

**University of Puerto Rico  
Río Piedras Campus  
College of Humanities  
Department of English**

**ENGL8020 – Caribbean Women’s Narrative**

Mondays 4:30 to 7:20 p.m., Pedreira 106

**Professor:** Maritza Stanchich

**Office hours:** Wednesdays 4-5 p.m. or by appointment at Pedreira # 5 near English Department.

**Email:** direct pertinent questions only please at maritzastanchich@yahoo.com

**3 Credit Hours**

**Prerequisites:** English 5489 Caribbean Narrative

**Course description**

Close readings and analysis of short stories and novels by select Anglophone, Francophone and Hispanophone Caribbean women, plus related criticism. How this literature challenges colonial and national paradigms will be a central question. Additional concerns include sexuality, class, race, language, exile, spirituality, AIDS, canonicity, genre (social realism, testimonio, science fiction, experimental, etc.). Fiction by Caribbean women writers will be analyzed in the context of recent critical approaches such as narrative, feminist/womanist, post-colonial, historical and socio-political theories.

**Objectives**

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- further develop doctoral level analysis of literary texts, criticism and theory in the field of Caribbean Studies, post-colonialism and women of color feminism
- deepen their knowledge of Caribbean Women’s Literature as well as the histories and ideologies of colonialism
- interrogate class, race, gender and sexuality as categories of analysis
- articulate the language of advanced literary analysis and theory through oral presentations and class discussions
- sharpen their analytical writing skills through concise weekly responses
- produce an in-depth, sophisticated research paper

**Course Outline**

See Reading List

**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

- I apologize for having to note this on a graduate syllabus, but past experience has warranted it. Three unexcused absences will result in an automatic C grade. Four unexcused absences will warrant an F. A maximum of three excused absences are allowed. If you have four legitimate, excused absences, then you should drop the class and retake it later. If you have two excused absences, then one more unexcused absence will affect your grade similarly.
- Please note: For students with disabilities, there will be differentiated methods of evaluation. *Evaluación diferenciada a estudiantes con necesidades especiales.*

**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 in advance on a sign-up sheet.

**Weekly responses:** One-page, single-spaced (that is a minimum and maximum length) responses to the reading on pre-determined dates (see schedule) are due in class, and to be exchanged with all of your classmates on e-mail the night before or in hard copy in class.

**Papers:** A final research paper of a minimum of 15 pages and a maximum of 25 pages will be due at the end of the semester on Caribbean women's work/s that we have not studied together. You may select another title by an author we have studied; however, this is also a good opportunity to expand the base of authors and/or national traditions covered in class. I will pass out written guidelines as the due date approaches.

**Grading System:** A, B, C, D, or F

### **Reading List and Course Outline**

#### **English 80200 – Caribbean Women's Narrative**

##### **Required Texts**

Available at Tertulia bookstore, except for *Yo-Yo Boing!*, which is in campus bookstore.

- Jean Rhys, *Voyage in the Dark*;
- Paule Marshall, *Brown Girl, Brownstones*
- Merle Hodge, *Crick Crack Monkey*
- Michelle Cliff, *Abeng*
- Jamaica Kincaid, *My Brother*
- Maryse Condé, *I, Tituba Black Witch of Salem*
- Simon Schwarz-Bart, *The Bridge of Beyond*
- Erna Brodber, *Jane and Louisa Will Soon Come Home*
- Giannina Braschi, *Yo-Yo Boing!*

- Nalo Hopkinson, *Midnight Robber*
- Articles from a reader will also be assigned weekly. The reader is at Best Copy off Avenida Universidad.
- Short stories will be selected from the following anthologies: *Green Cane and Juicy Flotsam*, *Caribbean New Wave*, *The Butterfly's Way*.

**Week 1, Aug. 16:** Introduce course and review syllabus, exploring its parameters.

**Week 2, Mon., Aug. 23:**

Introductory essays in Reader:

- Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "Introduction: Cartographies of Struggle: Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism." *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism* (1991).
- Carole Boyce Davies and Elaine Savory Fido, eds. "Foreword" and "Introduction." *Out of the Kumbla: Caribbean Women and Literature* (1990).
- Sylvia Wynter, "Afterword: Beyond Miranda's Meanings: Un/silencing the 'Demonic Ground' of Caliban's Woman." *Out of the Kumbla*, etc.
- Selwyn Cudjoe, "Introduction," *Caribbean Women Writers* (1990).
- Myriam Chancy, "Productive Contradictions: Afro-Caribbean Diasporic Feminism and the Question of Exile." *Searching for Safe Spaces: Afro-Caribbean Women Writers in Exile* (1997).
- Belinda Edmondson, "Introduction," *Gender, Literary Authority, and Women's Writing in Caribbean Narrative* (1999).

**Week 3, Mon, Aug. 30:**

Jean Rhys, *Voyage in the Dark* plus critical essays on Rhys in Reader

- Response paper #1 due, online or hard copies to all classmates

Critical essays on Rhys:

- Sue Thomas. Introduction and "Jean Rhys and Dominican Autoethnography" from *The Worlding of Jean Rhys* (1999).
- Elaine Savory. "Ex/Isle: Separation, Memory, and Desire in Caribbean Women's Writing" from *Winds of Change: The Transforming Voices of Caribbean Women Writers and Scholars*. eds. Adele S. Newson, Linda Strong-Leek (1998).
- Mary Lou Emery. "The Politics of Form: Jean Rhys's Social Vision in *Voyage in the Dark* and *Wide Sargasso Sea*" *Twentieth Century Literature* 28.4 (1984).
- Deborah Kelly Kloepfer. "Voyage in the Dark: Jean Rhys's Masquerade for the Mother" *Contemporary Literature* XXVI.4 (1985).

Additional critical essays:

- M. Jacqui Alexander and Chandra Talpade Mohanty, eds. Introduction to *Feminist Genealogies, Colonial Legacies, Democratic Futures* (1997).
- Evelyn O'Callaghan. Introduction to *Women Writing the West Indies, 1804-1939* (2004).
- Hilary McD Beckles. "Property Rights in Pleasure: Marketing Black Women's Sexuality" from *Centering Women: Gender Discourses in Caribbean Slave Society* (1999).

#### **Week 4, Mon., Sept. 6: Labor Day holiday**

#### **Week 5, Mon., Sept. 13:**

Paule Marshall, *Brown Girl, Brownstones* plus critical essays.

- Responses paper #2 due to all

Critical essays on Marshall:

Heather Hathaway. Introduction and "From Dislocation to Dual Location: Paule Marshall's *Brown Girl, Brownstones*" from *Caribbean Waves: Relocating Claude McKay and Paule Marshall* (1999).

Heidi Slettedahl Macpherson "Perceptions of Place: Geopolitical and Cultural Positioning

in Paule Marshall's Novels" from *Caribbean Women Writers: Fiction in English*. eds. Mary Condé and Thorunn Lonsdale (1999).

Simon Gikandi. "Modernism and the Masks of History: The Novels of Paule Marshall" from *Writing in Limbo: Modernism and Caribbean Literature* (1992).

#### **Week 6, Mon., Sept. 20:**

Merle Hodge, *Crick Crack Monkey* plus criticism.

- Response paper #3 due.

Hodge critical essays:

Simon Gikandi. "Writing after Colonialism: *Crick Crack, Monkey* and *Beka Lamb*" also from *Writing in Limbo: Modernism and Caribbean Literature* (1992).

Critical excerpts from *Caribbean Women Writers* (1997) and *Fifty Caribbean Writers* (1986).

Ketu Katak. "'This Englishness Will Kill You': Colonial[ist] Education and Female Socialization in Merle Hodge's *Crick Crack, Monkey*, and Bessie Head's *Maru*." *College Literature*. 22.1 Feb. 1995.

Overall critical essays:

Isabel Hoving. Introduction to *In Praise of New Travelers: Reading Caribbean Migrant Women Writers* (2001).

Lizabeth Paravasini-Gebert. "Decolonizing Feminism: The Home-Grown Roots of Caribbean Women's Movements" from *Daughters of Caliban: Caribbean Women in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Consuelo Lopez-Springfield (1997).

Mary Johnson Ostrim. "We Toil all the Livelong Day: Women in the English-Speaking Caribbean" also from *Daughters of Caliban: Caribbean Women in the Twentieth Century*.

#### **Week 7, Mon., Sept. 27:**

Michelle Cliff, *Abeng* plus criticism

Also two essays by Audre Lorde

- Response #4 due

Critical essays on Cliff:

Overall critical essays:

Suzanne Lafont and Deborah Pruitt "The Colonial Legacy: Gendered Laws in

Jamaica” also from *Daughters of Caliban: Caribbean Women in the Twentieth Century*.

**Week 8, Mon., Oct. 4:**

Jamaica Kincaid, *My Brother* plus criticism  
Response paper #5 due  
Critical essays on Kincaid

Overall critical essays:

Kathleen J. Renk. Introduction and “She Catch She Shadow: Lighting the Way Toward Decolonization.” from *Caribbean Shadows & Victorian Ghosts: Women’s Writing and Decolonization* (1999).

**Week 9, Mon., Oct. 11:**

Maryse Condé, *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem* plus criticism  
Response paper #6 due

**Week 10, Mon., Oct. 18:**

Simon Schwarz-Bart, *The Bridge of Beyond* plus criticism  
Response #7

**Week 11, Mon., Oct. 25:**

Erna Brodber, *Jane and Louisa Will Soon Come Home* plus criticism  
Response #8 due

**Week 12, Mon., Nov. 1: University closed Nov. 1-3 for elections**

**Week 13, Mon., Nov. 8:**

Giannina Braschi, *Yo-Yo Boing!* plus criticism  
Response #9 due

**Week 14, Mon., Nov. 15:**

Film screening director Julie Dash’s *Daughters of the Dust*

- Final paper guidelines to be handed out. You should be choosing or reading a text independent of our syllabus for your final project.

**Week 15, Mon., Nov. 22:**

Nalo Hopkinson, *Midnight Robber* plus criticism  
No response due

- Final paper topic due in writing (one paragraph)

**Week 16, Mon., Nov. 29:**

Select stories from *Green Cane and Juicy Flotsam; Caribbean New Wave Anthology; Butterfly’s Way* (Amryl Johnson, Olive Senior, Velma Pollard, Ana Lydia Vega, etc.).

- Provisional final paper bibliography due (minimum five outside sources)

## **Week 17, Dec. 6: Wrap up**

Final paper due in class

### **Selected Bibliography**

Agosto, Noraida. *Michelle Cliff's Novels: Piecing the Tapestry of Memory of History*. New York: Peter Lang, 1999.

Alexander, M. Jacqui and Chandra Talpade Mohanty, eds. *Feminist Genealogies, Colonial Legacies, Democratic Futures*. New York: Routledge, 1997.

Alleyne, Mervyn C. "A Linguistic Perspective on the Caribbean." *Caribbean Contours*. eds. Sidney W, Mintz and Sally Price. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985. 155-179.

Bébel-Gisler, Dany. *Leonora: L'histoire enfouie de la Guadeloupe*. Paris: Editions Seghers, 1985. Trans. Andrea Leskes. *Leonora: The Buried Story of Guadeloupe*. Charlottesville, London: University of Virginia, 1994.

Beckles, Hilary McD. *Centering Women: Gender Discourses in Caribbean Slave Society*. Oxford: James Curry, 1999.

Bernstein, Lisa. "Demythifying the Witch's Identity as Social Critique in Maryse Conde's *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*." *Social Identities*. 3.1 Feb. 1997. 77-90.

Bloom, Harold. ed. *Caribbean Women Writers*. Philadelphia, Chelsea House, 1997.

Boyce Davies, Carole and Elaine Savory Fido, eds. *Out of the Kumbla: Caribbean Women and Literature*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1990.

Boyce Davies, Carole. *Moving Beyond Boundaries: Volume 2: Black Women's Diasporas*. New York: New York UP, 1995.

Braham, Persephone. "Yo-Yo Boing! Review." *Latin American Literature and Arts Review: New Writing and Arts in the Americas*. 60. 1998. [americas-society.org/as/literature/br60braschi.html](http://americas-society.org/as/literature/br60braschi.html)

Braschi, Giannina. *El Imperio de los Sueños*. San Juan: Editorial de la Universidad de Puerto Rico. 1999. 1<sup>st</sup> ed. Barcelona: Editorial Anthropos, 1988.

\_\_\_\_\_. *YO-YO Boing!* Minneapolis: Latin American Review Press, 1998.

Bulatansky, K.M., Sourieau, M.A. eds. *Caribbean Creolization: Reflection on the Cultural Dynamics of Language, Literature and Identity*. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1998.

- Carrión, María M. "Geographies, (M)Other Tongues and the Rôle of Translation in Giannina Braschi's *El imperio de los sueños*." *Studies in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Literature*. 20. 1. Winter 1996. 167-191.
- Chancy, Myriam J.A. *Searching for Safe Spaces: Afro-Caribbean Women Writers in Exile*. Philadelphia, Temple UP, 1997.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Challenge to Center: Caribbean Literature." *American Literary History*. 2001. 329-342.
- Condé, Mary and Thorunn Lonsdale, eds. *Caribbean Women Writers: Fiction in English*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999.
- Condé, Maryse: "Order, Disorder, Freedom, and the West Indian Writer." *Yale French Studies*. 0.83 2(1993) 121-135.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Traversée de la Mangrove*. Paris: Mercure de France, 1989. trans. Richard Philcox. *Crossing the Mangrove*. New York: Doubleday, 1995.
- Cooper, Carolyn. *Noises in the Blood: Orality, Gender and the 'Vulgar' Body of Jamaican Popular Culture*. Warwick: MacMillan, 1993.
- Cudjoe, Selwyn R. ed. *Caribbean Women Writers*. Wellesley: Calaloux, 1990.
- Dance, Daryl Cumber. *Fifty Caribbean Writers: A Bio-Bibliographical Critical Sourcebook*. New York: Greenwood Press, 1986.
- Dessús, Virginia. "Identidad(es) postmoderna(s): *Yo-Yo Boing!* de Giannina Braschi." *La Torre: Revista de la Universidad de Puerto Rico*. vi.22. octubre-diciembre 2001. 412-426.
- De Souza, Pascale. *Demystifying Female Marooning: Oppositional Strategies and the Writing of Testimonios in the French Caribbean*. *International Journal of Feminist Studies*. 3.3. 2000. 141-150.
- Edmondson, Belinda. *Making Men: Gender, Literary Authority, and Women's Writing in Caribbean Narrative*. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 1999.
- Emery, Mary Lou. "The Politics of Form: Jean Rhys's Social Vision in *Voyage in the Dark* and *Wide Sargasso Sea*." *Twentieth Century Literature* 28.4 (1984).
- Ferré, Rosario. *The House on the Lagoon*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1995.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Maldito Amor y otros cuentos*, New York: Vintage, 1998. 1986.

- Garane, Jeanne. "A Politics of Location in Simone Schwarz-Bart's *Bridge of Beyond*." *College Literature*. 95.22.1 Feb. 1995. 21-37.
- Gikandi, Simon. *Writing in Limbo: Modernism and Caribbean Literature*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1992.
- Gray Diaz, Nancy. "Performing Soledad: The Demythification of Identity in Giannina Braschi's *El Imperio de los Sueños*." *Romance Notes*. 37. 3. Spring 1997. 331-338.
- Hathaway, Heather. "From Dislocation to Dual Location: Paule Marshall's *Brown Girl, Brownstones*." *Caribbean Waves: Relocating Claude McKay and Paule Marshall*, Bloomington, IN: 1999.
- Hoving, Isabel. *In Praise of New Travelers: Reading Caribbean Migrant Women Writers*. Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 2001.
- Katrak, Ketu. "'This Englishness Will Kill You': Colonial[ist] Education and Female Socialization in Merle Hodge's *Crick Crack, Monkey*, and Bessie Head's *Maru*." *College Literature*. 22.1 Feb. 1995.
- Kincaid, Jamaica. *At the Bottom of the River*. NY: Plume, 1992.
- Kloepfer, Deborah Kelly. "Voyage in the Dark: Jean Rhys's Masquerade for the Mother." *Contemporary Literature* XXVI.4 (1985).
- Liddell, Janice Lee and Yakini Belinda Kemp. *Arms Akimbo: Africana Women in Contemporary Literature*. Gainesville, FL: UP of Florida, 1999.
- Lopez-Springfield, Consuelo. ed. *Daughters of Caliban: Caribbean Women in the Twentieth Century*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 1997.
- Lorde, Audre. "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House." *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*. eds. Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa. New York: Kitchen Table, 1981.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*. Trumansburg, NY: The Crossing Press, 1984.
- Loustau, Laura R. "Conciencia nómada y traslados geo-literarios en *El imperio de los sueños* de Giannina Braschi." *Cuerpos errantes: Literatura latina y latinoamericana en Estados Unidos*. Rosario, Argentina: Beatriz Viterbo Editora, 2002. 117-156.
- Manzor-Coats, Lillian. "Of Witches and Other Things: Maryse Condé's Challenges to Feminist Discourse." *World Literature Today*. 67.4 Autumn 1993. 737-755.

- Marshall, Paule. *Brown Girl, Brownstones*. New York: The Feminist Press, 1981. 1959.
- Mohanty, Chandra Talpade and Ann Russo and Lourdes Torres, eds. *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 1991.
- Nelson, Alondra. "Making the Impossible Possible: An Interview with Nalo Hopkinson." *Social Text* 71. 20.2 Summer 2002. 97-113.
- O'Callaghan, Evelyn. *Women Writing the West Indies, 1804-1939: A hot place, belonging to Us*. New York: Routledge, 2004.
- Paravisini-Gebert, Lizabeth. *Jamaica Kincaid: A Critical Companion*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1999.
- Powell, Patricia. *A Small Gathering of Bones*. Oxford: Heinemann, 1994.
- Smith, Honor Ford and Sistren. *Lionheart Gal: Life Stories of Jamaican Women*. Kingston, Jamaica: The Women's Press, 1986.
- Raiskin, Judith L. *Snow on the Cane Fields: Women's Writing and Creole Subjectivity*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1996.
- Renk, Kathleen J. *Caribbean Shadows & Victorian Ghosts: Women's Writing and Decolonization*. Charlottesville, UP of Virginia, 1999.
- Rutledge, Gregory E. "Speaking in Tongues: An Interview with Science Fiction Writer Nalo Hopkinson." *African American Review*. 33.4 Winter 1999. 589-694.
- Santos-Febres, Mayra. *Sirena Selena Vestida de Pena*. Barcelona: Mandadori, 2000.
- Savory, Elaine. "Ex/Isle: Separation, Memory, and Desire in Caribbean Women's Writing." *Winds of Change: The Transforming Voices of Caribbean Women Writers and Scholars*. eds. Adele S. Newson, Linda Strong-Leek. New York: Peter Lang, 1998.
- Senior, Olive. *Working Miracles: Women's Lives in the English-speaking Caribbean*. Cave Hill, Barbados: Institute of Social and Economic Research, 1991.
- Sommer, Doris and Vega-Merino, Alexandra. "Either and." Introduction to *YO-Yo Boing!* Minneapolis: Latin American Review Press, 1998.
- Thomas, Sue. *The Worlding of Jean Rhys*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1999.

Vega, Ana Lydia. *Esperando a Lolo y otros delirios generacionales*. Rio Piedras, PR: University of Puerto Rico, 1994.

Wilson-Tagoe, Nana. *Historical Thought and Literary Representation in West Indian Literature*. Gainesville: UP of Florida, 1998.