ENGL 6120-01: Seminar in American Literature II: The African American Literary Tradition
M 5:30pm-8:00pm, TLC 1204

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DESCRIPTION: Designed for both future teachers and those wanting a more in-depth study, this American Literature seminar will be an intense study of the African American literary tradition. We will read less familiar African American texts, reread more familiar texts through the lens of contemporary scholarship, and apply recent developments in critical theory to our engagement with each of these texts. Like our text, The Norton Anthology of African American Literature, our sessions will proceed according to the following chronology:

1. The Literature of Slavery and Freedom, 1746-1865
2. Literature of the Reconstruction to the New Negro Renaissance, 1865-1919
3. Harlem Renaissance, 1919-1940
4. Realism, Naturalism, Modernism, 1940-1960
5. The Black Arts Era, 1960-1975
6. Literature since 1975

Our discussions will be marked by particular attention to the history, politics, and cultures of race in America as we read the literature of these African American writers through structural, feminist, and new historicist lenses.

Texts: The Norton Anthology of African American Literature, Third Edition

LATE WORK: Late work will not be accepted unless you make arrangements in advance and persuade me that you have a legitimate reason for turning the work in after the announced deadline. In case of emergencies, it is your responsibility, immediately upon your return to class, to make arrangements about assignments that you have missed. If you do not follow the procedure articulated here, you will receive a zero for all work not submitted on time. The policy on late work applies to all work for the class.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: In a graduate seminar one obviously expects all students to be present for all meetings of the class and to be fully prepared and ready to participate in discussion. While imposing an attendance policy on graduate students seems oxymoronic, I find it hard to imagine that one could be a full participant in the seminar and thus expect to receive credit for having taken it if one missed more than two (2) class meetings. If you are absent, you should not wait until the next week to explain your absence. You should, instead, send me an email so that I will know that you haven’t disappeared from the face of the earth or at least from the face of the class.

POLICY ON TARDINESS/LEAVING EARLY: Again, these seem matters that would not need to be addressed in a graduate class, but just for the record: We will begin class promptly, and all students should be in place and ready to work at 5:30. We will take a short break at some point about midway through the period, but all students are expected to remain for the entire class and to return from break promptly at the agreed upon time. Any student who is persistently
tardy and/or departs early will be considered absent on those occasions of tardiness and/or early departure.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: The Department of English defines plagiarism as taking personal credit for the words and ideas of others as they are presented in electronic, print, and verbal sources. The Department expects that students will accurately credit sources in all assignments. *Plagiarism is grounds for failing this course.* [For more detailed information on plagiarism, see the English Department website.]

ELECTRONIC ISSUES: 1) All cell phones, beepers, and other electronic devices capable of making noise should be turned off during class. 2) Students should *not* expect to submit work for class by fax or by attaching documents to email messages. Providing a hard copy of the assigned work by the stated deadline is your responsibility. 3) Failure of electronic equipment—computers, disks, etc.—is not a legitimate reason for turning work in late. Be aware of the possibilities of such complications and deal with these possibilities in a way that makes it possible for you to do your work on time. For example, know where the various computer labs on campus are and what their hours are.

EXPECTATIONS: I expect all students to take their work seriously, to come to class prepared and willing to participate, and to treat peers and their ideas with respect. I also expect students to keep up with their reading—in fact, in this class, I expect students to *love* the act of reading these texts. These texts sometimes include controversial or difficult subject matter, often quite vividly conveyed. I expect students to handle this representation in a mature way, in the spirit of intellectual inquiry. Consider yourself forewarned that these texts are *not* free of sex, violence, or profanity.

EMAIL: Your email correspondence with me should always include a salutation (Dear Dr. Boyd rather than “Hey”), follow appropriate etiquette, and be signed by you. Be sure to include a “subject.” Use your West Georgia email account when trying to email me. You should not expect me to respond to email from other accounts. Please allow some time for me to answer your email. If I have not answered your email by the following class period, you should follow-up with me in person. Do not email your essays to me unless you have my express written permission. Your West Georgia email account is the University’s official means of trying to reach you. You should maintain your account by deleting old email. Otherwise, your inbox may get too full and you will be unable to receive important information from me or from the University.

Please visit the following link for policies related to all UWG Classes
https://www.westga.edu/UWGSyllabusPolicies/

Grading

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<tr>
<th>Literature History PPT</th>
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<tr>
<td>Section Summary</td>
<td>20% (3-5 pgs)</td>
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<td>Seminar Paper</td>
<td>30% (15 pgs)</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
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Please Note: If West Georgia closes, you should continue your out-of-class assignments according to this schedule unless otherwise instructed.

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Important Dates</th>
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<tr>
<td>8/14</td>
<td><strong>The Literature of Slavery and Freedom, 1746-1865</strong>&lt;br&gt;OLAUDAH EQUIANO (ca. 1745–1797)&lt;br&gt; <em>The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African, Written by Himself</em>&lt;br&gt;Chapter I&lt;br&gt;Chapter II&lt;br&gt;PHILLIS WHEATLEY (1753?–1784)&lt;br&gt; <em>Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral</em>&lt;br&gt;Preface&lt;br&gt;[Letter Sent by the Author’s Master to the Publisher]&lt;br&gt;“To the University of Cambridge, in New-England”&lt;br&gt;“On Being Brought from Africa to America”</td>
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<td>8/21</td>
<td>SOJOURNER TRUTH (1797–1883)&lt;br&gt;“Ar’n’t I a Woman?”&lt;br&gt;From <em>Anti-Slavery Bugle</em>, June 21, 1851&lt;br&gt;From <em>The Narrative of Sojourner Truth</em>, 1878&lt;br&gt;HARRIET JACOBS (ca. 1813–1897)&lt;br&gt; <em>Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl</em>&lt;br&gt;Preface&lt;br&gt;I. Childhood&lt;br&gt;II. The New Master and Mistress&lt;br&gt;V. The Trials of Girlhood&lt;br&gt;X. A Perilous Passage in the Slave Girl’s Life&lt;br&gt;XII. Fear of Insurrection&lt;br&gt;XIV. Another Link to Life&lt;br&gt;XVII. The Flight&lt;br&gt;XXI. The Loophole of Retreat&lt;br&gt;XXIX. Preparations for Escape&lt;br&gt;XXXIX. The Confession&lt;br&gt;XL. The Fugitive Slave Law&lt;br&gt;XLII. Free at Last</td>
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<td>8/28</td>
<td>DAVID WALKER (1785–1830)&lt;br&gt; <em>David Walker’s Appeal in Four Articles; Together with a Preamble, to the Coloured Citizens of the World</em>&lt;br&gt;Preamble&lt;br&gt;Article I. Our Wretchedness in Consequence of Slavery&lt;br&gt;FREDERICK DOUGLASS (1818–1895)&lt;br&gt;From “What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?”&lt;br&gt;<em>The Heroic Slave</em> (find a full text copy online)</td>
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<td>9/4</td>
<td>Labor Day. No Class</td>
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“A Double Standard”  
“The Appeal to My Country Women” |
| 9/11 | | Literature of the Reconstruction to the New Negro Renaissance, 1865-1919 |
| 9/11 | ANNA JULIA COOPER (1858?–1964) | “Womanhood a Vital Element in the Regeneration and Progress of Race” |
| 9/18 | BOOKER T. WASHINGTON (1856–1915) | *Up From Slavery*  
Chapter I. A Slave among Slaves  
Chapter II. Boyhood Days  
Chapter III. The Struggle for an Education  
Chapter XIV. The Atlanta Exposition Address |
| 9/18 | W. E. B. DU BOIS (1868–1963) | *The Souls of Black Folk*  
The Forethought  
I. Of Our Spiritual Strivings  
III. Of Mr. Booker T. Washington and Others  
“Criteria of Negro Art” |
| 9/25 | IDA B. WELLS-BARNETT (1862–1931) | *A Red Record*  
Chapter I. The Case Stated  
Chapter X. The Remedy |
| 9/25 | PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR (1872–1906) | “We Wear the Mask” |
| 9/30 | | Last Day to Withdraw with W |
| 10/2 | | Harlem Renaissance, 1919-1940  
CLAUDE McKay (1889–1948)  
“The Harlem Dancer”  
“Harlem Shadows”  
“If We Must Die”  
“To the White Fiends”  
“The White House”  
RUDOLPH FISHER (1897–1934)  
“The City of Refuge”  
MARITA BONNER (1899–1971)  
“On Being Young—a Woman—and Colored” |
| 10/9 | ZORA NEALE HURSTON (1891–1960) | “Sweat”  
“How It Feels to Be Colored Me” |
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| 10/16  | “The Gilded Six-Bits”  
*Their Eyes Were Watching God*  
Chapter 2 [Pear Tree]  
GEORGE SAMUEL SCHUYLER (1895–1977)  
“The Negro-Art Hokum”  
LANGSTON HUGHES (1902–1967)  
“The Negro Speaks of Rivers”  
“Mother to Son”  
“The Weary Blues”  
“I, Too”  
“Christ in Alabama”  
“The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain” |
| 10/23  | COUNTEE CULLEN (1903–1946)  
“Yet Do I Marvel”  
“Tableau”  
“Incident” |
| 10/30  | Realism, Naturalism, Modernism, 1940-1960  
ANN PETRY (1911–1997)  
*The Street*  
Chapter I [The Apartment]  
RICHARD WRIGHT (1908–1960)  
“Blueprint for Negro Writing”  
“The Ethics of Living Jim Crow, an Autobiographical Sketch”  
RALPH ELLISON (1914–1994)  
*Invisible Man*  
Prologue  
Chapter 1 [Battle Royal] |
| 11/6   | JAMES BALDWIN (1924–1987)  
“Going to Meet the Man”  
LORRAINE HANSBERRY (1930–1965)  
*A Raisin in the Sun*  
view the video before class. |
| 11/13  | Thanksgiving, No Class |
| 11/20  | Thanksgiving, No Class |
| 11/27  | Last Day of Class  
Final Research Essay Due |
| 12/4   | Exams  
5pm-7pm |
| 12/9   | Graduation |
| 12/11  | Grades Due  
by Noon |