

ENG 333 American Ethnic Literature (F23)

Dr. Rosemarie Dombrowski (RD)

Office Hours: by appointment (zoom only)

poetryphd@asu.edu

Course Premise/Overview

According to literary theorist, scholar, and cultural critic Henry Louis Gates, Jr.

...it is sometimes necessary to remind ourselves of the distance from the classroom to the streets. Academic critics write essays...where the bad guys (for example, *racism* or *patriarchy*) lose, where the forces of oppression are subverted by the boundless powers of irony and allegory that no prison can contain, and we glow with hard-won triumph. We pay homage to the marginalized and demonized, and it feels almost as if we've righted a real-world injustice.

But have we righted anything by being a passive reader? I'm not sure we could argue that merely *reading* a text is an act of social justice, but perhaps the act of *recovering* a text is.

In light of the above, I'll simply acknowledge that this course is going to fall short of what it *needs* to address, though it will attempt to *recover* some African American literature (from slavery to the present) as well as a brief selection of Asian American, Jewish American, Chicano/a, Indigenous/Native American literature, and Arab American. The disproportionately long African American segment of the course represents the extant body of literature produced by Black Americans from the 1600s to the present.

Course Expectations

Please read all the selections with an open heart and mind, considering how their inclusion in this "course canon" might inform your own pedagogy, your own literary activism, your own quest for social justice.

Additionally, you'll be expected to

- **engage with the readings** (literary texts and lecture notes), which means **using the socio-historical and biographical contexts as a means of entering the textual conversations and better understanding the politics of identity.**
- **post weekly *Reading Responses* (RR)** to the Discussion Forum on Canvas by 11:59pm every Sunday (unless a Critical Response is due in its place).
- **upload the *Creative Responses* (CR) to Canvas by 11:59pm on the following Sundays: 9/25 & 11/6**

Course Structure

The **weekly modules** contain all the documents for that week, which include

- **Links to the assigned reading for that week**
- **Weekly notes**
 - They're well organized – with headings, subheadings, and bullets – and they provide the critical, socio-historical, and biographical contexts for the texts in question.
- **A link to a short video lecture (10-15 minutes)**
 - These will be filmed and uploaded on Mondays throughout the semester.
 - They're not designed to replace the written notes, but rather to highlight features of the movement/style and some interesting or challenging aspects of the text.
- **The Reading Response question for that week**
- **A link to the Creative Response prompt (when applicable)**

Course Assignments: RRs & CRs

- **Weekly Reading Responses (RR) will be due by 11:59pm every Sunday (unless a CR is due, in which case no RR is due).**
 - RRs should begin with a statement (thesis) that directly answers the RR question.
 - The remainder of the response should elaborate on the above claim and provide some supporting textual evidence. In other words, **these are “flash” critical analyses.**
 - **They should be between 250 and 350 words in length** and **posted directly to that week's Discussion Forum (no attachments please).**
 - **A 10-point scale will be used to evaluate these responses.**
 - Whole numbers and half decimals (e.g. 8.5, 9.5) will be used in the scoring.
 - Much like a full-length analysis...
 - **9.5s-10s** will have a clear thesis, address all components of the thesis in short paragraphs, engage briefly with all required texts (using quotes when possible and in-text citations when applicable), and be well-written/easily digestible.
 - **9s** may have a sentence or two that lacks clarity; it may merely mention a text/author that should've been more fully addressed; it may not be well-organized.

- **8s** may struggle to clearly convey a point about a text/author or only tangentially address the question that was posed.
 - **7s** typically neglect to address one or more of the required authors/texts and/or don't clearly address the question that was posed.
 - **6s and below** are likely the result of a combination of the above coupled with lateness, meaning points were deducted due to late submission.
- Brief feedback will also be given in the Assignment Comments section.
- Collectively, these make up 60% of your course grade.
- **Two Creative Responses (CRs) are also required for the course.**
 - **CRs will be written in response to a prompt** and will involve the creation of a poem, flash memoir, flash fiction, or un-classified piece of flash writing that borrows some of the techniques and themes that we're exploring through our readings.
 - The idea is for you to be able to creatively explore your own intersections with culture; no fieldwork is required—good creative writers write what they know/live.
 - The most challenging aspect of these assignments will be the borrowing and application of literary techniques that we're exploring.
 - Length will vary depending on the genre you choose to work within (i.e. poetry will have a max number of lines, fiction/prose will have a **750 word max**).
 - **CRs will be due by 11:59pm on the following Sundays: 9/25 & 11/6**
 - Each CR is worth 40% of your course grade.

Late Assignment Policy

- **Late RRs will incur a 1-point loss for every day that they are late.**
- **Late CRs will incur a 5% deduction per day that they are late.**
 - CRs will NOT be accepted if they are more than 5 days late unless you've contacted the instructor prior to the due date to discuss extenuating circumstances.
- Revisions will only be discussed on a case-by-case basis if/when extenuating circumstances are present.

Grading Breakdown

Weekly RRs	60%
CR 1	20%
CR 2	20%

Percentages will be assigned to the three CRs. Final grades will reflect the plus/minus system:

A+ = 99-100%	B+ = 87-89%	C+ = 76-79%	E = 59% and below
A = 95-98%	B = 83-86%	C = 70-75%	
A- = 90-94%	B- = 80-82%	D = 60-69%	

University Policies

Academic Integrity/Plagiarism

Academic honesty is expected of all students in all examinations, papers, laboratory work, academic transactions and records. The possible sanctions include, but are not limited to, appropriate grade penalties, course failure (indicated on the transcript as a grade of E), course failure due to academic dishonesty (indicated on the transcript as a grade of XE), loss of registration privileges, disqualification and dismissal. For more information, see <http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity>.

If you have any questions about your work and the academic integrity policy, please discuss your assignment or concerns with your instructor, teaching assistant, or your college Academic Integrity Officer in advance of submitting an assignment. Student resources on Sun Devil Integrity and strategies for completing your work with integrity and avoiding plagiarism are available here: ASU Student Resources for Academic Integrity or provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity for more information.

Student Code of Conduct

Students are required to adhere to the behavior standards listed in the Arizona Board of Regents Policy Manual Chapter V –Campus and Student Affairs: Code of Conduct located online at students.asu.edu/srr/code and the ACD 125: Computer, Internet, and Electronic Communications available at asu.edu/aad/manuals/acd/acd125.html

All incidents and allegations of violent or threatening conduct by an ASU student (whether on- or off-campus) must be reported to the ASU Police Department (ASU PD) and the Office of the Dean of Students. If either office determines that the behavior poses or has posed a serious threat to personal safety or to the welfare of the campus, the student will not be permitted to return to campus or reside in any ASU residence hall until an appropriate threat assessment has been completed and, if necessary, conditions for return are imposed. ASU PD, the Office of the Dean of Students, and other appropriate offices will coordinate the assessment in light of the relevant circumstances.

An instructor may also withdraw a student from a course when the student's behavior disrupts the educational process under USI 201-10 asu.edu/aad/manuals/ssm/ssm201-10.html. An

instructor may withdraw a student from a course with a mark of “W” or “E” when the student’s behavior disrupts the educational process. Disruptive classroom behavior for this purpose is defined by the instructor.

Title IX

Title IX is a federal law that provides that no person be excluded on the basis of sex from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. Both Title IX and university policy make clear that sexual violence and harassment based on sex is prohibited. An individual who believes they have been subjected to sexual violence or harassed on the basis of sex can seek support, including counseling and academic support, from the university. If you or someone you know has been harassed on the basis of sex or sexually assaulted, you can find information and resources at <https://sexualviolenceprevention.asu.edu/faqs>.

As a mandated reporter, I am obligated to report any information I become aware of regarding alleged acts of sexual discrimination, including sexual violence and dating violence. ASU Counseling Services, <https://eoss.asu.edu/counseling> is available if you wish to discuss any concerns confidentially and privately. ASU online students may access 360 Life Services, <https://goto.asuonline.asu.edu/success/online-resources.html>.

Statement on Inclusion

Arizona State University is deeply committed to positioning itself as one of the great new universities by seeking to build excellence, enhance access and have an impact on our community, state, nation and the world. To do that requires our faculty and staff to reflect the intellectual, ethnic and cultural diversity of our nation and world so that our students learn from the broadest perspectives, and we engage in the advancement of knowledge with the most inclusive understanding possible of the issues we are addressing through our scholarly activities. We recognize that race and gender historically have been markers of diversity in institutions of higher education. However, at ASU, we believe that diversity includes additional categories such as socioeconomic background, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability, veteran status, nationality and intellectual perspective.

Resources

As an ASU student you have access to many resources on campus. This includes tutoring, academic success coaching, counseling services, financial aid, disability resources, career and internship help and many opportunities to get involved in student clubs and organizations.

- Writing Center: <https://studentsuccess.asu.edu/writingcenters>
- Tutoring: <http://studentsuccess.asu.edu/frontpage>
- Counseling Services: <http://students.asu.edu/counseling>
- Financial Aid: <http://students.asu.edu/financialaid>
- Disability Resource Center: <http://www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/ed/drc/>
- Major/Career Exploration: <http://uc.asu.edu/majorexploration/assessment>
- Career Services: <http://students.asu.edu/career>
- Student Organizations: <http://www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/mu/clubs/>

Disability Accommodations

Students who feel they may need a disability accommodation(s) in class must provide documentation from the Disability Resource Center to the class instructor verifying the need for an accommodation and the type of accommodation that is appropriate.

Students who desire accommodations for a disability should contact DRC as early as possible (i.e., before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the DRC. Their site can be found at eoss.asu.edu/drc. Instructors cannot provide accommodations without authorization from the DRC.

Mental Health

As a student, like anyone else, you may experience a range of challenges that can interfere with learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, substance use, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These emotional health concerns or stressful events may diminish your academic performance and/or reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. ASU Counseling Services provides counseling and crisis services for students who are experiencing a mental health concern.

Any student may call or walk-in to any ASU counseling center for a same day or future appointment to discuss any personal concern. Here is the Web site: eoss.asu.edu/counseling. After office hours and 24/7 ASU's dedicated crisis line is available for crisis consultation by calling 480-921-1006.

Content Disclaimer

Some course content may be triggering, including literary texts and lecture notes dealing with gender, race, and sexual identity, as well as racism, ethnocentrism, sexual assault, and other difficult themes. Please contact me ASAP if you're having trouble navigating any of the material.

Lastly, please remember that all assignments are due on Sunday before midnight.

Schedule of Readings and Due Dates

Week One (8/17-8/20): Towards Defining “Ethnicity” & “Americanness”

- Introduction to American Ethnic Lit & Introduction to Ethnic Theory
- **Statement of Interest Due Sunday 8/20**

Week Two (8/21-8/27): African American Literature Part I: Pre/Post Slavery Literature

- **Phyllis Wheatley (P)**
 - *On Being Brought from Africa to America*
<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/174733>
 - *An Elegiac Poem, On the Death of...George Whitefield*
<http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/wheatley/whitefield/whitefield.html>
- **Frederick Douglass (NF)**
 - *from The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*
<https://www.commonlit.org/texts/the-narrative-of-the-life-of-frederick-douglass-excerpts-from-chapters-1-7>
 - *The Meaning of the Fourth of July for the Negro*
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4h2927t.html>
- **Charles Chesnutt (F), *The Wife of His Youth***
<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1898/07/the-wife-of-his-youth/306658/>
- **RR Due by 11:59 on Sunday 8/27**

Week Three (8/28-9/3): African American Literature Part II: The Harlem Renaissance

- **Langston Hughes (P)**
 - *I, Too, Sing America* <http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/15615>
 - *The Weary Blues* <http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/15612>
- **Claude McKay (P), *America*** <http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/20221>
- **Ralph Ellison (F), *Flying Home* (pdf)**
- **RR Due by 11:59 on Sunday 9/3**

Week Four (9/4-9/10): African American Literature Part III: New Protests & the Black Arts Movement

- **James Baldwin (F)**, *Sonny's Blues* <http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/wooda/2B-HUM/Readings/Baldwin-Sonnys-Blues.pdf>
- **Amiri Baraka (P)**
 - *Incident* <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poems/detail/42558>
 - *Who Blew Up America*, <http://www.afropoets.net/amiribaraka13.html>
- **Gwendolyn Brooks (P)**
 - *The Mother* <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poems/detail/43309>
 - *The Last Quatrain...* <https://allpoetry.com/The-Last-Quatrain-Of-The-Ballad-Of-Emmett-Till>
- **RR Due by 11:59 on Sunday 9/10**

Week Five (9/11-9/17): African American Literature Part IV: New Black Feminisms

- **Audre Lorde (P)**, *Power* <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poems/detail/53918>
- **Alice Walker (F)**, *Everyday Use* <http://faculty.weber.edu/jyoung/English%206710/Everyday%20Use.pdf>
- **June Jordan (P)**, *Poem about My Rights* <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poems/detail/48762>
- **Lucille Clifton (P)**
 - *Menstruation* <https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/poem-praise-menstruation>
 - *Uterus* <https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/poem-my-uterus>
- **RR Due by 11:59 on Sunday 9/17**

Week Six (9/18-9/24): African American Literature Part V: Contemporary African American Literature

- **Jericho Brown (P)**
 - *Hustle* <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/57692/hustle>
 - *Another Elegy* <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/57693/another-elegy-this-is-what-our-dying-looks-like>
 - *Bullet Points* <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/152728/bullet-points>

- **Danez Smith (P)**
 - *CREAM* <https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/cream>
 - *Not an Elegy* <https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/not-elegy-mike-brown>
 - *Dear White America (slam)* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LSp4v294xog>
- **Claudia Rankine (Prose Poetry)**
 - from *Citizen IV* <https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/citizen-iv>
 - from *Citizen IV, I knew whatever was in front of me...*
<https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/citizen-vi-i-knew-whatever-was-front-me-was-happening>
- ***CR* Due by 11:59 on Sunday 9/24**

Week Seven (9/25-10/1): Jewish American Literature

- **Cynthia Ozick (F)**, *The Shawl*, <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1980/05/26/the-shawl>
- **Adrienne Rich (NF)**, *Split at the Root* (word doc)
- **Allen Ginsberg (P)**
 - *Kaddish* (part I) <https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/kaddish-part-i>
 - *Mourner's Kaddish* (from Judaism 101) <http://www.jewfaq.org/kaddishref.htm>
- **Philip Roth (F)**, *The Conversion of the Jews*
<https://www.maclester.edu/religiouslife/programs/sacredstories/documents/RothConversionoftheJews.pdf>
- **RR Due by 11:59 on Sunday 10/1**

Week Eight (10/2-10/8): Asian American Literature Part I

- **Hisaye Yamamoto (F)**, *Seventeen Syllables*
<https://literatureofethnicgroups.files.wordpress.com/2016/03/seventeen-syllables.pdf>
- **Maxine Hong Kingston (NF)**, *No Name Woman* (word doc)
- **RR Due by 11:59 on Sunday 10/8**

Week Nine (10/9-10/15): Asian American Literature Part II

- **Garrett Hongo (P)**
 - *Yellow Light* (pdf)
 - *Off from Swing Shift* (pdf)
- **Li Young Lee (P)**
 - *I Ask my Mother to Sing* <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poems/detail/56513>
 - *Persimmons* <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poems/detail/43011>
- **Marilyn Chin (P)**, *Chinese Quatrains* <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poems/detail/55753>
- **RR Due by 11:59 on Sunday 10/15**

Week Ten (10/16-10/22): Chicano Literature

- **Tomas Rivera (F)**, *Y no se lo tragó la tierra/And the Earth Did Not Devour Him* (pdf)
- **Juan Phillippe Herrera (P)**
 - *tomorrow I leave to El Paso, Texas* <https://poets.org/poem/tomorrow-i-leave-el-paso-texas>
 - *Exiles* <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/58270/exiles-56d23c7eba08b>
 - *Everyday We Get More Illegal* <https://poets.org/poem/everyday-we-get-more-illegal>
- **Jose Olivarez (P)**, *Mexican American Disambiguation* <https://hyperallergic.com/400145/one-poem-by-jose-olivarez/>
- **RR Due by 11:59 on Sunday 10/22**

Week Eleven (10/23-10/29): Chicana Literature Part I

- **Xicana Literature (NF)** (see section entitled *Oppressive Chicana archetypes redefined*) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xicana_literature
- **Gloria Anzaldua (NF)**, from *Borderlands/La Frontera* <http://www.warscapes.com/retrospectives/uncertain-borders/excerpts-borderlandsla-frontera>
- **Helen Maria Viramontes (F)**, *The Moths* <http://cabrillo.edu/~anajarro/classes/TheMoths.pdf>

- **RR Due by 11:59 on Sunday 10/29**

Week Twelve (10/30-11/5): Chicana Literature Part II

- **Cherie Moraga (F & P)**, from *Loving in the War Years*
 - *Salvation...*
 - *Anatomy Lesson*
 - *Winter of Oppression*
 - *My Brothers Sex was White*
- <http://queeraztlan.weebly.com/uploads/2/5/1/7/25172584/lovinginthewaryears.pdf>
- **Lorna Dee Cervantes (P)**
 - *Beneath the Shadow of the Freeway*
<http://citedatthecrossroads.net/chst404/resources/readings/poems-of-lorna-dee-cervantes/>
 - *Freeway 280* <https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/freeway-280>
- **Sandra Cisneros (F)**, from *House on Mango Street*
<http://theliterarylink.com/mangostreet.html>
- ***CR* Due by 11:59 on Sunday 11/5**

Week Thirteen (11/6-11/12): Native American Literature Part I

- **N. Scott Momaday (NF)**, from *The Way to Rainy Mountain* <http://www.b-g.k12.ky.us/userfiles/1049/The%20Way%20to%20Rainy%20Mountain.pdf>
- **Simon Ortiz (P)**, *Culture and the Universe* <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poems/detail/53440>
- **Leslie Marmon Silko (F)**, *Lullaby*
<http://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/engl484jj/SilkoLullaby001.pdf>
- **RR Due by 11:59 on Sunday 11/12**

Week Fourteen (11/13-11/19): Native American Literature Part II

- **Joy Harjo (P)**
 - *Perhaps the World Ends Here* <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poems/detail/49622>
 - *A Map the Next World* <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poems/detail/49621>

- **Sherman Alexie (F)**, *What You Pawn I Will Redeem*
<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2003/04/21/what-you-pawn-i-will-redeem>
- **Natalie Diaz (P)**
 - *Abecedarian Requiring Further Examination...*
<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poems/detail/56353>
 - *The Facts of Art* <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poems/detail/56354>
- **RR Due by 11:59 on Sunday 11/19**

Week Fifteen: Thanksgiving Break

- No assignments due

Week Sixteen (11/26-12/1): Arab American Literature

- **Naomi Shihab Nye**
 - *Blood* <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/48602/blood-56d229f9da8a9>
 - *Jerusalem* <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/54296/jerusalem-56d2347ab7a20>
- **Natalie Handel**
 - *The Act of Counting* <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/58507/the-act-of-counting>
 - *The Thing about Feathers* <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/57719/the-thing-about-feathers>
- **RR Due by 11:59 on *Friday* 12/1**