

Some Student Work

Excerpts from discussions between/among SSU and AUPh students (note: students also used the “comment” option in google docs to respond to one another – harder to showcase here). These are just 2 of many examples.

Example 1

Student at Salem State University

Hi [student at AUPh], after reading your response to [another student at AUPh, this reading's meaning is much more powerful. It's insane how “white feminists” become defensive when women of color are brought into the conversation of feminism because black women have always fought for women's rights but they are continuously overlooked. I'm also appalled to read about what happened to Roxanne when she was 12. I agree with your point about how her thought process on feminism is great for representing all the women who feel like they don't fit into some “box” placed by societal standards or in the feminism realm. Women are judged no matter what they do or like or how they act. There is so much pressure and guilt put on women to do opposing things just to satisfy someone's ideal of what they think a woman or a feminist “should” be. It feels like an endless cycle and I empathize with your experiences as well.

Student at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki [responding to the above]

Hi [student at SSU] Well said, it is indeed an endless cycle. If you are interested in reading the article it is on theguardian.com and it is titled “My body is a cage of my own making”. She has had to deal with so much discrimination as an oversized. black woman.

Example 2

Student at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki [responding to a discussion being carried on between an SSU student and another AUPh student]

For me a sanctuary is a safe place, like its literal meaning but in the forms of movies and tv series I watch repeatedly and books I re-read. In terms of femininity, a sanctuary could be related to the whole mentality that is -fortunately- constantly cultivated, of “women supporting women” and in the age of MeToo the sanctuary is the community that believes and offers shelter to victims of abuse. I was impressed by [SSU Student's]response to this, stating that our bodies can be sanctuaries that contain our souls, too. I, also, agree with [AUPh Student's] answer regarding the vulnerability that a sanctuary is connected with, in combination with [Auth Student's] opinion about society linking women with the sensitivity and need of a safe place, while simultaneously depriving them of one. The tone of the poem excerpt from melancholic -that was mutually agreed in the previous responses- also tries to highlight a division. The line “How to understand, then, what deserves rescue and what deserves to suffer” could be a reference to the

feminism initially expressed only for white women; and an attempt to shed light to the discrimination of black women inside the “sanctuary” that advocates for every woman’s safety and rights. Eleni makes an interesting point by comparing the sizes of the ocean, that in the poem is not associated with a woman, and that of the tide pool which refers to women. The ocean is untamed, free and unpredictable, whereas a tide pool is much more restricted and contained, that might be an ironic comment on how women are expected to behave, and unevenly shaped- which could also be referring to body positivity.

Student at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

As [Auth student] and [SSU Student] mention, the language used in the poem further underline this helplessness, the “littleness” of women as they try to become their own sanctuaries, but are continuously beaten down by society’s standards. So, the division between “what deserves rescue and what deserves to suffer [...] what must be sheltered and what abandoned” becomes in the poem a matter of nature. Humans and their society are stripped of agency, of freedom of choice, as it all comes back to the overpowering force of nature -in the form of the ocean- present in the poem.

Student at SSU [responding to the above last line]: I loved that you [AUTH student] touched on this concept. I missed the freedom of choice message and interpreted it as being unheard. I can see where you got this interpretation from with the overpowering force of nature comment you made as well as the cyclone verse in the poem