

LIT 4192 /Section 1C97

After the Song and Dance of Independence: Contemporary Caribbean Literature

Instructor: **Leah Rosenberg**

Tuesday 10:40-11:30 in Turlington 2336

Thursday 10:40-12:35 in Turlington 2346 (Note different room for T and R)

Office: 4346 Turlington hall / Email: rosenber@ufl.edu / phone: 294 2848

Office hours: Tuesday 11:40-12:40

Thursday 1-2 and by appointment

Course Descriptions

This course explores the emergence of new popular genres and the influence of cultural movements, political events, and crises on Caribbean literature written since 1990. Most countries in the Anglophone Caribbean gained Independence between the 1960s and 1980s. Prior to Independence, many writers saw their role as contributing to decolonization and the bringing of independence by assisting in the project of decolonizing the mind, by helping the public to overcome the centuries of teaching, literature, and laws that had insisted—implicitly or explicitly—on British and (often) white cultural and intellectual superiority. Focusing on work in the post-independence era allows us to examine how writers understand their social role once the goal of independence and freedom from colonialism has been met. The title of the course refers to the widely-felt sense that Independence did not bring an end of oppression—US and Europe continued to exert power on the region, so that sovereignty was never complete and governments and society failed to dismantle the class, ethnic, (and often color) divisions that stratified Caribbean societies and denied opportunity to the majority. Thus, the focus on social & political movements and aesthetic changes since independence is meant to open a window into how the relationship between politics and literature, writers and society has changed in the post-independence period.

The course focuses on the English-speaking (anglophone) region and is designed to give students a sense of how the tradition is changing at the present time. The course begins by examining dramatic shifts in the way in which poets have represented the landscape since the early 1900s. We focus on land because the land tends to be a central trope and concern of writers as they establish self-consciously national literatures. It is the literally the foundation of the nation and the region, and thus of national and regional

culture and identity. We then survey changes in the literary representation of Rastafarianism, beginning with Roger Mais's 1954 novel, *Brother Man*, one of the first novels with a Rastafarian protagonist, turning to poetry and literary theory of the 1970s and 1980s, and finally addressing the 1999 popular romance whose protagonist is a Rastafarian.

These first units compare earlier work to contemporary work, in order to introduce the anglophone Caribbean literary tradition and to provide context for interpreting the significance of contemporary trends in form, content, publishing location, and readership. The following units focus on literature about the Grenada revolution, globalization, and the 2010 earthquake in Haiti as well as the emergence of science fiction and popular romance as significant genres.

Learning Objectives

1. To understand key concepts, themes, tropes, styles, and aesthetic concerns of Caribbean literary discourse through examining literary representations of the two migrations under study.
2. To gain insight into the shifts in genre, form, and content from the early periods of anglophone Caribbean literature and contemporary literature.
3. To analyze creative texts in relation to historical events, as well as other disciplinary modes of inquiry such as history, anthropology, sociology.
4. To develop and hone skills of literary analysis and research such as archival practice, close reading, critical argumentation, critical synthesis, and thesis writing.
5. To engage students through the wiki and other class activities and assignments in the collaborative process and citations practices of creating knowledge embodied in the dialogues and debates among scholars that take place in articles, books, and conferences

Course Requirements:

Professionalism (Attendance, Participation, and Conferences— reading quizzes will be calculated as part of your participation grade)	20 pts
Wiki Contributions	30 pts
Midterm Exam	10 pts

Class Presentation	10pts
Final Paper or project	25pts
Final Paper proposal	5 pts

Important Deadlines

Home page	1 September 10 am
Sign up for original blog post and two responses	2 September by class
Sign up for the book you will present on	12 September (in class/online)
Midterm	24 October, 10 am on Sakai
Proposal for Final Paper	15 November (via sakai)
Final Paper first draft due (Optional)	6 December (via sakai)
Final Exam or Project	13 December (via sakai)

Grading for this course is consistent with UF grading policies for assigning **grade points**: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>.

Professionalism (Attendance, Participation, and Conferences) (20%)

Attendance. This is a discussion course, so we produce knowledge through discussion in class and online. You need to attend class and to participate in class discussion.

- You are allowed three absences without affecting your grade.
- Six absences result in failure in the course.
- One absence = one fifty-minute period.
- Being more than 10 minutes late=an absence
- Being tardy (late by less than 10 minutes) or leaving early three times will count as one absence.
- In addition to your three excused absences, I excuse those absences involving university-sponsored events, such as athletics, band, and religious holidays. Please note that in order to qualify for these excused absences, you must provide prior written notice of your anticipated absence. Please also note that extended absences even for serious crises cannot be excused.
- For every absence after your third absence and before your sixth, you will receive a **grade deduction**.
- If you are absent, you are responsible for finding out what we did during class. I suggest you exchange email addresses with two other students on

the first day of class, so you will be able to get updates and notes in the event of an absence.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found in the online catalog at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Participation. Participation requires contributing to class discussion—online and in class. Read the material, read student blog posts, and contribute. Take notes and be ready to discuss what you think is important about the assigned reading and your colleagues' blog posts. You may be asked to focus on a particular aspect or section of the reading, and I will usually supply you with study questions to focus your reading. If you attend but do not participate, you will receive a "C" for attendance and participation.

You must use technology in a respectful and professional manner. This means setting your cell phone on silent for the duration of class. You are encouraged to bring your laptop, tablet, etc. to class, but you must use it only for activities directly involved with class, such as looking at pdf files we are discussing in class and finding relevant documents on line. "Off topic" use of a computer is equivalent to an absence.

Conferences. Each student is required to meet with the instructor twice during the semester, once in the beginning of the semester to introduce yourself and to acquaint me with your intellectual background and goals and once during the course of the semester to discuss your presentation and the final paper based on it.

Assignments

Wiki contributions to the class PBWorks website (please keep a record of all your posts to the website as files for your records. The reason for this to have all your work in one place so that we can both keep track of it, so that you have all your work in one place and see your accomplishments (like a portfolio) and so that you can make good use of it in preparing for the midterm and the final paper.

1. Introduction on the class introductions page. Include 1) a brief description of your scholarly and professional interests and anything other information you would and 2) one photograph of yourself. (6 points)
2. **One** original post (that focuses on a theme and does a close reading of a passage and/or introduces a relevant historical context or document and explains its significance to the text). This is due on or

before 18 September. You must sign up on the syllabus page for which text you will write on. (500 words -15 points)

3. **Three** Responses (75-200 words) to one of the posts and/or class discussion. These need to be posted within 24 hours of the original post or of the discussion in class. One is due on or before 18 September and the other due afterwards but cannot be on the book or other text you choose for your presentation and final paper. (3 points each)
4. Read at least one original posting and response for each class. Ideally you will write a brief note or statement on your home page, but this is not required.
5. Students can earn up to 15 extra credit points by writing additional wiki posts contributions.

Why Wiki? (Objectives)

One central goal of the wiki is to foster intellectual exchange to improve our understanding of the course materials and relevant issues. I therefore encourage people to contribute to the wiki page in any useful way. If you would like to contribute in another way, consult with me and we can probably arrange for your work to be an equivalent to an entry or comment.

- a) To ensure that students complete the reading and think about it.
- b) To improve class discussion.
- c) To supply interpretations of key scenes and themes as well as information about historical context and relevant cultural texts (songs, film, books) that are alluded to or otherwise included in the novels we read.
- c) To provide a record and critical assessment of class discussion
- d) To model the dialogue and exchange that characterizes scholarship.
- c) To assist you in preparing for the midterm exam and final papers.
- d) To communicate your ideas to me, so that I can organize the class around your insights and interests.
- e) To hone skills in analyzing literature and critical arguments.

Wiki assignments:

Midterm Short answer and essay take home exam will cover the content, form, and context of the readings and can include information from lecture and class discussion. Due 24 October at 10 am via Sakai

Presentation, Book Page, Final Paper Proposal, and Final project.

1. Choose a novel. Sign up in class or the scheduling page of our Wordpress site by 12 September
2. **Book Page** Work with your colleagues who have also chosen the same novel to design a page for your book, which contains as appropriate and available an introduction to the author, links to reviews and scholarly essays, information about relevant historical and cultural contexts, and embedded images or videos. Ideally your contribution to the page will be closely tied to the topic you would like to present on and write your final paper or project about. (10 points)
3. **Presentation.** Choose a specific topic related to the novel you have chosen. Make a presentation to the class in which you present your ideas on the topic. Post your presentation on the page for the book and on your home page. This presentation should be the basis for your final project; however, you may change your topic for the final project but only in consultation with the instructor. Presentations are scheduled for the class on the second or third day we discuss the book (see syllabus). (10 points)

In your presentation, you will focus on a theme, a relevant historical or cultural context, or a relevant cultural intertext. You should include a close reading of at least one passage and a minimum of 2 external documents, including historical documents, cultural texts, or scholarship about the novel. Your presentation should present an argument about the significance of your theme or context. The presentation should be no more than 10 minutes in duration and not shorter than 7 minutes. You should present your information in a clear and straightforward fashion. Try not to read directly from your notes but you can do that especially if it is only for sections of the presentation. Try also to use the book page, your homepage (or possibly additional wiki pages) to present your information, but you can use a PowerPoint, Prezi, or other platform if you wish, just be sure to link to the book page and to your home page. Depending on your topic, you may wish to include images, sound, or video.

4. **The Proposal Final Paper (5%)**—Post this on your home page:

The Proposal comprises:

- 1) A title
- 2) A 250-word description of your argument with reference to the evidence you will use to make that argument.
- 3) Brief outline
- 4) Bibliography with at least three sources in MLA format.

(If it is more convenient or helpful for you to write a draft or partial draft, then do that but include a bibliography).

5. **Final paper or digital project** Final (Research) Paper based on your presentation (25 points approx. 10-15 pages)
This essay will develop a focused argument based on your presentation. You can change your focus or angle, but unless you have no interest at all in your topic, please stick with it for your paper. This essay must use a minimum of 2 secondary sources or additional primary documents.

Grading Criteria and Rubrics

Grading Criteria for Papers

All papers must use page numbering (except on page 1), Times new roman 12 point font, one inch margins, and use MLA style for parenthetical references and works cited page.

- 1 Thesis
- 2 Argument and evidence
- 3 Use of citations
- 4 References
- 5 Paragraphs
- 6 Sentences/style
- 7 Presentation/ Formatting/typos, misspelling

Grade Ranges

A range	The essay is excellent in respect to all criteria, including an original thesis, strong structure, close
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	analysis of the specific sections of the novel, adept and smart use of citations, correct and elegant writing, and strong presentation.
B range	The essay has a solid thesis and structure but has some weaknesses in respect to other criteria and/or the thesis is valid but strong. These weaknesses are minor to moderate and do not occur in all criteria. If the weaknesses are too severe or occur in too many categories the essay enters the C-E range.
C range	The essay has some weakness in the thesis and structure has demonstrates a solid understanding of the material and solid competence in using references, paragraph structure, writing in correct sentences, and presentation.
D and E Range	The essay has a weak or invalid thesis and weak structure and/or exhibits significant errors in using references, structuring paragraphs, writing grammatically correct sentences, and in presentation.

Grading Criteria for Wiki Contributions (Including Book pages)

I will consider the following in grading Wiki contributions. Please note that wiki contributions are a place to experiment and develop your ideas and I grade with that mind!

Analysis	A contribution that merits an "A" demonstrates a nuanced understanding of the text(s) and performs incisive analysis of one passage, concept, context, or reference.
Communication	It is written in a very clear, concise, and logical manner. Writing for online resources must be succinct.
Presentation	It contains no errors in spelling, grammar, or punctuation or very few. It is presented on the correct page of the class PBworks site. It is clearly readable (using the same font as the rest of the page and doesn't obscure other contributions). It contains relevant bibliographic information in MLA format and supplies URL addresses where relevant.

Research	(If you present a historical context or document which is generally optional.) The successful contribution will identify a relevant and significant source(s) and provide a strong explanation or evaluation of them. If explicating a historical or cultural context or reference, the contribution will explain the significance of the context for the literary text and provide the specific passage(s) to which it pertains with page numbers.
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I am influenced by the general criteria for grading blogs used by Christopher Long, philosopher and assoc. dean at Pennsylvania State University.

<http://www.personal.psu.edu/cpl2/blogs/cplportfolio/Blogging%20Scoring%20Rubric.pdf>

Grading Criteria for Presentations

1. A clear focus on a theme, a relevant historical or cultural context, or a relevant cultural intertext.
2. Articulates at least the beginning of an argument or poses a critical question(s) about the significance or meaning of your topic and proposes approaches to answering it or provisional answers.
3. Includes a close reading of at least one passage and a minimum of 2 external documents, including historical documents, cultural texts, or scholarship about the novel.
4. Is no more than 10 minutes in duration and not shorter than 5 minutes. (this may be modified by the number of people in your group—check with me.)
5. Presents your information in a clear and straightforward fashion. Try not to read directly from your notes but you can do that especially if it is only for sections of the presentation.

Books and other readings

Please buy the following books, any edition electronic or traditional will do, except for *Angel*. You must buy the 2011 edition of *Angel*. These books are listed in the order we will read them.

Mais, Roger. *Brother Man* MacMillan 1954
Channer, Colin. *Waiting in Vain* 1999
Collins, Merle. *Angel*, (the 2011 edition)
Lovelace, Earle. *Salt* (1997)
Diaz, Junot. *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (2007)

Dany Laferrière, translated by David Homel. *The World Is Moving Around Me: A Memoir of the Haiti Earthquake* (2013)

Kempadoo, Oonya. *All Decent Animals* Farrar Straus Giroux (2013)

Ezekel, Alan. *Disposable People: Inspired by true events* (2012)

Other readings will be made available via course reserves or a link will be provided on the syllabus.

General Information:

Challenges to final grades are to be directed to Professor Stephanie Smith, associate Chair of the English department.

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Statement on harassment. UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, [see: http://www.hr.ufl.edu/eeo/sexharassment.htm](http://www.hr.ufl.edu/eeo/sexharassment.htm)

Statement on academic honesty. All students must abide by the Student Honor Code. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and Unauthorized collaboration, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/student---honor---code.aspx>

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing **online evaluations** at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>.

Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

The instructor reserves the right to modify this syllabus in the course of the semester. Check email and syllabi for changes.

Week 1	Land, Literature, and History
Tues. 8/26	<p>Early Jamaican Poetry in Praise of Landscape</p> <p>In class</p> <p>1. McKay, Claude. Flame Heart http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/poets/m_r/mckay/additionalpoems.htm &</p> <p>2. "My Mountain Home" Available on "The Dialect Poetry of Claude McKay" http://claudemckay.blogspot.com/2007_04_18_archive.html also in the Digital Library of the Caribbean, in Songs of Jamaica p. 125 http://www.dloc.com/AA00011909/00001/125j?search=mckay+%3dsongs+%3djaamaica</p> <p>3. Marson, Una. "Home Thoughts." The Moth and the Star, p. 22 available in http://www.dloc.com/UF00077395/00001/28?search=marson</p> <p>Jones, Evan "Song of the Banana Man" (text and audio)</p> <p>4. Evan Jones, "Song of the Banana Man," Text: http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/entertainment-ian-june01-bananaman_01-30/ Recordings: "Song of the Banana Man" by Evan Jones is presented by Miss Williams direct from Classroom 6C at the Albion Primary and Junior High School in Montego Bay, Jamaica and Presented by Evan Jones, read by George Scott for as part of the Favorite Poems Project. , 1999 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WKAB5JM2T9M (poem begins, 3:23)</p>
Thurs. 8/28	<p>Unearthing the history of the tropical landscape (Continued discussion of poems from 8/26 and)</p> <p>Senior, Olive. Selections from <i>Gardening in the Tropics</i></p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Meditation on Yellow" http://www.ryerson.ca/olivesenior/poems/meditation_on_yellow.html 2. "Plants" http://www.ryerson.ca/olivesenior/poems/plants.html 3. "Brief Lives" http://www.ryerson.ca/olivesenior/poems/brief_lives.html 4. "Tree of Life" http://www.ryerson.ca/olivesenior/poems/tree_of_life.html
Week 2	Literature and Rastafari
Sept. 2	<p>Mais, Roger <i>Brotherman</i> (This novel is divided into five parts. Each is preceded by a short section entitled "Chorus of People in the Lane.") Due: Part 1 and 2 inclusive of the "Chorus of the People in the Lane" Sections.</p> <p>Chevannes from Rastafari Reader "Rastafari and the Exorcism of the Ideology of Racism and Classism" <i>Chanting Down Babylon</i> pp 55-71 (in course reserves available via library website)</p>
Sept. 4	<p><i>Mais, Roger Brotherman parts 3 & 4 inclusive of the Chorus sections.</i></p>
Week 3	Reggae and Literature
Sept. 9	<p><i>Brotherman</i> Finish the novel (part 5). Black Friday Coral Gardens Incident on reserve in Library West and on Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UfpXJsB3QlcA</p>

Sept. 11	<p>Dawes, Kwame. <i>Natural Mysticism "The Reggae Lyric"</i> (for short description of the book, see http://www.kwamedawes.com/wp/blog/2012/07/18/natural-mysticism/)</p> <p>Listen to the following and read lyrics:</p> <p>Bob Marley, "Natural Mystic" "Redemption Songs"; Burning Spear, "The Invasion"; Bob Marley and the Wailers, "Slave Driver" and "War"; Peter Tosh, "400 Years";</p> <p>Dawes, Kwame et al. <i>Wheel and Come Again</i>, Introduction (e-reserve)</p> <p>Linton Kwesi Johnson, <i>Ragga for Dada</i>, (e-reserve)</p> <p>Smith, Mikey, "Me Cyaan Believe it" (e-reserve)</p> <p>Brathwaite, "Spades" (e-reserve)</p> <p>Jean Binta Breeze, "Riddym Ravings" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p0piz-Impr8&index=5&list=PL5XU4_VdWnxJHGA5F3hDugZsm_KVa-jlx</p>
Week 4	Rastafari, Reggae, and Romance
Sept. 16	<p>Channer, Colin <i>Waiting in Vain</i> This book is divided into four books. Today books 1 and 2 are due, which is the same thing as chapters 1-6.</p>
Sept. 18	<p>Channer, Colin <i>Waiting in Vain</i> books 3 &4 (chapters 7-19)</p>
Week 5	The Grenada Revolution and Literature
Sept. 23	<p>Merle Collin's <i>Angel</i>, chapters 1-5</p> <p>Recommendations for Libguide/bookpage</p> <p>Noguera, P.A. (2001). "The Limits of Charisma: Grenada's Eric Gairy (1922-97) and Maurice Bishop (1944-83): Intellectual and Political Biographies." In A. Allahar (ed), <i>Caribbean Charisma</i>. Kingston, Jamaica: Ian Randle Publishers: pp 72-91. (e-reserves)</p> <p>Collins, "Grenada's Journey" <i>Caribbean Quarterly</i> 60:1 March 2014, 23-41</p>

	Shemak, April. "Re/Writing Reconciliation in Merle Collins's <i>Angel</i> ," <i>Caribbean Quarterly</i> 60:1 March 2014, 42-60 (e-reserves)
Sept. 25	<p>Merle Collin's <i>Angel</i>, chapters 6-10</p> <p>Bishop, Maurice. "In Nobody's Backyard." (13 April 1979) available <i>The Grenada Revolution</i> Online: http://www.thegrenadarevolutiononline.com/bishnobodybkyd.html</p>
Week 6	Literature and Reparations
Sept. 30	Merle Collin's <i>Angel</i>
Oct. 2	Beckles, Hilary. <i>Britain's Debt</i> chapter 1 "The Principles and Politics of Reparations" pp 11-23 (e reserves) Lovelace, <i>Salt</i>
Week 7	
Oct. 7	Lovelace, <i>Salt</i>
Oct.9	Lovelace, <i>Salt</i>
Week 8	Science Fiction and Caribbean Literature
Oct. 14	Junot Diaz's <i>The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao</i> Hopkinson, Nalo, "Speaking in Tongues: an Interview with Science Fiction Writer Nalo Hopkinson," <i>African American Review</i> 33:4 (Winter 1999) pp 589-601 (e-reserves) --- "From Midnight Robber," <i>African American Review</i> 33:4 (Winter 1999) pp 603-607 (e-reserves)
Oct. 16	Junot Diaz's <i>The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao</i>
Oct. 18	Homecoming
Week 9	
Oct. 21	Junot Diaz's <i>The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao</i>
Oct. 23	No Class
Oct. 24	Exam due
Week 10	

The 2010 Earthquake in Haiti and Literature	
Oct. 28	<p>Reading and Viewing:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Edwidge Danticat: The Earthquake's Impact on Haitian Literature (3mins) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xNI78qN0pPI 2. Schuller, Mark and Pablo Morales. "Introduction," <i>Tectonic Shifts: Haiti After the Earthquake</i> (Kumarian, 2012) pp 1-8 (e-reserves) 3. Gina Ulysse "Why Representations of Haiti Matter Now more than Ever," NACLA http://reconsideringdiaspora.wikispaces.com/file/view/Ulysse.+Why+Representations+of+Haiti+Matter+Now+More+Than+Ever.pdf NACLA July August 2010: 37-41. 4. When I Wail for Haiti: Debriefing (Performing) a Black Atlantic Nightmare http://postcolonialnetworks.com/2011/02/13/when-i-wail-for-haiti-debriefing-performing-a-black-atlantic-nightmare/ 5. Because When God is too Busy How did Haiti—the enfant terrible of the Americas become the bête noire of the world? https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nL5xSjsT_uY
Oct. 30	<p><i>Dany Laferrière, translated by David Homel</i> <i>THE WORLD IS MOVING AROUND ME</i> <i>A Memoir of the Haiti Earthquake</i></p>
Week 11	
Nov. 4	<p><i>Dany Laferrière, translated by David Homel</i> <i>THE WORLD IS MOVING AROUND ME</i> <i>A Memoir of the Haiti Earthquake</i></p>
Nov. 6	<p>Kempadoo, Oonya. <i>All Decent Animals</i></p> <p>Nixon, Angelique and Rosamond King, "Introduction," <i>Theorizing Homophobias in the Caribbean – Complexities of Place, Desire, and Belonging</i>, available online: http://www.caribbeanhomophobias.org/node/6</p>
Week 12	Caribbean Literature and Globalization I

Nov. 11	Veteran's Day. No Classes
Nov. 13	<i>All Decent Animals</i>
Week 1 3	
Nov. 18	<i>All Decent Animals</i>
Nov. 20	Alan, Ezekel. <i>Disposable People</i> Chapters 1-18 pp. 150
Week 1 4	Caribbean Literature and Globalization II
Nov. 25	<i>Disposable People</i> <i>Chapters 19-34 pp. 151-283</i>
Nov. 27	Thanksgiving
Week 15	
Dec. 2	<i>Disposable People</i> <i>finish novel</i>
Dec. 4	Workshop on the final project
Week 16	
Dec. 9	Evaluation of Class
Week 17	
Dec. 16	Final Project Due