

EN199.01 Introduction to Caribbean Writers

Spring 2004 – 006 Carney Hall, Tuesday/Thursday 1:30 PM to 2:50 PM

Professor Frederick

CONTACT INFORMATION: 459 Carney Hall, 552-3717, frederir@bc.edu

OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday and Thursday, 4:00 to 5:00 PM and by appointment

REQUIRED TEXTS

Cliff, Michelle	<i>Abeng</i>
Danticat, Edwidge	<i>The Farming of Bones</i>
Ferré, Rosario	<i>The Youngest Doll</i>
Hopkinson, Nalo	<i>Brown Girl in the Ring</i>
Lovelace, Earl	<i>The Dragon Can't Dance</i>
Naipaul, V. S.	<i>A House for Mr. Biswas</i>

Required Supplemental Readings

Alexander, Jacqui “Not Just (Any) Body Can Be a Citizen: The Politics of Law, Sexuality and Postcoloniality in Trinidad and Tobago and the Bahamas”

Brennan, Timothy “The National Longing for Form”

Mohammed, Patricia “Taking Possession: Symbols of Empire and Nationhood”

Renan, Ernest “What is a Nation?”

Robinson-Walcott, K. “Claiming an Identity We Thought They Despised: Contemporary White West Indian Writers and Their Negotiation of Race”

Smith, Faith “‘You Know You’re West Indian if ...’: Codes of Authenticity in Colin Channer’s Waiting in Vain”

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course, we will explore the dialectical relationship between Caribbean identities represented in our fictional readings and “national identities” represented in our non-fictional ones. We will do so through an examination of regional histories and cultures; as well as depictions of gender, sexuality, and class as they appear in literature set in Jamaica, Haiti and the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Trinidad, as well as in Canada’s Caribbean diaspora culture. Although the required texts are textual, students may call on other genres to assist us in our interpretations, such as visual, aural, oral, and virtual. Finally, presenters may also draw on historical, political, and critical materials to help us interpret required texts. Through lectures, readings, writings, discussions, and class presentations, we will begin to understand the complex constructions of and interrelationships between Caribbean identities. In addition to attendance, a research essay, six short writing assignments, and one presentation are required.