

EN 6714 3.0: Considering Black Canada

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In *Odysseys Home*, George Elliott Clarke proffers a massive bibliography of black Canadian writing extending back to the eighteenth century, a testament to the long tenure of people of African descent in Canada, and a complex expressive tradition. Critical readings and theorizing of black Canadian writers regularly frame them as 'postcolonial' or 'Caribbean,' more recently as 'diasporic,' yet each frame has limitations, excluding some writers, neglecting geographic/social location, or segregating the writers within 'the' national imaginary. This course takes a prismatic approach, both attending to a selection of creative works and interrogating what a variety of approaches disclose, while considering Canada as location, space and context for blackness. We will be concerned with a variety of literary conversations, both within and across a variety of boundaries and borders.

Assignments:

1 seminar presentations (20%); 2 brief response papers (20%); one major paper, 3000 words/15 pages (40%); informed participation (20%).

Texts to be selected from among:

Dionne Brand, *Thirsty; The Blue Clerk*

Wayde Compton, *Performance Bond*

Austin Clarke, short stories

George Elliott Clarke, *Execution Poem*

*The Black Prairie Archives* (selections)

Sylvia D. Hamilton, *And I Alone Escaped to Tell You.*

M. NorbeSe Philip, *Zong*

Kaie Kellough *Dominoes at the Crossroads*

Marie Agnant, *The Book of Emma*

Claire Harris, *She*

Theoretical work

Selections from:

Rinaldo Walcott; Dionne Brand; Christina Sharpe; Kevin Quashie; Katherine McKittrick Nourbese Philip; *CLR James Journal Black Canada Issue*