

ENGL162W-4: Social Justice and 20th Century American Literature

Course Time: TTh 4:30 – 6:20p.m., Room TBD
Instructor: Dalglish Chew
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Office: Building 460, Room TBD
Office Hours: TTh 3:00 – 4:00p.m and by appointment



DESCRIPTION

This course examines key works of 20th century American literature that probe the relations between social justice and literary aesthetics. As we read, discuss, and write about texts by Richard Wright, James Baldwin, Adrienne Rich, Audre Lorde, and Junot Díaz, these are some of the questions we will explore together: What new literary forms and styles do an author's anti-oppressive politics make available? How do the writers we're reading imagine literature as an instrument of social change? What is the relationship between political commitment and the aesthetic pleasures of literary texts? By attending to how writers navigate the imperatives of political critique, literary merit, and aesthetic pleasure, we will also shed light on contemporary parodies of politicized cultural commentary, like the "Social Justice Warrior" cliché and satirical memes like "Your Fave is Problematic."

LEARNING GOALS

Close Reading: You will cultivate the reading practices necessary to a) develop an intuition about a given literary text, b) trace the development of this intuition through the text by following the trail of identifiable modes, styles, or forms, c) accumulate sufficient evidence as to the generalizability of your intuitions, and d) learn to present this evidence in a manner that approaches the rigor expected of academic literary scholarship

Critical Engagement: You will practice reading literary scholarship with the same close reading skills you bring to bear on literary texts. In so doing, you will a) develop a reflexive awareness of your own styles and modes of argumentation, b) try on and test out different critical "moves" as you develop your own personal style of scholarly writing, c) learn to engage generously but critically with other scholars' arguments, and d) begin to approach literary scholarship not only as expositions of argument and evidence, but also as works of rhetorical inventiveness and aesthetic pleasure.

Research: You will develop the skills necessary to develop a substantial research project. You will learn, amongst other things, to a) scope and shape research questions out of your intuitions about primary texts, b) identify the genre of your research questions (historicist, archival, theoretical, and/or methodological, etc.) and to situate these in relation to existing scholarly conversations. You will also practice the work habits necessary to accomplish your research goals.

PRIMARY TEXTS

Richard Wright, *Native Son* (ISBN 978-0060837563)
James Baldwin, *Another Country* (ISBN 9780679744719)
Adrienne Rich, selections from *The Fact of a Doorframe*
Audre Lorde, selections from *The Collected Poems*
Junot Díaz, *This Is How You Lose Her* (ISBN 978-1594631771)

SECONDARY TEXTS

W. E. B. DuBois, "Criteria of Negro Art"
Richard Wright, "How Bigger was Born"
Barbara Johnson, "The Re(a)d and the Black: Richard Wright's Blueprint"
James Baldwin, "Everybody's Protest Novel"

James Baldwin, "The Creative Process"
Ernesto Martínez, "Dying to Know: Identity and Self-Knowledge in Baldwin's *Another Country*"
William A. Cohen, "Liberalism, Libido, Liberation: Baldwin's *Another Country*"
Susan Feldman, "Reconciling Baldwin's Racial and Sexual Politics"
Adrienne Rich, "When We Dead Awaken"
Piotr Gwiazda, "Nothing Else Left to Read"
Audre Lorde, "Poetry is Not a Luxury"
Audre Lorde, "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House"
Sagri Dhairyam, "Artifacts for Survival"

REQUIREMENTS

Position Paper (5 pages): Write an essay that both a) explicates an argument made by DuBois, Locke, or Wright in their essays about the relationship between racial politics and literary aesthetics, and b) evaluates said argument testing it against a passage of your choice from Richard Wright's *Native Son*.

Critical Engagement (5 pages): Write an essay addressing a significant work of literary scholarship (selected either from a provided bibliography, or in consultation with the instructor) on the relationship between politics and literary aesthetics. The essay should a) explicate the author's main claims, b) engage critically with at least one aspect of the author's overall argument, and c) suggest how the essay generates productive questions that might be brought to bear on literary analysis.

Final Paper Proposal (300 words): Write a brief proposal, with an attached bibliography, that outlines the research problem to be tackled in the final paper.

Final Paper (15 pages): Undertake a substantial research project that explores, with the help of scholarly and historical sources, a question about one of the assigned literary texts. You are encouraged to develop your final paper topic out of questions developed in your first two assignments.

GRADING

Attendance and Participation:	15%
Position Paper:	20%
Critical Engagement:	25%
Final Paper + Proposal:	40%

All papers are due at 6PM of the stated deadline (by email to dalGLISH@stanford.edu). All written work must be double-spaced, in 12-point Times New Roman font with 1-inch margins, and should conform to MLA or Chicago citation and formatting conventions. Late papers will be graded down by 1/3 letter grade per day. No extensions will be granted unless otherwise discussed well in advance with the instructor.

STUDENTS WITH DOCUMENTED DISABILITIES

Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). Professional staff will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty dated in the current quarter in which the request is being made. Students should contact the OAE as soon as possible since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk (phone: 723-1066, URL: <http://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/oae>).

HONOR CODE

Students will be expected to adhere to Stanford's Honor Code, noting in particular the severe penalties for plagiarism. In order to clarify what is regarded as plagiarism, the Board on Judicial Affairs adopted the following statement on May 22, 2003: " For purposes of the Stanford University Honor Code, plagiarism is defined as the

use, without giving reasonable and appropriate credit to or acknowledging the author or source, of another person's original work, whether such work is made up of code, formulas, ideas, language, research, strategies, writing or other form(s)." If you are in doubt about what constitutes plagiarism in the context of a particular assignment, talk with the instructor.

The entire text of the Honor Code and the Fundamental Standard can be accessed at the following URL: <https://communitystandards.stanford.edu/student-conduct-process/honor-code-and-fundamental-standard/additional-resources/what-plagiarism>

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Week 1	Introduction: Aesthetics and Politics
T 1/5	<input type="checkbox"/> In-Class: Arthur Chu, "Racial Stereotypes Can Be Funny" <input type="checkbox"/> In-Class: Meghan O'Dea, "The Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt has a Race Problem" <input type="checkbox"/> In-Class DuBois, "Criteria of Negro Art" <input type="checkbox"/> In-Class Locke, "Art or Propaganda?"
Th 1/7	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Wright, <i>Native Son</i> pp. 1-94
Week 2	The Sociological Imagination
T 1/12	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Wright, "How Bigger Was Born" <input type="checkbox"/> Read Wright, <i>Native Son</i> pp. 95-200
Th 1/14	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Wright, <i>Native Son</i> pp. 200-270
Week 3	The Writing of Race and Gender
T 1/19	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Wright, " <i>Native Son</i> pp. 273-363
Th 1/21	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Wright, " <i>Native Son</i> pp. 363-430 <input type="checkbox"/> Read Johnson, "The Re(a)d and the Black: Richard Wright's Blueprint"
F 1/22	<input type="checkbox"/> DUE: Paper #1
Week 4	The Lover's War
T 1/26	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Baldwin, "Everybody's Protest Novel" <input type="checkbox"/> Read Baldwin, "The Creative Process" <input type="checkbox"/> Read Baldwin, <i>Another Country</i> pp. 1-126
Th 1/28	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Baldwin, <i>Another Country</i> pp. 127-179 <input type="checkbox"/> Read Martínez, "Dying to Know: Identity and Self-Knowledge in Baldwin's <i>Another Country</i> "
F 1/29	<input type="checkbox"/> DUE: Paper #1 Rewrite
Week 5	Identity Politics and Minority Studies
T 2/2	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Baldwin, <i>Another Country</i> pp. 183-267
Th 2/4	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Baldwin, <i>Another Country</i> pp. 268-315 <input type="checkbox"/> Read Cohen, "Liberalism, Libido, Liberation: Baldwin's <i>Another Country</i> "
Week 6	Race and Sexuality
T 2/9	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Baldwin, <i>Another Country</i> pp. 316-377
Th 2/11	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Baldwin, <i>Another Country</i> pp. 381-436 <input type="checkbox"/> Read Feldman, "Reconciling Baldwin's Racial and Sexual Politics"
Week 7	Literature and Feminist Re-visions
T 2/16	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Rich, "When We Dead Awaken" <input type="checkbox"/> Read selections from Rich, <i>The Fact of a Doorframe</i>

Th 2/18	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Gwiazda, “Nothing Else Left to Read” <input type="checkbox"/> Read Sheridan, “Adrienne Rich and the Women’s Liberation Movement” (Optional)
F 2/19	<input type="checkbox"/> DUE: Paper #2

Week 8	Dialogues and Intersections
T 2/23	<input type="checkbox"/> Read selections from Lorde, <i>The Collected Poems</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Read Lorde, “Poetry is Not a Luxury” <input type="checkbox"/> Read Lorde, “The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House”
Th 2/25	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Dhairyam, “Artifacts for Survival”

Week 9	Decolonial Love
T 3/1	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Díaz, <i>This Is How You Lose Her</i> pp. 1-118
Th 3/5	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Díaz, <i>This Is How You Lose Her</i> pp. 119-213
F 3/6	<input type="checkbox"/> DUE: Final Paper Proposal

Week 10	Conclusion
T 3/8	<input type="checkbox"/> Final Paper Workshop
Th 3/10	<input type="checkbox"/> Final Paper Workshop

Final Paper Due by 6:00PM Friday, 3/18