

WS 540
Women of Color Writing Culture
Professor Catrióna Rueda Esquibel

Class: MW: 11:30AM-1:18PM
220 Hayes Hall
Office hours: Tuesdays , 2:00-3:00 or by appointment

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Class website: <http://class.osu.edu>

Course Description

In this class, we will explore the fiction of women of color authors in relation to the histories of women and communities of color in the US, to US colonialism, and immigration to the US. Themes include re-reading and re-writing history, bearing witness, conquest and decolonization, “Old” and “New” worlds, language, “dialects” “Race-ing” Gender, and canonization.

This is a reading-intensive course for advanced undergraduate majors in Women’s Studies, Comparative Studies, and English.

Key Concepts:

colonization, decolonization, diaspora, genocide, hybridity, identity, indigeneity, interpellation, language, mestizaje, reclaiming “Nuestra América,” subjectivity,

Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will have acquired introductory level:

1. practice in critical reading, oral presentation, and analysis of issues related to feminist cultural traditions and social history
2. knowledge of women of color histories, traditions and interventions
3. competence in methods of interdisciplinary feminist analysis

Required Texts:

Course Reader

Aurora Levins Morales. *Remedios: Stories of Earth and Iron from the History of Puertorriqueñas*. 1998.

Octavia Butler. *Kindred*. 1980.

Linda Hogan. *Mean Spirit*. 1990. Edwidge Danticat. *The Farming of the Bones*. 1998. Julia Alvarez. *In the Time of the Butterflies*. 1994.

Jessica Hagedorn. *Dogeaters* 1990.

Nora Okja Keller. *Comfort Women*. 1998.

III. Course Requirements:

Participation. (15% of grade) Your active participation in discussions will make this class a success. Please complete all reading by the assigned date and be prepared to share your questions, ideas, and criticisms. Attendance is a necessary component of participation, and more than two absences will affect your grade. Occasional quizzes will assess the degree to which you have read and understood the novels.

Leading Discussion (10% of grade) Each class, one or more students will present the readings. Presentations should discuss how the text is important to the history of Women of Color, summarize the major points of the reading, perform a close reading of one or more passages, and pose critical questions. Presentations should be between 10 and 15 minutes long.

Reading Journals (15% of grade). Purchase a small composition book to use as your reading journal. Think of it as your opportunity to interact with the texts: keep notes about your questions about the texts, what you think they're doing and why, and any answers you may discover. Bring to every class period for in-class writing assignments,

Midterm Exam. (30% of grade) A take-home essay exam. 7-10 pages. Due Wednesday, February 5, in class. No late exams will be accepted.

Final Exam (30% of grade) A take-home essay exam. 7-12 typed pages. Due Monday, March 17, 11:30 a.m. No late exams will be accepted.

Standard Grading Scale: 94-100=A, 90-93=A-, 87-89=B+, 83-86=B, 80-82=B-, 77-79=C+, 73-76=C, 70-72=C-, 67-69=D+, 63-66=D, Below 62=E

Secondary Readings: Additional supporting readings may be added to the course requirements as necessary.

Accommodation: Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. *In particular, I need to know immediately if we need to supply audio versions of the texts, as most of the texts are not widely available and bilingual speakers are necessary to record the texts for audio use.* Please contact the Office for Disability Services at 614-292-3307 in room 150 Pomerene hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

Women's Studies department Statement on Plagiarism

As defined by University Rule 3335-31-02, plagiarism is "the representation of another's works or ideas as one's own; it includes the unacknowledged word for word use and/or paraphrasing of another person's work, and/or the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person's ideas." Plagiarism is one of the most serious offenses that can be committed in an academic community; as such, it is the obligation of this department and its instructors to report **all** cases of suspected plagiarism to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. After the report is filed, a hearing takes place and if the student is found guilty, the possible punishment ranges from failing the class to suspension or expulsion from the university. Although the existence of the Internet makes it relatively easy to plagiarize, it also makes it even easier for instructors to find evidence of

plagiarism. It is obvious to most teachers when a student turns in work that is not his or her own and plagiarism search engines make documenting the offense very simple.

Always cite your sources (your TA and/or professor can help with this).

Always ask questions **before** you turn in an assignment if you are uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism.

Always see your TA or professor if you are having difficulty with an assignment.

To preserve the integrity of OSU as an institution of higher learning, to maintain your own integrity, and to avoid jeopardizing your future, **DO NOT PLAGIARIZE!**

Course Schedule

Week One

Monday, January 6: Introductions, review of syllabus, brief lecture on women of color histories, counter-histories
Aurora Levins Morales, *Remedios*, pp. xxxi–xxxvi Introduction

Wednesday, Jan 8: Aurora Levins Morales, *Remedios*, 1-63: Bisabuelas/Great Grandmothers
Abuelas/Grandmothers, Discovery,

Week Two

Jan 13

Remedios, 64-140: Huracán, Jenjibre/Ginger, Parteras,

Jan 15

Remedios, 141-206: Lazos, Aguacero, Derrumbe

Week Three

Jan 20

Martin Luther King, Jr. No classes.

Jan 22

Reading assignment: Angela Y. Davis. "The Legacy of Slavery: Standards for a New Womanhood"

Week Four

Jan 27

Octavia Butler. *Kindred*. 9-107.

Jan 29

Kindred. 108-264
Midterm Exam distributed

Week Five

Feb 3

Film: *Daughters of the Dust*, dir. Julie Dash

Feb 5

Class discussion: *Daughters of the Dust*, dir. Julie Dash
Midterm Exam due

Week Six

Feb 10

Linda Hogan *Mean Spirit* 1-206

Feb 12 *Mean Spirit*. 209-375

Week Seven

Feb 17 Nora Okja Keller *Comfort Women* 1-120
Film: *Silence Broken: Korean Comfort Women*, Dai Sil Kim-Gibson

Feb 19 Nora Okja Keller *Comfort Women* 121-224
Cynthia Enloe "Base Women" from *Bananas, Beaches and Women*

Week Eight

Feb 24 Julia Alvarez *In the Time of the Butterflies*. 1-168
Feb 26 *In the Time of the Butterflies*. 171-321

Week Nine

Mar 3 Edwidge Danticat. *The Farming of Bones*. 1-203

Mar 5 *The Farming of Bones* 204-310

Week Ten

Mar 10 Jessica Hagedorn, *Dogeaters* 1-116
Film: Marlon Fuentes, *Bontoc Eulogy* 1995
Final Exam Distributed
Graduating Seniors: Journals due; Final Exams in UH 286 during class

Mar 12 *Dogeaters* 117-251
Closing Ceremony
Course Evaluations

Final Exams Due: Monday, March 17, 11:30 am

Turn in your Journals at Final Exam

If you would like your work returned to you after grades are posted, please submit a large SASE (Self-Addressed Stamped Envelope) with sufficient postage.