
History and the Literature: The Invention of Wings

OSHER 374-001**Dates:** Monday, October 5**Time:** 9:30 am – 11:30 am**Location:** Online via Zoom**Instructor:** Diane Henderson dianedhenderson@gmail.com
Stanley Henderson sehender@umich.edu**Instructor Information:**

Stan and Diane Henderson are avid readers—Stan reads history, Diane reads fiction. In other lives, Stan would have been a history professor and Diane an English professor. They have teamed up to share their passion for history and literature with the OLLI community. In their previous worlds, Stan was the Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management and Student Life at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, and Diane was an educational program planner and consultant. Both earned baccalaureate degrees at Michigan State University. Stan earned an MA in Government at Cornell and Diane an MA in Communication at MSU. Both are ABD from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign—Stan in Higher Education Administration and Diane in Mass Communication. In addition to their interest in history and literature, they share a 50-year marriage, three sons (the eldest earned an MFA and a PhD in English at the U), and eleven grandchildren.

Description:

Historical novels tell interesting stories about a time and place and the people living there. The authors of these novels must do extensive research so that their writing accurately reflects the history of the period. Using *The Invention of Wings*, by Sue Monk as the launching point, this class will offer a one-hour look at the history of a period/place/time (Charleston, South Carolina, mid-19th century) in order to provide the historical context of the novel. We'll then spend an hour discussing the novel as a piece of contemporary literature. Readers and history buffs welcome! (Note: Participants should read *The Invention of Wings* before the class.)

Goal:

To provide the historical context of a period in order to facilitate a deeper approach to a particular piece of contemporary literature.



Objectives:

After this class, participants will be able to:

- i. Discuss the events occurring in Charleston, South Carolina before the Civil War.
- ii. Use knowledge of the history to better understand and analyze the events described in *The Invention of Wings*
- iii. Analyze the structure, characters, and techniques used by the author in writing the novel.

Course Content:

- Review the historical context—people, movements, and events—for the evolution of slavery and abolitionism in the early years of the United States and the South.
- Explore and discuss *The Invention of Wings*, by Sue Monk Kidd, as a piece of contemporary literature.

Course Materials:

Required Text:

- *The Invention of Wings*, Sue Monk Kidd.
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