ENGL4361: Race and Ethnicity in Literature  
Racialization, Intimacy, Possibility

Dr. Sarah H. Salter  
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Office: Faculty Center 256  
Office Hours: Mon. 12 – 1 pm  
(in person) Tues. 11.15am – 2pm  
Wed. 5 – 6pm & by appointment

Time/Place: Mon/Wed. 3.30-4.45pm  
Bay Hall 127

Course Description. In this course, we will study histories of race and ethnicity in the US by exploring how US racialized categories emerged in tandem with heteronormative structures for intimate attachment. As Anglo-American citizens hardened social expectations through the gendered distinctions of "separate spheres," those outside the circle of capitalist privilege and white normativity sought alternative models and systems of attachment, community, and collectivity.

Learning Objectives/Outcomes. By the end of the course, students should be:
  o Aware of key terms, debates, and frameworks for the study of race & ethnicity in the US
  o Informed about various communities, cultures, and perspectives in the US
  o Able to apply interpretive methods like contextualization and close reading to literary texts
  o Confident users of SAE and academic writing conventions

Primary Texts.
Texts with an asterisk next to them are available at the bookstore. You should own copies of all the texts offered through the bookstore, whether you purchase them at the bookstore or somewhere else.

Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Borderlands/ La Frontera.*
*Cordova, Jeanne. *When We Were Outlaws.*
*Delany, Martin. *Blake.*
*Eaton, Edith (as Sui Sin Far). *Mrs. Spring Fragrance.*
*Machado, Carmen Maria. *Her Body and Other Parties.*
Tan, Shaun. *The Arrival.*

**Assignments & Point Breakdown** (1000 total points)
*Complete Assignment Sheets available via Blackboard.*

- **Keyword Presentation** 15%
- **Annotated Bibliography** 15%
- **Midterm Reading Reflection Essay** 20%
- **Final Essay** 20%
- **Discussion Questions (8 @ 3.75%)** 30%

**Keyword Presentation**
Each student will prepare an 5-minute presentation offering an overview/introduction to one of the course’s major keywords (the conceptual and theoretical phrases we work with during the semester). This presentation will use original research & synthesis to create a usable critical definition.

**Annotated Bibliography**
Your Annotated Bibliography will summarize at least five (5) secondary sources related to your keyword and any of the texts in our course. It will serve as a foundation for your Final Interpretive Essay.

**Midterm Reading Reflection**
At midterm, we will have a reflective reading essay in lieu of a Midterm Examination. In this essay, you will put together your reading thus far in the semester through any number of interpretive and reflective frameworks.

**Discussion Questions**
Eight times during the semester, each student will post a discussion questions to our Bb discussion space. These questions will help to guide our class discussions, and will serve to demonstrate your engagement with the assigned readings.

**Final Interpretive Essay**
The Final Interpretive Essay in this course will use one of the course keywords to develop an original argument that includes at least two texts from our course or its authors.

**Specific Course Policies.**
**Class Participation.** Success in literary and cultural criticism requires good communication and productive interaction, so attending class and contributing
usefully to discussion are important parts of the final grade in this class. Students who are routinely without hard copies (either bound books or, when appropriate, printouts) will lose participation points. While you need not contribute to class discussion on every single day we meet, every student should arrive to class prepared by having done the reading and considered a question or two about the text. Asking informed and productive question is as important as answering them! If you cannot afford the texts in this course, please see me and we can address difficulties about textbook access together.

If you anticipate participation being for you a major source of anxiety please speak with me about some strategies we can employ together.

Studying American literature in a serious way means getting to enjoy the pleasures of beautiful writing and the insights of sophisticated minds. It also means confronting violent histories, especially histories of race, sex, and labor. Our readings include accounts of physical abuses, rapes, and other harms, as well as instances of racist epithets. Indeed, one of the more difficult elements of working with literatures of race and ethnicity in the US is how often they confront us with the prejudices and oppressions that permeate our national culture. We will talk openly about how hard it can be to read this work, but all assigned readings are required. Also important is your willingness to engage thoughtfully, generously, and sympathetically with your peers in this learning community. Please see Professor Salter to discuss any questions or concerns you may have about your own participation in this course.

**Class Attendance.** Students are allowed a maximum of three (3) absences. All absences count equally, irrespective of the cause, and students who exceed 3 absences will be penalized .05 points on their final grade for every absence over the limit.

Additionally:
- Students who participate in university-sanctioned activities should meet with me during the first week of classes.
- If you are unable to attend class, you do not need to email me to explain the circumstances. You should contact another student in class and copy his/her notes.

For more detail, consult TAMU-CC’s “General Academic Policies and Regulations.” [http://catalog.tamucc.edu/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=177](http://catalog.tamucc.edu/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=177)

**Communication.** As members of a learning community, everyone is expected to be up-to-date and responsible for any changes or additions to the course schedule. I will be using your TAMU-CC email, through Blackboard, to send messages about readings, assignments, and assorted matters to the class throughout the semester. It is imperative to check email regularly and stay aware of what is happening in and outside of the classroom. I will also take my communication responsibility to you seriously: if I have not responded to an email within 24 hours, do not hesitate to follow up. Be advised that emails sent after 10pm will not be read until the following day.

**Work Policies.** All late work will lose 1/3 of a letter grade each day for as long as the assignment continues to be overdue. Students must complete all major assignments (as listed in the syllabus) in order to pass the course.

**General Educational Policies.**

**Classroom / Professional Behavior.** Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the state. Our goal is to provide you with a high quality educational experience that is free from repression. You are responsible for following the rules of the University, city, state and federal government. We expect that you will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated. In ENGL4361, we will be reading texts, and having conversations about them in class, that will ask us each to examine and reexamine the assumptions, preconceptions, and often-imperceptible operations of national ideology. That means we will ask, and answer together, difficult questions about race,
ethnicity, collectivity, and oppression with careful attention to the texts at hand, to the perspectives of our peers, and to the conventions of civic, well-intentioned discourse.

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

**Disabilities Accommodations.** The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116. If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

**Basic Needs Statement.** Insufficient basic needs—food, a safe living space—can affect your performance in classes and make your university experience more challenging. If you have difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food, or you lack a safe and stable place to live, you might consider several resources on campus.

- Contact the Division of Student Engagement and Success for support. Specifically, the office of Student Assistance provides consultations, resource management, and institutional support for “extenuating circumstances.” Their website is here: [http://studentaffairs.tamucc.edu/StudentAssistance.html](http://studentaffairs.tamucc.edu/StudentAssistance.html). The Student Assistance Coordinator is Kristeen Gonzalez. UC318, M-F 8AM-5PM. 361-825-2612
- If you do not have access to or cannot afford sufficient food, be aware that “Izzy’s Food Pantry” provides on-campus access to food. Find more information here: [http://seas.tamucc.edu/FoodPantry/](http://seas.tamucc.edu/FoodPantry/)
- If you feel comfortable doing so, please talk with me and/or your other professors. We may be able to assist.

**Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct.** English graduate students are expected to "conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty" (Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Graduate Catalog). TAMU-CC identifies “Academic Misconduct” as “engaging in an act that violates the standards of the academic integrity policy as described in the Student Code of Conduct and Procedure for Academic Misconduct Cases.” These include cheating, plagiarism, multiple submissions, complicity, fabrication, falsification, and misrepresentation (Student Code of Conduct, Article III, 1. Academic Misconduct). In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment will result in failure of the course and possible recommendation for dismissal from the academic program (TAMUCC Graduate Catalog, Academic Honesty). For each Academic Misconduct case, the faculty member must file a record, including a description of the disciplinary action taken, along with any materials involved, with his or her college dean, who will forward a copy to the Office of Student Affairs. Further information regarding the judicial process is available on the website of the Office for Student Affairs.
Specifically, academic misconduct includes plagiarism, the act of using someone else’s words and ideas without attribution. The TAMU-CC Student Code of Conduct defines Plagiarism as “Intentionally, knowingly, or carelessly presenting the work of another as one’s own without proper acknowledgement of the source, with the exception of information that is generally accepted as common knowledge.”

Examples:

- Using another’s work from print, web or other sources without acknowledging the source.
- Quoting from a source without citation.
- Using facts, figures, graphs, charts or information without acknowledgement of the source.
- Using a past assignment the student has completed as a portion of a new assignments, without providing citation. Please note that without instructor permission, this is also considered a multiple submission violation.

We will discuss MLA citation style and the appropriate use of academic sources and conventions throughout the semester. Please do not hesitate to ask me any questions about academic misconduct and academic integrity at any time.

If you are confused about citation of quotes or ideas, please visit the Writing Center or see me to get help. Information on MLA documentation rules is available at Purdue University’s OWL: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/, and from our local Writing Center at CASA. See the TAMU-CC Graduate Catalogue for more detail.

Academic Advising. It is imperative that all students visit regularly with an academic adviser. Each college within the university has an academic advising center, staffed by full-time, professional advisers to assist students with course selection, degree plans, and other academic matters. To find out how to contact the right adviser, go to: http://www.tamucc.edu/academics/advising.php

Students who have yet to declare a major are advised by the Academic Advising Transition Center. For more information, go to: http://www.tamucc.edu/~aac

The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The College’s Academic Advising Center is located in Driftwood 203E, and can be reached at 825-3466.

Dropping a Class. Although I hope we will learn together for the course of this semester, sometimes a student must drop a course. Please see me if you are considering doing so. You must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. April 05 is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

Grade Appeals. Students who feel that they have not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in this class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts
website, clatamucc.edu/students/studentinfo.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean.

**Statement of Academic Continuity.** In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

**Campus Carry.** Beginning August 1, 2016, it is legal in the State of Texas for “a handgun license holder to carry a concealed handgun on the campus of an institution of higher education.” As a state institution of higher learning, Texas A&M–Corpus Christi must recognize and abide by the Campus Carry law, which limits concealed carry to those over the age of 21 who hold the appropriate permit. By law, employees of TAMUCC cannot restrict permit holders, under the appropriate circumstances, from carrying a firearm on campus (with the exception of university restricted zones, which are clearly marked). I hope that you will consider participating in our learning community’s safe-space mentality in the classroom and my office. If you have concerns about this law and its effect on your learning experience, you can speak to your professor, a representative of the office of Student Engagement and Success, an employee of Campus Security, or a member of the ICARE community. For more information about this policy, please consult the TAMUCC website at http://campuscarry.tamucc.edu/ and http://www.tamus.edu/campus-carry-rules/

**Reading Schedule**

NB: Professor reserves the right to make changes as needed to the syllabus

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Discussion Question</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jan. 14/16</td>
<td>Introductory. From <em>East of Harlem?</em></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Jan. 23</td>
<td>Douglass. <em>My Bondage and My Freedom</em> (1855)</td>
<td>DQ1</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Jan. 28/30</td>
<td>Douglass. <em>My Bondage and My Freedom</em></td>
<td></td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Feb. 4/6</td>
<td>Anonymous, from <em>Xicoténcatl</em> (1826)</td>
<td>DQ2</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Feb. 18/20</td>
<td>Eaton, from <em>Mrs. Spring Fragrance</em> (1912)</td>
<td>DQ4</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Mar. 4/6</td>
<td>Midterm Reading Reflection</td>
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~SPRING BREAK. March 11~
Week 10. March 25/27
Lorde, Zami.

Week 11. April 1/3
Anzaldúa, from Borderlands/La Frontera (1987) DQ6

Week 12. April 8/9

Week 13. April 15/17
Cordova, from When We Were Outlaws (2011).

Week 14. April 22/24
Machado, from Her Body and Other Parties (2017) DQ8

Week 15. April 29/May 1
Conclusion

Final Interpretive Essay due Finals Week