

CIRCULATIONS OF THE NEO-SLAVE NARRATIVE*

ENG 9117B January 7-April 8, 2015

Time: Wednesday 3.30 PM-6.30 PM

Location: UC 377

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TENTATIVE SYLLABUS:

This syllabus may be revised before the first class January 7, 2014.

Long considered a quintessentially African American genre, the neo-slave narrative, the historical novel of New World chattel slavery, now circulates as a genre for representing cultural debris of circum-Atlantic slave plantation economies. In this seminar, we will examine how writers use the form to address the interconnections of everyday living with histories of displacement and dispossession. Discussions and theoretical readings will focus on the importance of kinship, family, and marriage within these representations of plantation slavery. As recent studies of slavery, the plantation, and the post-emancipation period reveal, these categories were essential in the constructions of freedom, civility, gendered subjectivities, and the legibility of slave and post-emancipation subjectivities. Overall, students will emerge from this seminar with a grasp of debates about the neo-slave narrative, its diverse manifestations in contemporary novels of plantation slavery, and the importance of kinship, family, and marriage in representations of plantation economies.

JANUARY

Week 1 January 7 Introduction Screening: *12 Years A Slave*.

2. January 14 Solomon Northup, *12 Years A Slave*.

3. January 21 Readings:
Ashraf H. A. Rushdy, *Neo-Slave Narratives*. Chapters 1 & 2.
Nicole N. Aljoe, *Creole Testimonies*. "Introduction."
Vincent Brown, *The Reaper's Garden*. Chapters 1 & 2.
Lisa Lowe, "The Intimacies of Four Continents."
Ann Laura Stoler, "Intimidations of Empire."

5. January 28 Toni Morrison, *Beloved*.

FEBRUARY

6. February 4 Valerie Martin, *Property*.

7. February 11 Bernandine Evaristo, *Blonde Roots*. Suggested Viewing: *Roots*. Episode 1. Available at Film Resource Library and Screening Room.

8. February 18 READING WEEK

9. February 25 Edward P. Jones, *The Known World*.

MARCH

10. March 4 Edward P. Jones, *The Known World*.
11. March 11 Caryl Phillips, *Cambridge*.
12. March 18 Andrea Levy, *The Long Song*.
13. March 25 Marlon James, *The Book of Night Women*.

APRIL

14. April 1 Marlon James, *The Book of Night Women*.
15. April 8 Symposium: "Circulation and the Neo-Slave Narrative."

- Students who enroll in this course will be expected to organize and participate in a one-day colloquium that will take place in the last week of class. To accommodate this event, the last class may be shifted to the Thursday or a day that is convenient for all participants. During this all students will present a 15-minute conference paper. An invited speaker will give a plenary talk after all student panels.
- The film resource library is located in AHB 1G19 and is open from 9:00-4:30 (Monday-Friday). Two films (12 Years a Slave and episode 1 of *Roots*) have been placed on hold for the course. Please Chris Bell at cbell57@uwo.ca for information about the films.

Evaluation:

Seminar Presentation 20%
Symposium Presentation 10%
Participation 10%
Research Paper 50%

Required Readings (as scheduled):

Solomon Northup, *12 Years A Slave*.
Toni Morrison, *Beloved*.
Valerie Martin, *Property*.
Bernardine Evaristo, *Blonde Roots*.
Edward P. Jones, *The Known World*.
Caryl Phillips, *Cambridge*.
Andrea Levy, *The Long Song*.
Marlon James, *The Book of Night Women*.

Statement on Academic Offences:

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:
http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf.