

CPLT 201W: “20TH CENTURY QUEERIBBEAN LITERATURE”

JACQUI BROWN | DEPT OF COMPARATIVE LITERATURE | FALL 2025



CPLT 201W: 20TH CENTURY QUEERIBBEAN LITERATURE

JACQUI BROWN | DEPARTMENT OF COMPARATIVE LITERATURE | MW, 4:00 - 5:15 PM

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COURSE SYLLABUS: CPLT 201W | SECTION 2

READING COMPARATIVELY: “20TH CENTURY QUEERIBBEAN LITERATURE”

MONDAYS & WEDNESDAYS | 4:00 – 5:15 PM | FEW BUILDING 129

20th Century Queeribbean Literature is a survey course in which we will read Caribbean literature about, as well as by, LGBTQIA+ Caribbean (aka “Queeribbean”) people. Assigned texts will cover Queeribbean fiction, non-fiction, and poetry in both English and dialect. Through reading and discussion, students will come to understand the Caribbean as central to critical understandings of the Americas as well as contemporary legal, economic, and social structures of power. Throughout the course we will examine how race, gender, and sexuality in the Americas found their beginnings in colonial Caribbean societies, and how our social, cultural, and geopolitical relationships to the Caribbean shape each of our individual, collective, and structural understandings of and engagements with power, sustainability, and freedom.

INSTRUCTOR: JACQUI BROWN, DEPARTMENT OF COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

Office Hours: Thursdays, 2:30 – 5:00 pm

jacqui.brown@emory.edu | Office Hours [link](#), Login: 879 0638 5556; Passcode: 3eNSgT

COURSE OUTCOMES

[1] Disciplinary Outcomes

Textual Analysis	Students will learn core literary components and devices and will become competent in close textual and paratextual reading.
Literature & Identity	Students will learn the core components of Caribbean and Queer literatures. Students will become familiar with reading and analyzing literature in dialect.

[2] Africana, Gender, & Sexuality Studies Outcomes

Africana Studies	Students will become fluent with postcolonialism and will learn the key racial groups and demographics of the Caribbean.
Gender & Sexuality Studies	Students will learn the basics of gender and sexuality studies and how Queeribbean study deepens understandings of gender and sexuality studies. Students will learn about key LGBTQIA+ groups in the Caribbean and how they complicate our understandings of race and sexuality.

[3] Transnational Studies

Geography	Students will learn Caribbean geography and become competent in sociocultural analysis of the Americas.
Globalization	Students will develop a critical understanding of globalization and deploy this in their analyses.

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The Land & Labor That Makes our Class Possible

We are all on occupied, unceded indigenous land. Turtle Island — commonly called “North America” — is not my land, nor is it most of yours. We are in the city now known as Atlanta, Georgia, which is often acknowledged as [Mvskoke](#) (Muscogee) land. If you would like to know what indigenous land your hometown or other places you have lived are on, you can visit [native-land.ca](#). I encourage each of you to identify and acknowledge whose sovereign land you have some sort of connection to and how you can act in solidarity.¹

We must recognize that Black people have lived and worked on the land we now occupy in various states of freedom and unfreedom. Black people quite literally built this city and gave it the rich and beautiful culture we enjoy today. I encourage each of you to look into the needs of native Atlantans and do what you can to help.

- Courtesy of Jordan Brown, 2018 ©

Our Texts (!), Assignments, & Grades

Our Texts!

*All assigned texts are available on physical and/or electronic course reserves. You can access electronic course reserves through our course canvas. Most of our **literary texts** are also available for electronic checkout through Open Library (Internet Archive's electronic library). Open Library links are also available on electronic course reserves; you will need to create an account either with Internet Archive or Open Library to access their collection. All of our **academic texts** are available electronically through eReserves, as are our **cinematic texts (films)**, which are available for streaming through eReserves.*

Fiction

- Brand, Dionne. *In Another Place, Not Here*. New York: Grove Press, 1996
- Cliff, Michelle. *No Telephone to Heaven*. New York: Dutton, 1987.
- Mootoo, Shani. *Cereus Blooms at Night*. New York: Grove Press, 1996.
- Powell, Patricia. *The Pagoda*. Orlando: Harcourt, 1998.
- Powell, Patricia. *A Small Gathering of Bones*. Oxford: Heinemann, 1994.

Film

- Frilot, Shari. *Black Nations/Queer Nations? Lesbian and Gay Sexualities in the African Diaspora*. New York, NY: Third World Newsreel, 1995. 52 mins.
- Mohabeer, Michelle. *Queer Coolie-tudes*. Toronto: Caribbean Tales Worldwide Distribution, 2019. 87 mins.

¹ “Native Land,” [Native Land Digital](#). <<https://native-land.ca/>> visited on August 24, 2023.

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Nonfiction

Jamaica Kincaid. *My Brother*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1997.

Poetry

Brand, Dionne. *Chronicles of the Hostile Sun in Chronicles: Early Works*. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2011.

Academic Texts

**Note: ¹You are assigned only 1 – 2 chapters from each monograph; ²All of these assigned academic texts are available on e-Reserves, which is accessible through Canvas.*

Articles

- Cohen, Cathy J. “Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens: the Radical Potential of Queer Politics?” *GLQ* 3 (1997), 437-465.
- Silvera, Makeda. “Man Royals and Sodomites: Some Thoughts on Invisibility of Afro-Caribbean Lesbians,” *Feminist Studies* 18.3, *The Lesbian Issue* (Autumn 1992), 521 – 532.

Monographs

- Allen, Jafari. *There’s a disco ball between us: a theory of Black gay life*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2022.
Assigned chapters: “An Invitation,” ix – xx & Introduction. “Pastness is a Position,” 1 – 23.
- Lightfoot, Natasha. *Troubling Freedom: Antigua and the Aftermath of British Emancipation*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2015.
Assigned Chapter: Ch. 1 “A Landscape That Continually Recurred in Passing: The Many Worlds of a Small Place,” 21 – 56.
- Lowe, Lisa. *The Intimacies of Four Continents*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2015.
Assigned Chapter: Ch. 1 “The Intimacies of Four Continents,” 1 – 41.
- Morgan, Jennifer L. *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in New World Slavery*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004.
Assigned Chapter: Notes on Sources, Maps, and Introduction, xi – 11.
- Sheller, Mimi. *Consuming the Caribbean: from Arawaks to Zombies*. London and New York: Routledge, 2003.
Assigned Chapters: Introduction & Ch. 1 “The binding mobilities of consumption,” 1 – 35.
- Tinsley, Omise’eke Natasha. *Thieving Sugar: Eroticism Between Women in Caribbean Literature*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010.
Assigned Chapter: Introduction “The Spring of Her Look,” 1 – 28.

Assignments

Participation: ~27 classes for 35% of your grade.

You will be graded on your participation in each class. You will be assessed on the number of times you contribute, the substance of your contributions, and your engagement with your classmates and I. Classes may need to be cancelled on one or a few occasions due to inclement weather, unforeseen campus-wide/-related events, or due to my discretion. This will mean that the total number of participation grades will fluctuate.

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Homework – Weekly Discussions: 15 posts for 25% of your grade.

Each week you will submit a discussion post on canvas about our assigned literary and academic texts for that week. All discussion posts are due by Sunday at 5pm.

Quizzes: 2 quizzes for 15% of your grade.

You will take two short in class quizzes: the first on Caribbean geography and demographics, and the second on literary devices.

Final Portfolio: 1 portfolio for 25% of your grade.

You will submit a portfolio of a map, a few short essays, and the blueprint for a seminar paper. This will be due during the final exam period at the end of our university-assigned exam day.

Grades

GRADE SCALE	
PARTICIPATION	35%
HOMEWORK	25%
FINAL PORTFOLIO	25%
QUIZZES	15%
TOTAL	100%

PARTICIPATION SCALE	
HIGH PASS	A
PASS	B+
LOW PASS	C+
NO PASS	D
NOTETAKER	+ one grade level

Emory College Policies

Explanation of Letter Grades & Grading Scale

Percentage	Letter		Quality Points
93.00-100	A	A: An excellent response to the assignment. Demonstrates a sophisticated use of rhetorical knowledge, writing, and design techniques.	4.0
90.00-92.99	A-		3.7
86.00-89.99	B+	B: A good response to the assignment. Demonstrates an effective use of rhetorical knowledge, writing, and design techniques. May have minor problems that distract the reader.	3.3
83.00-85.99	B		3.0
80.00-82.99	B-		2.7
76.00-79.99	C+	C: An average response to the assignment. Demonstrates acceptable use of rhetorical knowledge, writing, and design technique. May have problems that distract the reader.	2.3
73.00-75.99	C		2.0
70.00-72.99	C-		1.7
66.00-69.99	D+	D: A poor response to the assignment. Demonstrates a lack of rhetorical knowledge and writing and design technique. May have significant problems that distract the reader.	1.3
60.00-65.99	D		1.0
00.00-59.99	F	F: A failure to respond to the assignment appropriately.	0.0

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Academic Integrity. The [Honor Code](#) is in effect throughout the semester. By taking this course, you affirm that it is a violation of the code to cheat on exams, to plagiarize, to deviate from the teacher's instructions about collaboration on work that is submitted for grades, to give false information to a faculty member, and to undertake any other form of academic misconduct. You agree that the instructor is entitled to move you to another seat during examinations, without explanation. Here is the [link](#) to the Honor Council resource for faculty.

Course Policies

Attendance: Attendance is essential. Aside from documented absences for school-related activities or [religious holidays](#), you are allowed to three (3) absences without incident. You will need to alert me by 15 minutes prior to any class you will miss after your three (3) allowable absences. You will also need to meet with me to develop a plan to make up for any further absences.

Contact/Communication: Office hours and speaking during, before, and after class is the best way to contact me. The next best method is my Discord server; I will create a channel for our course. You may also email me, but please note that it generally takes me about 48 hours (although on weekends and holidays, it may take a little longer) to respond. Likewise, there may be instances when I will need to contact you by email. Please respond to my emails as soon as possible.

Late work: Turn in late work when you can. Note that the time of your submission will impact my ability to substantively engage with your work and give good feedback.

[Inclement Weather Policy](#)

- **University closures: Short-term (one or two days).** Should the university close for one or two days, you should continue to do your reading, writing, and analysis according to the weekly schedule posted in Canvas. Unless I otherwise notify you, due dates for reading and writing assignments will remain unchanged in the case of short-term closures. Plans for asynchronous/synchronous learning will be developed as necessary.
 - **University closures: Long-term (three or more days).** Should the university close for three or more days, we will hold make-up classes. Make-up dates will be determined and communicated as necessary.
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Resources

Accessibility and Accommodations

I strive to create an inclusive learning environment for all. I am invested in your success in this class and at Emory, so please let me know if anything is standing in the way of your doing your best work. This can include your own learning strengths, any classroom dynamics that you find uncomfortable, ELL issues,

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disability or chronic illness, and/or personal issues that impact your work. I will hold such conversations in strict confidence.

Students who anticipate barriers related to the requirements of this course due to disabilities are encouraged to contact DAS (the Department of Accessibility Services) to learn more about requesting accommodations. Students with accommodations should arrange to meet with me during the first two weeks of the semester to discuss the needs of the course as related to these accommodations. Additional information is available at equityandinclusion.emory.edu/access.

Writing Center Tutoring

The Emory Writing Center (EWC) is open year-round to support writers (students, staff, and faculty) in Emory College, the Laney Graduate School, the School of Nursing, and the Medical Imaging Program. **The Writing Center is located in Callaway N111 and a maximum of two appointments are allowed each week.**

We offer one-on-one remote and in-person tutoring for writers working on a range of composition projects (essays, applications, reports, theses, etc.), at any stage of the writing process (from brainstorming to final revisions). Writing Center tutors work on idea development, structure, use of sources, style, grammar, and more. We are not a proofreading or editing service, but rather offer strategies and resources writers can use as they compose, revise, and edit their own work. Tutors also support the literacy needs of English Language Learners (ELL); several tutors are trained ELL Specialists.

You can learn more about the Emory Writing Center and make an appointment on our website: <http://www.writingcenter.emory.edu>. Our opening day each semester is set one week after the add/drop/swap deadline, to allow for our tutors to finalize their schedules. Please review our policies before your first appointment, including our new policy on inclusivity and respect: <http://writingcenter.emory.edu/appointments/policies.html>.

Emory Counseling Services

Free and confidential counseling services and support are available from the Emory. Counseling Center (404) 727-7450. This can be an invaluable resource when stress makes your work more challenging than it ought to be.

Class Schedule

Week #1

Class #1: Wednesday, August 27th

Course Welcome and Introduction

Homework

- Cohen, “Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens”
 - Discussion post by Sunday, September 2nd, 5pm
-

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Week #2

No Class: Monday, September 1st Labor Day Holiday

Class #2: Wednesday, September 3rd

Homework

- Kincaid, *My Brother*, 1 – 61
 - Discussion post by Sunday, September 7th, 5pm
-

Week #3

Class #3: Monday, September 8th

Watch: *Frilot, Black Nations / Queer Nations*

Homework

- Kincaid, *My Brother*, 61 – 124
- Lightfoot, Ch. 1 “A Landscape That Continually Recurred in Passing: The Many Worlds of a Small Place,” *Troubling Freedom*

Class #4: Wednesday, September 10th

Homework

- Kincaid, *My Brother*, 124 - 163
 - Lightfoot, Ch. 1 “A Landscape That Continually Recurred in Passing: The Many Worlds of a Small Place,” *Troubling Freedom*
 - Discussion post by Sunday, September 14th, 5pm
-

Week #4

Class #5: Monday, September 15th

Homework

- Kincaid, *My Brother*, 163 – 201
- Lightfoot, Ch. 1 “A Landscape That Continually Recurred in Passing: The Many Worlds of a Small Place,” *Troubling Freedom*

Class #6: Wednesday, September 17th

Homework

- Powell, *A Small Gathering of Bones*, 1 – 51
 - Lightfoot, Ch. 1 “A Landscape That Continually Recurred in Passing: The Many Worlds of a Small Place,” *Troubling Freedom*
 - Discussion post by Sunday, September 21st, 5pm
-

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Week #5

Class #7: Monday, September 22nd

Homework

- Powell, A Small Gathering of Bones, 52 – 99
- Sheller, Introduction & Ch. 1, Consuming the Caribbean: from Arawaks to Zombies

Class #8: Wednesday, September 24th

Homework

- Powell, A Small Gathering of Bones, 100 – 137
 - Sheller, Introduction & Ch. 1, Consuming the Caribbean: from Arawaks to Zombies
 - Discussion post by Sunday, September 28th, 5pm
-

Week #6

Class #9: Monday, September 29th

Homework

- Powell, Chs. 1 & 2, *The Pagoda*
- Sheller, Introduction & Ch. 1, Consuming the Caribbean: from Arawaks to Zombies

Class #10: Wednesday, October 1st

Homework

- Powell, Title page – Ch. 3, *The Pagoda*
 - Sheller, Introduction & Ch. 1, Consuming the Caribbean: from Arawaks to Zombies
 - Quiz #1 Caribbean Geography
 - Discussion post by Sunday, October 5th, 5pm
-

Week #7

Class #11: Monday, October 6th

Homework

- Powell, Ch. 4 & 5, *The Pagoda*
- Lowe, Ch. 1: “The Intimacies of Four Continents,” *The Intimacies of Four Continents*

Class #12: Wednesday, October 8th

Homework

- Powell, Ch. 6 & 7, *The Pagoda*
 - Lowe, Ch. 1: “The Intimacies of Four Continents,” *The Intimacies of Four Continents*
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- Discussion post by Sunday, October 14th 5pm
-

Week #8

No Class: Monday, October 13th – Tuesday, October 14th – Fall Break

Homework

- Powell, Ch. 8 – 11, *The Pagoda*
- Lowe, Ch. 1: “The Intimacies of Four Continents,” *The Intimacies of Four Continents*

Class #13: Wednesday, October 15th

Homework

- Brand, In Another Place, Not Here, 1 – 71
 - Lowe, Ch. 1: “The Intimacies of Four Continents,” *The Intimacies of Four Continents*
 - Discussion post by Sunday, October 19th 5pm
-

Week #9

Class #14: Monday, October 20th

Homework

- Brand, In Another Place, Not Here, 72 – 151
- Silvera, “Man Royals & Sodomites”

Class #15: Wednesday, October 22nd

Homework

- Brand, In Another Place, Not Here, 152 – 201
 - Silvera, “Man Royals & Sodomites”
 - Discussion post by Sunday, October 26th 5pm
-

Week #10

Class #16: Monday, October 27th

Homework

- Brand, In Another Place, Not Here, 201 – 247
 - Silvera, “Man Royals & Sodomites”
-

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Class #17: Wednesday, October 29th

Homework

- Brand, “Languages,” and “Sieges,” *Chronicles of the Hostile Sun*
 - Tinsley, Introduction: “The Spring of Her Look,” *Thieving Sugar: Eroticism Between Women in Caribbean Literature*
 - Discussion post by Sunday, November 2nd, 5pm
-

Week #11

Class #18: Monday, November 3rd

Homework

- Brand, “Military Occupations,” *Chronicles of the Hostile Sun*
 - Tinsley, Introduction: “The Spring of Her Look,” *Thieving Sugar: Eroticism Between Women in Caribbean Literature*
 - QUIZ #2 LITERARY DEVICES
-

Class #19: Wednesday, November 5th

Homework

- Cliff, Ch. 1 “Ruin,” – Ch. 2 “No Telephone to Heaven,” *No Telephone to Heaven*
 - Tinsley, Introduction: “The Spring of Her Look,” *Thieving Sugar: Eroticism Between Women in Caribbean Literature*
 - Discussion post by Sunday, November 9th, 5pm
-

Week #12

Class #20: Monday, November 10th

Homework

- Cliff, Ch. 3 “The Dissolution of Mrs. White,” – Ch. 4 “White Chocolate,” *No Telephone to Heaven*
 - Tinsley, Introduction: “The Spring of Her Look,” *Thieving Sugar: Eroticism Between Women in Caribbean Literature*
-

Class #21: Wednesday, November 12th

Homework

- Cliff, Ch. 5 “Et in Arcadia Ego,” Ch. 6 “Organ Harvester,” and Ch. 7 “Magnanimous Warrior,” *No Telephone to Heaven*
 - Morgan, Introduction – *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in New World Slavery*
-

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- Discussion post by Sunday, November 16th, 5pm
-

Week #13

Class #22: Monday, November 17th

Homework

- Cliff, Ch. 8 “Homebound,” Ch. 9 “De Watchman,” Ch. 10 “The Great Beast,” and Ch. 11 “Film Noir,” *No Telephone to Heaven*
- Morgan, Introduction – *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in New World Slavery*

Class #23: Wednesday, November 19th

Homework

- Mootoo, *Cereus Blooms at Night*, 1 – 67
 - Morgan, Introduction – *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in New World Slavery*
 - Discussion post by Sunday, November 23rd, 5pm
-

Week #14

Class #24: Monday, November 24th

Watch Mohabeer, *Queer Coolietudes*

Homework

- Mootoo, *Cereus Blooms at Night*, 67 – 138
- Morgan, Introduction – *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in New World Slavery*

No Class: Wednesday, November 26th – Friday, November 28th – Fall Holiday Break

Homework

- Mootoo, *Cereus Blooms at Night*, 139 – 188
-

Week #15

Class #25: Monday, December 1st

Homework

- Mootoo, *Cereus Blooms at Night*, 189 – 249
- Discussion post by Sunday, December 2nd, 5pm

Class #26: Wednesday, December 3rd

- Allen, Invitation & Introduction – *There's a disco ball between us*
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- Discussion post by Sunday, December 7th, 5pm
-

Week #16

Class #27: Monday, December 8th – FINAL DAY OF CLASS

Final Submissions

You will submit a final portfolio is all about taking stock of various aspects of your critical thinking orientation and praxis – where it is was before this class and how it has been impacted by this class. Your portfolio will consist of five (5) components: 1 map, 2 short essays, a brief blueprint for a seminar paper, and a pamphlet.

FINAL PORTFOLIO due WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17TH AT 5:30PM.

Specific instructions are posted on Canvas.