Course Description: Women Writing Age

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How do you narrate the story of women’s old age?  So many events that shape fiction—courtship, marriage, coming of age—happen to young people.  How do you write a novel—or a short story—about the later part of life? We encounter failures of mind and body, grief and loss, death. Yet these novels also reveal resilience, humor and gestures of reparation.  In this course, we will study works by four prize-winning contemporary women writers that portray women in old age.

We’ll choose selections from these four authors and titles:

Elizabeth Strout Olive Kittridge

Elizabeth Taylor Mrs. Palfrey at the Claremont

Margart Atwood, Old Babes in the Woods

Joanna Cannon, Three Things about Elsie