ENGLISH 509.02 SOUNDING CANADIAN LITERATURE

E-LOCUTION / DEFORMATION ASSIGNMENT

Value: 35% of your final grade Due: April 11, 2019

This final assignment of the term asks you to read from and write about one of the following books we are studying in the remaining weeks: M. NourbeSe Philip’s *Zong!*; Rachel Zolf’s *Janey’s Arcadia*; Jordan Abel’s *Injun*; or Joshua Whitehead’s *Full Metal Indigiqueer*. All these books present poems / texts that challenge conventional approaches to reading. You will record yourself reading / performing selected texts from your chosen book, and post these recordings to Dropbox in D2L. You may be as inventive as you wish in these recordings, and may choose to integrate musical accompaniment or other sound effects, as well as other voicings into your recordings. You will then discuss your recordings as performances / deformances of the text, explaining the interpretive decisions you made in your performances / deformances, and how these relate to a larger interpretive argument about the text as a whole. Essays must be 13-15 pages (3250-3750 words), in MLA format.

Your essay should frame your discussion of these texts with some reference to Lisa Samuels and Jerome McGann’s essay “Deformance and Interpretation,” available in D2L and which we will discuss in class. You will also want to reference the various other theoretical texts we have read this term that discuss the oral performance of poetry. Finally, you will need to do your own research and bring to your discussion at least **two** other peer-reviewed, critical / theoretical texts, either about the text you are working on specifically, or about larger questions of orality, decolonial poetics, conceptual writing, or any other relevant critical argument. Note that there are a number of critical essays published on the older texts we are studying (*Zong!* And *Janey’s Arcadia*); fewer on the more recent texts (*Injun* and *Full Metal Indigiqueer*).

Since all of these texts deal in some ways with legacies of / ongoing racism and colonialism, I expect that your essays will address these issues in some way. Because you are going to be giving voice to these texts, you may wish to consider your own positionality in relation to them. What might it mean for a non-Indigenous / settler-descended reader, for example, to perform / deform these texts? How might issues of orality and voice be particularly salient in considering these texts?

While you may build on our collective discussions of these texts in class, your paper should go well beyond our observations, given the time and room available to develop a more sophisticated argument.