

Course Title: Caribbean Narrative

Course number: ENGL6489

Time: Tuesdays 4:30 to 7:20 p.m.

Location: LPM 311

Instructor: Maritza Stanchich

Office hours: 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. Wednesday in SGG 01 (in the basement, below Estudios Hispanicos), or by appointment at a more mutually convenient time.

Email address: direct urgent questions only please at maritzastanchich@yahoo.com

Course description: Close readings and analysis of Anglophone Caribbean short stories and novels, as well as of criticism. Themes to be discussed include slavery, emancipation, colonialism, nationalism, independence, black power, neocolonialism, tourism, religiosity, exile/migration, gender, sexuality, language, class, race. Current debates within Caribbean studies, such as masculinist nationalism, Afro-Caribbean epistemology and canon formation, will also be considered. Authors range from major figures to more recent experimental writers, with attention to the historical development of Caribbean narrative, from the nation-building novel to the boom in fiction by women.

Texts: *Banana Bottom* by Claude McKay, *In the Castle of my Skin* by George Lamming, *Wide Sargasso Sea* by Jean Rhys, *Moses Ascending* by Sam Selvon, *The Mimic Men* by V.S. Naipaul, *The Wine of Astonishment* by Earl Lovelace, *Palace of the Peacock* by Wilson Harris (possible photocopy), *Beka Lamb* by Zee Edgell, *Me Dying Trial* by Patricia Powell (possible photocopy), *A Small Place* by Jamaica Kincaid, *Louisiana* by Erna Brodber, and stories from the *Caribbean New Wave* anthology. All titles unless otherwise noted should be available at the campus bookstore. Articles from a photocopied reader will also be assigned weekly. It will be at Copies Unlimited on Avenida Gándara, starting Monday afternoon, January 26.

Presentations: You will be responsible for one oral presentation on a select theme or angle focusing on an assigned text, which you will commit to on a sign-up sheet Jan. 27.

Weekly responses: Five one-page, single-spaced (that is a minimum and maximum length) responses to the reading on pre-determined dates (see our schedule) are due in class, and to be exchanged with one of your classmates. For the first three responses, a classmate on the following week will respond in writing to your response, in a maximum of one page, single space. Bring two copies of the original response and the secondary response each time to turn in one to me and one to the person you're working with. The headings of the responses should clearly indicate which is the original response, and which is the secondary one. For the last two responses, bring enough copies for everyone.

Papers: A final research paper of a minimum of eight pages will be due at the end of the semester on a topic of your choice under the rubric of Caribbean narrative. I will pass out written guidelines and prompts as the date approaches. We will also schedule at least one in-class, one-on-one meeting on the progress of your paper.

Teaching strategies: Class meetings will consist of analysis and discussion of reading assignments, and conceptual understanding of related issues. Visual materials will be incorporated as needed and available.

- Los estudiantes que reciban servicios de Rehabilitación Vocacional deben comunicarse con el/la profesor/a al inicio del semestre para planificar el acomodo razonable y equipo asistivo necesario conforme a las recomendaciones de la Oficina de Asuntos para las Personas con Impedimiento (OAPI) del Decanato de Estudiantes. También aquellos estudiantes con necesidades especiales que requieren de algún tipo de asistencia o acomodo deben comunicarse con el/la profesor/a.

Methods of Evaluation: Class attendance and punctuality: 20 percent
Class participation, including written responses: 30 percent
Oral presentation: 20 percent
Final paper: 30 percent

- Please note: For students with disabilities, there will be differentiated methods of evaluation. Evaluación diferenciada a estudiantes con necesidades especiales.

Class Calendar

Week 1, Jan. 20: Introduction to course and to each other. Preliminary articles are already in the Richardson Seminar Room, above the department.

Week 2, Jan. 27:

- **Sign up sheet for oral presentation will be passed out in class.**

Claude McKay's *Banana Bottom*, plus two articles on McKay by Carl Pederson and Heather Hathaway.

In addition, five, mostly short articles that overview Anglophone Caribbean fiction by Booker/Juraga, King, Cobham, Gilkes and Cudjoe. An overarching question here is, what do you make of the impulse to determine an originary work of fiction in Anglophone Caribbean literature? What are some of the politics and purposes of canon formation? Where does Claude McKay fall into this schema and how does his position as a key figure from the U.S. Harlem Renaissance complicate his canonical location? How do the parameters of canon formation relate to national identifications?

Week 3, Feb. 3:

George Lamming's *In the Castle of My Skin*, plus articles on Lamming, by Booker/Juraga, Plotz, Pouchet Paquet.

Week 4, Feb. 10:

In the Castle of My Skin, continued. One-page written response to novel due, two copies.

Week 5, Feb. 17:

Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea*, plus articles on Rhys. One-page responses to classmates' Lamming responses due. **Select partner and arrange exchange for the next response.**

Week 6, Feb. 24:

Classes revert to a Monday schedule to compensate for holidays, and I will be teaching.
One-page responses on Rhys due in my mailbox or via my email address above.

Week 7, March 2:

Moses Ascending by Sam Selvon, plus articles on Selvon as well as articles on language.
One-page responses to classmates' responses on Rhys due; please bring two copies.

Week 8, March 9:

The Mimic Men by V.S. Naipaul, plus articles on Naipaul.

Week 9, March 16:

Wrap up *The Mimic Men* by Naipaul. Article by Homi Bhabha.
A Small Place by Jamaica Kincaid, plus articles on Kincaid.
One-page response due on either Naipaul or Kincaid; please bring two copies.

Week 10, March 23:

The Wine of Astonishment by Earl Lovelace, plus articles by Benitez-Rojo and Burton.
One-page response to classmates' responses on Naipaul/Kincaid due, two copies.

Week 11, March 30:

Palace of the Peacock by Wilson Harris (possible photocopy), plus articles on and by Harris. One page response on Harris due; bring copies for whole class, plus for me.

- **Final paper guidelines will be distributed and reviewed.**

Week 12, April 6: Semana Santa

Week 13, April 13:

Beka Lamb by Zee Edgell, plus related articles.

Week 14, April 20:

Louisiana by Erna Brodber, plus related articles. One-page responses on Brodber, bring copies for whole class plus me.

Week 15, April 27:

Class canceled due to my presenting at conference in Santo Domingo.

- **Final paper bibliographies due in my mailbox or via my email (address above).**

Week 16, May 6:

Select stories from the *Caribbean New Wave* anthology. How and where do they fit (or not) in the anglophone Caribbean tradition we have studied?

- **Bring fully realized final paper outlines and we will schedule half of class for one-on-one discussions about the progress of your papers. You may also discuss your papers with each other to generate ideas or hone a more focused argument.**

Week 17, May 11: Last day of class! Wrap up. Final papers due.