cady Stanton dedicated her life to resisting what she saw as the core causes of the subjection of women and urged other women to open their eyes to the institutions denying them their basic rights. She carried this sentiment through her major works in the later years of her life.

In 1892, at age 76, Elizabeth Cady Stanton delivered her farewell address to the National American Woman Suffrage Association, “The Solitude of Self,” which Campbell describes as a “startling departure from the typical speeches and arguments of nineteenth century feminists” due to three extraordinary details (Vol I 133). First, the fact that it was a “philosophical statement of the principles and values underlying the struggle for woman’s rights in the United States,” second, it was “a social reformer’s defense of humanistic individualism,” and third, it was a rhetorical statement of the limits of what could be achieved through words or social action”
In this speech, Cady Stanton outlines her underlying philosophy of natural rights feminism as they related to the “solitude and personal responsibility of (woman’s) own individual life” (qtd in Campbell, Vol I 135). This was the driving force of the speech’s message. Natural rights philosophy asserts that “individuals have rights because they are human beings” and Cady Stanton’s speech “demonstrated why the personhood of each individual is of such ultimate significance” (Campbell, Vol I 136). Cleverly, Elizabeth Cady Stanton crafted this appeal so that it did not stand out in direct opposition to the “culture’s dominant political and religious systems of belief” that were widely held at the time, namely, that “one who disagreed was compelled to argue that women were not persons who could rightfully claim their rights as citizens or as children of God” (Campbell, Vol I 140). In this appeal, Cady Stanton aimed to make it impossible to disagree with her, because if one disagreed with her, then one would also disagree with mainstream Protestant ideology as well.

In “The Solitude of Self” Cady Stanton did not discuss religion outright, but she made a case for what she thought was perhaps “the most crucial aspect of traditional Christianity worth preserving” (Kern 97). According to Kern, in this speech Cady Stanton fused “our Protestant idea, the right of individual conscience” with “our republican idea—individual citizenship” (97). Cady Stanton made connections between an admirable Protestant ideal, the value of the individual, and aimed to carry it over to her goal of fully realized legal and social equality. Cady Stanton argued that the “isolation and self-reliance of every human soul necessitated its political autonomy, the fulfillment of its ‘birthright to self-sovereignty’” (Kern 97). She believed it was a natural truth that women were equal with men and existed in this world in an individual isolation which naturally leads to political autonomy. According to this philosophy, all individuals are self-sovereign and thus deserving of equal status before the law in exercising their civil rights.
Cady Stanton aptly uses a known religious ideal of individual conscience to support claims that an individual conscience precedes an individual citizenship, which then calls for the political equal status of women and men in society.

As much as an individual conscience was a Protestant ideal, it is doubtful that the clergy of the time agreed so quickly that women also deserved the same level of self-sovereignty that men were afforded. According to Kern “in Stanton’s mind this universal truth of Protestantism had been corrupted. Instead of teaching the doctrine of individual conscience, Protestants had taught the subjection of one class of individuals to another and undercut the radical potential of Christianity” (97). From this one can draw the conclusion that clergymen would likely not advocate these ideas in the women of their congregations. Under the oppression of the patriarchal values of religion, women in Elizabeth Cady Stanton’s time did not have autonomy to choose their own destiny. She states “In discussing the rights of woman, we are to consider first, what belongs to her as an individual, in a world of her own, the arbiter of her own destiny… Her rights under such circumstances are to use all her faculties for her own safety and happiness (qtd in Campbell, Vol II 372). However, in opposition to Cady Stanton’s view, the reality was often different. Women were taught that their roles as daughters, wives, and mothers were inherent to their existence. They were implored to listen to a masculine presence to fulfill their destinies – the fathers, husbands, and clergymen – rather than listen to their own inner heart and choose each step they take. In “The Solitude of Self,” Cady Stanton argues that women must be given the freedom to fully develop themselves because, in the end, “Whatever the theories may be of women’s dependence on man, in the supreme moments of her life, he cannot bear her burdens” (qtd in Campbell, Vol. I 138). The church taught that men must look to God for strength and
guidance, and women must look to men for the same. Cady Stanton refutes this idea by arguing that individuals, regardless of sex, can only truly take care of themselves alone.

Cady Stanton treads on delicate water when she delivers this speech to her audience. She does not wish to rely on religious dogma, but she also does not want to alienate her religious audience. To balance between these two realms, Cady Stanton cleverly invokes the idea of a private relationship between God and an individual, while also using this relationship to support her point that women are individual beings who deserve equal status as men in life. Cady Stanton explains that “...there is a solitude which each and every one of us has always carried with him....

Our inner being which we call our self, no eye nor touch of man or angel has ever pierced...for to it only Omniscience is permitted to enter” (qtd in Campbell, Vol. I 137, my emphasis added). Not only does Cady Stanton not rely on overtly religious terminology, but she also suggests that this secret self, this inner being, is inaccessible to any mortal, and that only an all-powerful being is privy to the individual’s inner life. She avoids the term “God,” perhaps to put some distance between the themes in the speech and a religious sermon, but she does not do away entirely with the concept of an “Omniscience.” Therefore, anyone outside of an individual woman’s mind and her relationship with an all-powerful being has no right to direct or tamper with her self-sovereignty. Through affirming the concept of a private relationship with God, Cady Stanton uses ideas and words familiar to her religious audience in order to support her claims for the natural rights of women.

Through this piece and many of her other works, Cady Stanton aims to save women from the oppressive bonds of religion. She “desperately wanted to rescue the individual conscience from the grasp of Christianity” and “firmly believed that change in the social order began at the level of the individual conscience” (Kern 97). Specifically, in “The Solitude of Self” she hoped
to save them from the superstitions of the church by advocating for recognition of the right to individual freedoms inherent in all people. “When woman discards the church, she will be free & free woman is a divine being, the savior of mankind” (qtd in Kern 97). Once women break through the shackles of civil, social, and religious barriers they can fulfill their destinies and elevate human civilization to its natural equilibrium.

As Elizabeth Cady Stanton entered late life without seeing the political reform which she had fought for decades for, she relied on her abilities as a writer rather than a campaigner or lecturer. In 1895 and 1898 Cady Stanton and a committee of women embarked on a collaborative project that came to be known as The Woman’s Bible, a work that reprinted biblical passages that pertained to women and provided interpretive commentary (Kern, Mrs. 2). It was clear, however, that this piece held a “radical critique of American culture” which “stirred a particular sensation among those who never read it” and brought a “flood of denunciations” upon it (Kern, Mrs. 2). Cady Stanton hoped that her readers would find “a compelling analysis of women’s dependence on the church, the clergy, and the Bible” and aimed for it to be “a symbol of women’s ultimate emancipation” (Kern, Mrs. 2). However, the negative reception of The Woman’s Bible deeply damaged her reputation and alienated her from the women’s rights activists at the end of the nineteenth century.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton felt very strongly that Christianity as it was organized, and the Bible as it was currently interpreted, did a great injustice to women by reinforcing current social norms that put women in a subordinate position. According to Kern, Cady Stanton created the The Woman’s Bible because “woman’s political subjection grew out of her denigration in the church” (Kern, Rereading 373). While Cady Stanton started developing these ideas as early as the 1850s, it wasn’t until the mid-1880s that she turned with “renewed vigor to questions of
religion” and she reportedly “asked association members to withdraw ‘personal support’ for all individuals or institutions who taught that ‘woman was an afterthought in creating, her sex a misfortune, marriage a condition of subordination, and maternity a curse’” (qtd in Kern, Rereading 373). By the 1890s Cady Stanton began targeting the Bible for her continued analysis of the church’s role in the subjection of women. She was indeed wary of woman’s “blind faith” in the Bible and warned, “The Bible teaches that woman brought sin and death into the world...and that she precipitated the fall of the race” (Kern, Rereading 374). Cady Stanton felt that it was time for women to examine the Bible and “envisioned The Woman’s Bible as a challenge to the meaning and authority of biblical scriptures and as an attempt to liberate women from the ‘religious superstitions’ that she believed blocked their emancipation” (Kern, Rereading 374). Elizabeth Cady Stanton wanted The Woman’s Bible to open the eyes of these women who followed the Bible with “blind faith” and show them that the very teachings they followed were responsible for their lack of rights and political powerlessness. However, this was not an easy task to undertake.

In 1896, the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), of which Cady Stanton was an honorary president, debated over The Woman’s Bible and its place in their movement for suffrage. Some members agreed with Cady Stanton’s views that it was necessary work, and others thought it had “a direct and damaging impact on suffrage work” (Kern, Rereading 372). So, at the behest of Susan B. Anthony, they decided to table The Woman’s Bible and refrain from discussing it and the views of individual members of the NAWSA for the time being (Kern, Rereading 372). Eventually, the association bluntly rejected any relationship to The Woman’s Bible and voted to publicly renounce the work and any association with it. Cady
Stanton’s project to free women from the binds of religion had been rejected by the movement she cared so deeply about.

After the defeat of *The Woman’s Bible* in the suffrage movement, a younger and more conservative leadership emerged in the NAWSA. Kern says that “Scholars have associated the emergence of this younger, more conservative leadership with the ‘mainstreaming’ of the suffrage movement” and the “broadening of the constituency and narrowing of the political agenda” (*Rereading* 378). The movement which Cady Stanton had helped start had fundamentally changed. Unfortunately, Cady Stanton’s “failed attempts to return the movement to its earlier radicalism” had “the effect of crystallizing the ideological direction for the twentieth century” (Kern, *Rereading* 379). While *The Woman’s Bible* did not fulfill its intended purpose, it remains an artifact that challenges historian’s assumptions about how religion and notions of separate spheres was received by women of the time. Cady Stanton and the women who stood by her hold a place in history that shows us not all women adhered to dominant ideologies of conservative religion in the nineteenth century. Their words and ideas lived on for future generations to dust off and examine once again.

After the controversy of *The Woman’s Bible*, Elizabeth Cady Stanton’s role in the suffrage campaign was reduced “to the point where she was nearly forgotten” (Mace 11). This event shaped the rest of the women’s suffrage movement into the 20th century. Later suffrage historians in the 1920s-1930s subsequently “crowned” Susan B. Anthony as the “champion of the movement” and *The Woman’s Bible* fell out of print until second wave feminist scholarship began (Mace 11). While *The Woman’s Bible* was out of favor immediately after being published and through the next 70 years, it began gaining interest in the second-wave feminist movements of the 1970s. Mace explores *The Woman’s Bible* and the “leading role Stanton has played in
feminist theology and feminist studies since 1970” where she aims to focus on “the reception of
*The Woman’s Bible* by contemporary scholars and offers a historiographic analysis of that
reception” (7). Mace compares Stanton’s reception in contemporary scholarship with that of
Frances Willard and Matilda Joslyn Gage. These two figures, while important in their day, have
not received the same amount of attention as Cady Stanton has had in analysis of nineteenth
century feminist thought (Mace 16). She concludes that Willard’s work in religious feminism
was “simply not radically feminist enough” and that Gage’s work, which called for rebellion and
a “fundamental reshaping of the social order” was too radical for mainstream scholars because of
her direct attack on the Bible and the church (Mace 21). Essentially, Cady Stanton’s work has
been taken up by second and third wave feminists over that of Willard and Gage’s because “one
apparent criterion of a feminist tradition is that it needs to offer contemporary scholars a usable
past... (a past that) opens avenues for further research” (Mace 21). Elizabeth Cady Stanton’s
work opens space for a dialogue among scholars and gives space to enter the tradition of feminist
discussion. It is clear from Mace’s analysis that Elizabeth Cady Stanton’s work with *The
Woman’s Bible*, while amateur, has cemented her position as a founding forerunner in the
historiography and has “offered contemporary feminist scholars a useable past out of which to
construct a tradition of scholarship” (Mace 23). While *The Woman’s Bible* may have shut doors
at the end of Stanton’s career, her passion on this topic did not get buried forever. She finally
found her place of recognized significance in the feminist tradition decades after her death.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton’s storied career continued until late life with publication of *The
Woman’s Bible*, and her last major work, her autobiography *Eighty Years and More
Reminiscences 1815-1897*, published in 1898, only four years before her death in 1902. Scholars
generally attributed the publication of Cady Stanton’s autobiography as an attempt to repair her
image after the controversy of *The Woman’s Bible* (Hogan 1). Hogan explores Cady Stanton’s autobiography and posits that it was not an “apologia” to attempt to revise her legacy, but was instead a long personal manifesto that addresses a broad range of concerns and goes even further than *The Woman’s Bible* in “attacking what she saw as the roots of patriarchal oppression” (Hogan 3). Cady Stanton knew that the women’s movement was becoming more conservative in later decades. Publishing an autobiography was another chance to respond to this change and reinforce the ideas and beliefs she built throughout her life.

In her final chapter of *Eighty Years and More*, Elizabeth Cady Stanton details her eightieth birthday celebrations in 1895 where Susan B. Anthony made the arrangements for the celebration and the party was conducted by the National Council of Women, rather than the National American Woman’s Suffrage Association (286). Cady Stanton reminisces fondly over the “testimonials of love and friendship” that she received and felt very moved by such positive regard (291). She says, “Having been accustomed for half a century to blame rather than praise, I was surprised with such a manifestation of approval” (291). She recounts her defeats and victories and remembers when she was told it was a mistake to hold the first convention in 1848 because “God has set the bounds of women’s sphere and she should be satisfied with that position” (291). She says that the grave mistake of holding the 1848 Seneca Falls Conference is now referred to as “a grand step in progress” (291). Her next “mistake” was when she demanded the passage that allowed divorce for wives caught up with abusive, drunkard husbands in 1860. She says “This, also called a ‘mistake’ in 1860, was regarded as a ‘step in progress’ a few years later (291). Finally, she recounts her experience demanding a change in the sexist and oppressive interpretations of the Bible by the clergy through *The Woman’s Bible*. She says that *The Woman’s Bible* committee merely proposed to comment on what was said of women in the Bible.
in plain English, but they were met by “general disapproval by press and pulpit, and even by women themselves…(but) Like other ‘mistakes,’ this too, in due time, will be regarded as ‘a step in progress’” (292). Perhaps Elizabeth Cady Stanton’s steps in examining religion’s place in the oppression of women was a bit before her time. It was a notion not easily accepted by her mainstream peers and only a few others of radical thought understood her insights. However, in the final passage of her autobiography she seems to know that one day her work will be looked at again with different eyes by future generations. At her birthday celebration she felt that it was more than a pageant or tribute, it was also hope for the future: “It was the dawn of a new day for the Mothers of the Race! … (It was) a prophecy that with all the exaltation of Womanhood would come new Life, Light, and Liberty to all mankind” (Eighty Years 291). Although Elizabeth Cady Stanton knew that she may never see the day where women were granted equal rights as men, she had faith that it would come in future generations.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton was a pivotal figure in the women’s rights movements of the mid-to-late nineteenth century in the United States. She held within herself unwavering convictions that woman’s natural place in this world was equal to that of man’s. As her work shifted to from abolitionism to women’s rights and suffrage, Cady Stanton’s views on religion and politics developed as well. She became convinced that Christianity and its long tradition of treating women as inferior to men was to blame for the unequal status of women in society. This unequal status was not because of any sort of natural inclination but imposed by the patriarchal religious systems in power. Through her later work in articles like “Has Christianity Benefited Woman,” her speech “The Solitude of Self,” and her books The Woman’s Bible and Eighty Years and More, her convictions and efforts to evoke change are clear. Elizabeth Cady Stanton fell out of favor with women’s rights advocates in the early 20th century, but she was rediscovered
during the second wave of feminism in the 1970s. Since then, her works have seen a revival of scholarship, discussion, and debate. Elizabeth Cady’s Stanton’s influential work remains of significant importance in the study of feminism, rhetoric, and religious criticism to this day.
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