

**Women Writers of Color in the Americas
(20th century to the present)**

ENGL/AAS/FGSS/AMST 3580

Spring 2017 T/R 2:55-4:10

236 Goldwin Smith Hall

Professor Shelley Wong
282 Goldwin Smith Hall
Office Hours: Friday 12-2pm (and by appointment)
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This semester, the course will focus primarily on writing by African American and Asian American women writers. As used here, the term “American” refers to the broader geo-political territory of the hemispheric Americas. Over the past twenty years, the study of what used to more commonly be called “American literature” has increasingly shifted its purview to encompass this broader terrain, so much so that the study of American literature is now often referred to as the study of American literatures. This plurality of literatures includes the varieties of literatures (primarily English-language based) within the U.S. as well as those outside the geopolitical boundaries of the U.S. nation-state.

This course will expose you to the formally and thematically wide-ranging work of a number of twentieth-century women authors writing in the US and in Canada. There are no prerequisites for this course—familiarity with either these particular writers or with the contexts of criticism and theory that attend their work will not be assumed. Instead, the production of that knowledge through attentive, thoughtful, and sustained mutual engagement will constitute the collective project of this course.

Required Readings:

Gwendolyn Brooks, **MAUD MARTHA**

Jessica Hagedorn – **DOGEATERS**

Carolivia Herron - **THEREAFTER JOHNNIE** (purchase **only** the Random House or Vintage edition)

(Purchase online or borrow from AASP Resource Center – 4th floor Rockefeller Hall)

Shani Mootoo - **CEREUS BLOOMS AT NIGHT** (currently unavailable from campus store)

Toni Morrison, **THE BLUEST EYE**

Fae Myenne Ng - **BONE**

Ann Petry - **THE STREET**

Claudia Rankine, **CITIZEN**

Madeleine Thien, **DO NOT SAY WE HAVE NOTHING**

Additional short readings will be available on the Blackboard site for this course.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

This course will be conducted as a seminar in which collaborative intellectual engagement and sustained dialogue will be the order of the day.

- regular and punctual attendance (more than two unexcused absences may affect your grade)
- completion of assigned readings by the date we begin our discussion of a given text
- active participation in class discussion (15% both attendance and participation)
- class presentation with an accompanying write-up that is due 1 week after presentation (10%)
- 6-page mid-term essay (30%)
- 10-page final essay (45%)

Plagiarism:

All the work you submit in this course must have been written for this course and not another and must originate with you in form and content, with contributory sources fully and specifically acknowledged. Make yourself familiar with Cornell's Academic Integrity Code, distributed to students in the Policy Notebook and available on-line at <http://www.cornell.edu/Academic/AIC.html>. The code, together with a guide to Acknowledging the Work of Others, can be downloaded from <http://www.cornell.edu/UniversityFaculty/docs/main.html>. In this course, the normal penalty for a violation of the code is an "F" for the term.

SYLLABUS (subject to change)

Week 1 – January

26 TH – Introduction

Week 2 – January/February

31 TU – Fae Myenne Ng, *Bone*

02 TH – Fae Myenne Ng, *Bone*

Week 3 – February

07 TU – Fae Myenne Ng, *Bone*

09 TH – Ann Petry, *The Street*
- presentation

Week 4 – February

14 TU – Ann Petry, *The Street*
- presentation

16 TH – Ann Petry, *The Street*

Week 5 – February

21 TU – *winter break*

23 TH – Gwendolyn Brooks, ***Maud Martha***
- presentation

Week 6 – February/March

28 TU – Gwendolyn Brooks, ***Maud Martha***
- presentation

02 TH – Toni Morrison, ***The Bluest Eye***
- presentation

Week 7 – March

07 TU – Toni Morrison, ***The Bluest Eye***
- presentation

09 TH – Toni Morrison, ***The Bluest Eye***

Week 8 – March

14 TU – To Be Announced
- **Mid-term essay (6-page) due today** (please submit a hard copy in class and email a soft copy)

16 TH – Shani Mootoo, ***Cereus Blooms at Night***
- presentation

Week 9 – March

21 TU – Shani Mootoo, ***Cereus Blooms at Night***
- presentation

23 TH – Shani Mootoo, ***Cereus Blooms at Night***

Week 10 – March

28 TU – Claudia Rankine, ***Citizen***
- presentation

30 TH – Claudia Rankine, ***Citizen***
- presentation

Week 11 – April

04 TU – *spring break*

06 TH – *spring break*

Week 12 – April

11 TU – Madeleine Thien, *Do Not Say We Have Nothing*
- presentation

13 TH – Madeleine Thien, *Do Not Say We Have Nothing*
- presentation

Week 13 – April

18 TU – Madeleine Thien, *Do Not Say We Have Nothing*

20 TH – Carolivia Herron, *Thereafter Johnnie*
- presentation

Week 14 – April

25 TU – Carolivia Herron, *Thereafter Johnnie*
- presentation

27 TH – Carolivia Herron, *Thereafter Johnnie*

Week 15 – May

02 TU – Jessica Hagedorn, *Dogeaters*
- presentation

04 TH – Jessica Hagedorn, *Dogeaters*
- presentation

Week 16 – May

09 TU – To Be Announced

16 TU – Final essay due today. Please leave your essay for me in my mailbox in the English Department mailroom (next to English Department main office at 250 Goldwin Smith Hall). The mailroom is open from 9:00am to 4:30pm. Please be sure to email me a copy of your essay as well.