



Language and Domestic Space in Mary Wilkins Freeman's Short Fiction

Professor Alfred Bendixen (Princeton University)

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Philosophicum I, P15



Professor Alfred Bendixen of Princeton University explores the intersection of language and domestic space in establishing the feminist foundations of Mary Wilkins Freeman's strongest short fiction. Through the careful manipulation of dialogue and silence, Freeman investigates the struggle of women to achieve a meaningful voice. In her meticulous rendering of physical space, particularly the domestic spaces that women claim as their own, she defines the ways in which women can maintain or lose personal autonomy. The presentation focuses on three of Freeman's best stories: „The Revolt of ‚Mother,“ „A New England Nun,“ and „A Village Singer.“

Alfred Bendixen received his Ph.D. in 1979 from the University of North Carolina and taught at Barnard College, California State University, Los Angeles, and Texas A&M University before joining the Princeton faculty in 2014. Much of his scholarship has been devoted to the recovery of 19th-century texts, particularly by women writers, and to the exploration of neglected genres, including the ghost story, detective fiction, science fiction, and travel writing. His teaching interests include the entire range of American literature as well as courses in science fiction, graphic narrative, and gender studies.