A foul murder was committed Saturday night near Medford, fifteen miles southwest of Indianola. A farmer named Hossack was struck over the head and killed by unknown parties, at his home a few miles out from Medford... Mr. Hossack was about 60 years of age and leaves a wife and large family.

--Susan Glaspell, in the Des Moines Daily News, December 3, 1900

This is a small class for students who are interested not just in women's literature but also in true crime. The play Trifles and the story "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?" are both based on actual murders, which we'll be reading about.

We'll also explore questions like these:
- Why did so many farmers' wives end up in mental hospitals?
- What was the fate of a Victorian governess who never married?
- Why were Victorians so shocked by Jane Eyre?
- How did Rochester's first wife try to cast a voodoo spell on him?
- How much of A Raisin in the Sun is based on Lorraine Hansberry's real experiences?

Texts:
- Charlotte Brontë, Jane Eyre (Dover Thrift Edition)
- Natasha Trethewey, Beyond Katrina
- Susan Glaspell, Trifles
- Lorraine Hansberry, A Raisin in the Sun
- Paula Vogel, How I Learned to Drive
- "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?" by Joyce Carol Oates

Personal essays by Dorothy Allison and Alice Walker

Please contact Becky Hagenston at bhagenston@english.msstate.edu with any questions.