**Trio House Press - Poetry Now**

***Threed, This Road Not Damascus***

*The following are sample lesson plans to generate discussion and learning applicable to the designated text.  Instructors and facilitates should adapt lesson plans and content to meet their class schedules (time limits), course content, and learning outcomes*

**Lesson Plan:** “A multitude of voices: locating poetic speakers and characters across Tamara J. Madison’s *Threed, This Road Not Damascus*”

**Lesson objectives:**

* Analyze the multiplicity of Tamara J. Madison’s poetic speaker/voice in her book *Threed, This Road Not Damascus*.
* Understand Madison’s use of language as it dictates form and imagery across her poetry.
* Locate the role of men and Three-Breasted Woman in Madison’s book, as well as their relevance to students’ personal lives.

**Target Audience:** Highschool juniors/seniors

**Key Terms:**

* **Poetic speaker**: the narrative voice or persona of a poem, who is not always the poet themselves.
* **Imagery**: a literary device that uses figurative language to evoke the 5 senses and create a picture or image in the reader’s mind.

**Tasks:**

1. Read the following two poems*: Rebuttal: Three-Breasted Woman Confronts King James 1* (p. 6) and *Hypothesis: Poet Questions King James* (p. 38).
2. For *Rebuttal: Three-Breasted Woman Confronts King James 1*, have students answer the following questions:
	1. The first word in the poem’s title is “rebuttal.” A rebuttal is a refutation or contradiction, and therefore requires two sides. What kind of ideas or ideology might the poetic speaker be rebutting?
	2. The text in this poem is all in italics. Why do you think that is? Think carefully about who the poetic speaker might be here. Why is that important, given the fact that this poem serves as a rebuttal?
3. For *Hypothesis: Poet Questions King James*, have students answer or think about the following questions:
	1. This poem, though concise, is filled with rich imagery. Identify the words that create imagery in this poem and discuss their commonalities. What might be the purpose in grouping together images with those commonalities?
	2. In this poem, the text is not italicized. Compare this poem’s poetic speaker to the speaker in *Rebuttal*. How are they similar, and where do they differ?
4. Both *Rebuttal* and *Hypothesis* implicate the figure of King James I either directly, with quotes from the King James version of the bible, or indirectly, by name. Both poems implicate a male figure, but this is not the only time men are mentioned in this book. Have students find two more poems that mention men, either directly or indirectly. Then have them answer the following:
	1. When are men mentioned in this book? Provide examples.
	2. How are men mentioned in this book? What kind of messages do poems mentioning men carry, and with what kinds of tones? Provide examples.
	3. Characterize the male/female relationships portrayed in this book. How do the two interact? Provide examples.

**Free-Write:**

 The Three-Breasted Woman is presented as a kind of mythical figure in this book, transcending laws of physics, time, and space. Yet, there are plenty of poems in which she acts as the poetic speaker, *Rebuttal* being one of them. Have students think about the characteristics of Three-Breasted Woman, referencing multiple poems if necessary (i.e the book’s first 4 poems). Then:

1. Have students write a list of Three-Breasted Woman’s attributes, containing at least 5 items.
2. For 15 minutes, have students write a paragraph comparing Three-Breasted Woman to a female figure in modern society. This could be a politician like Kamala Harris, or it could be a pop figure like Beyoncé. Students should pick whoever comes to mind. Then, they should provide evidence for their comparison. In what ways are their figure and Three-Breasted Woman similar and different?

**Materials:**

[https://www.amazon.com/Threed-This-Road-Not-Damascus/dp/1949487032/ref=sr\_1\_1?dchild=1&keywords=threed&qid=1621975054&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/Threed-This-Road-Not-Damascus/dp/1949487032/ref%3Dsr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=threed&qid=1621975054&sr=8-1)