

WST 369: Queer Identities in Contemporary Cultures
M/W/F 12:10-1:00pm, Avery Hall 104
Spring 2018

Professor L. Heidenreich Zuñiga
Office Hours: Thursdays 4-5 pm
Office: Wilson Hall 10F

Email: lheidenr@wsu.edu (for apt. only)

Each one of us is equipped with the resources to write good poetry – the histories of our lives and the ability to see, think, feel, and hear. When we combine these with a willingness to write, we discover that writing poetry is as natural as walking and talking.

Shelly Tucker, *Writing Poetry*

Find the muse within you. The voice that lies buried under you, dig it up. Do not fake it, try to sell it for a handclap or your name in print.

Gloria Anzaldúa, *Speaking in Tongues*

An Introduction to Queer Identities in Contemporary Cultures

Course Description: Queer Identities is an introduction to Queer Chican@ and Queer Black resistance literatures (focusing on poetry and plays), the historical circumstances which gave rise to such literature, and the content and form of the literature itself. Students will study socio-political systems in the U.S. and how L/G/B/T identities are constructed within those systems. While the class will address the historical background of dominant socio-political and economic structures, we will emphasize how L/G/B/T Chican@s, African Americans and Afro-Caribbeans have used literature to challenge structural inequalities within their communities and the dominant U.S. society. By the close of the semester, students will be able to discuss the historical watersheds and liberation movements that gave rise to Queer Black and Queer Chican@ resistance literatures, founding and formative figures from each genre, and equally important, produce examples of resistance writing from their own subject positions. In addition to weekly assignments and a short-research paper, students will produce a complete volume of their own creative work, focusing on a single issue addressed in class. This course is interdisciplinary; it is designed to challenge you and push you to develop new and creative ways to transform the world around you.

Required Texts (Available at the Bookie, Crimson and Gray, and online):

1. Gaspar de Alba, Alicia. *Three Times a Woman: Chicana Poetry*, 1989.
2. Grise, Virginia. *Your Healing is Killing Me*. Plays Inverse Press, 2017.
3. Langston Hughes. *Poems* (Everyman's Library)
4. Lara, Ana-Maurine. *Kohnjehr Woman*. RedBone Press. ISBN-10: 0-9899405-2-7
5. Moraga, Cherríe. *Heroes and Saints and Other Plays*.

Reader, available at Cougar Copies: Bring to Class Daily
Poetry Packets distributed in class
WSU Databases/Blackboard

Class Grading and Requirements:

Class Attendance and participation (+/- 1%): Class attendance and participation is mandatory and comprises a portion of your grade for this class. You are allowed up to three absences from the class, after that your grade will be lowered by 5 points for each class missed. In addition, you lose points for any assignments missed during absences; if you have an anticipated absence (athletic event, job interview, etc.) be sure to turn in all assignments before you leave. Approved and *documented* university excuses are acceptable.

If you ask a question which demonstrates to the professor, that you have not read before class, you will be directed to “do the reading.” If you ask a question or make a comment that is racist, sexist, homophobic, or ableist, the professor will put the question or comment on the white board so that we, as a class, can analyze it and learn from it. Persistent racist or sexist, homophobic language will result in dismissal from the course. Your class participation grade will be determined by your attendance and your *informed participation* in this class. Do you directly engage the material assigned in the class? Do you encourage your classmates to do so? Do you listen critically? Remember, opinion is very different than informed participation. Informed participation demonstrates a grappling with and understanding of assigned texts. Opinion does *not* aid class participation grades.

Tardy Penalties: If you are tardy you will lose 5 points from your grade for each tardy and/or for each time you leave the classroom during class.

Short Assignments (10-20 points each/17%): Throughout the semester students will be assigned mini-research projects, poetry assignments and collective projects each worth 10-20 points each. Because these assignments are critical to understanding and fully participating in the day’s curricular activities, no late short assignments will be accepted.

For ‘Creative Question’ assignments – be sure to *always* respond to questions with typed, double-spaced, complete paragraphs (1-2 per question). All CQ assignments are due in hard-copy at beginning of class on MONDAYS unless otherwise specified. CQ assignments are credit/no-credit/half credit – so do your best.

Assignment (50 points/8%): “Everything I know about [your poet here].” Two-three-page biography of one of the poets/literary artists whose work we have addressed in class this semester (or that we will address in class).

Research Project (100 points/17%): This paper 4-5 page paper must research a historical event directly relevant to queer survival/flourishing in the U.S. Topics must be approved by the professor; a full description of the assignment will be distributed during week three.

Exam One: (100 points/17%): In-class written exam covering all material through week six. The exam will consist of short answer, poetry IDs, Fill in the Blank, and an essay question.

Exam Two: (100 points/17%): We will have an in-class, cumulative, written exam covering all material discussed in class and/or covered in required readings. The exam will consist of short answer, poetry IDs, Fill in the Blank, and an essay question.

Final Project: Poetry/Creative Writing Collection (100 points/17%): Building on the research projects completed for the mid-term, students will produce chapbooks of no less than 10 pages. Full descriptions of the final research project will be distributed to students during week six. These are, in part, collective projects – students should not begin working on projects until they have formed their collectives.

Poetry Reading: (50 points/8%): With their collectives, students will present the work they have produced to their classmates in a formal presentation.

Name that poet....

World wide dusk
of dear dark faces
driven before an alien wind
scattered like seed
from far off places
growing in soil
that's strange and thin.

Grading Scale		Assignment	Points	Percentage
A	94-100%	Short Assignments	100	17%
A	90-93%	Everything I Know	50	8%
B+	87-89%	Research Project	100	17%
B	84-86%	Exam One	100	17%
B-	80-83%	Exam Two	100	17%
C+	77-79%	Chapbook	100	17%
C	74-76%	Poetry Reading	50	8%
C-	70-73%	Total	600	
D+	67-69%			
D	60-66%			
F	59% and below			

Course Policies:

Academic Etiquette Policy: Class will begin promptly at 12 noon. Arriving late or leaving early is not tolerable. Students are required to treat each other, their texts, the professor and themselves with the utmost respect. Disrespectful behavior in class will result in dismissal for the day (0 for class participation), student will not be permitted to return to class until they meet with the professor and a letter will be sent to Student Conduct.

Email Policy: I do not answer questions via email. If you have a question ask it in class or come to my office. You may also post questions to our discussion board on blackboard. Email may be used to set up appointments; all other email will be deleted.

Use of cell phones and laptops is *not* permitted during class. If your cell phone is out or rings during class you will lose 5 points from your grade. While laptops do allow students to take more notes during lectures, most recent studies show that students retain less information than when they take hard-copy notes— so consider taking hard-copy notes in your other classes as well. If laptops are needed/allowed for specific in-class assignments, I will let you know.

Assignments: After the first five minutes research/creative papers are considered “same day late” and lose five points. They continue to lose five points each day thereafter. Assignments must be turned in as “hard copy.” Electronic submissions are not acceptable. Readings are due on the day they appear in the syllabus, thus CQ assignments cannot be turned in after their due date.

Students with Disabilities: Students with Disabilities: Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and need accommodations to fully participate in this class, please either visit or call the Access Center [Pullman] or Disability Services at [name of campus] address on your campus] to schedule an appointment with an Access Advisor. All accommodations **MUST** be approved through the Access Center or Disability Services. For more information contact a Disability Specialist on your home campus.

Pullman or WSU Online: 509-335-3417, Washington Building 217;
<http://accesscenter.wsu.edu>, Access.Center@wsu.edu

Academic Integrity Policy: Academic integrity is the cornerstone of higher education. As such, all members of the university community share responsibility for maintaining and promoting the principles of integrity in all activities, including academic integrity and honest scholarship. Academic integrity will be strongly enforced in this course. Students who violate WSU’s Academic Integrity Policy (identified in Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 504-26-010(3) and -404) will receive a failing grade on the assignment, will not have the option to withdraw from the course pending an appeal, and will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct.

Cheating includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration as defined in the Standards of Conduct for Students, WAC 504-26-010(3). You need to read and understand all of the definitions of cheating: <http://app.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=504-26-010>. If you have any questions about what is and is not allowed in this course, you should ask course instructors before proceeding. If you wish to appeal a faculty member's decision relating to academic integrity, please use the form available at conduct.wsu.edu.”

Campus safety plan/emergency information: *Classroom and campus safety are of paramount importance at Washington State University, and are the shared responsibility of the entire campus population. WSU urges students to follow the “Alert, Assess, Act,” protocol for all types of emergencies and the “Run, Hide, Fight” response for an active shooter incident. Remain ALERT (through direct observation or emergency notification), ASSESS your specific situation, and ACT in the most appropriate way to assure your own safety (and the safety of others if you are able). Please sign up for emergency alerts on your account at MyWSU. For more information on this subject, campus safety, and related topics, please view the [FBI’s Run, Hide, Fight video](#) and visit the [WSU safety portal](#)*

Schedule of Readings, Activities and Assignments

If it becomes necessary to make changes to the syllabus you will be informed of such changes during class time.

Week One: Writing Against the Grain

January 8-12

CQ: Due Friday, *Packet*, “Where Will You Be?”; “Class and Race in the Early Women’s Rights Campaign.” *Hughes*: “Aunt Sue’s Stories (18),” “Negro (20).”

Monday: Introduction to colleagues, professor, syllabus, discussion of plagiarism (see syllabus pp. 9-10).

Lecture: Constructing Race, Constructing Gender

Wednesday: Lecture: Race, Sex, and Civil Rights (Black Resistance Literatures); Using the WSU databases.

Friday: Class Discussion + from your Packet, we will look at: “How to Read a Poem,” Anzaldúa’s “Borderlands/La Frontera.”

Distribution of Final Project materials and first research assignment

Week Two: Politics of Resistance

January 15-19

Begin Researching Short Assignment; Topic Due Friday: “Everything I know about X”

CQ due Wednesday: Lorde, “Poetry is not a Luxury.”

Wed/Fri:

Film Clip and discussion: *Place of Rage*, *Readings*

Bring Hughes to Class, we will discuss “Cross (40)” and “Black Seed (75).”

Week Three: Poetry and the Importance of Rage

January 22-26

CQ: Literary Sampling (Reader); *Glave*, “Fire and Ink” (Reader).

This week student collectives begin to develop themes around which they will organize their research.

Monday: Defining Queer; Collectives identify research issues + Name Game

Wednesday: Discuss CQs

Friday: Workshop: List Poems.

Week Four: Queer Black Resistance

January 29-February 2

We have already had a glimpse of Queer Black resistance literature; how did we get here? This week we look at precursors to Queer Black resistance literature.

CQ (Reader) “‘Under the Days’: The Buried Life and Poetry of Angelina Weld Grimké”; *Hughes*, “Poet to Patron” (102), “KU KLUX (115),” “Words like Freedom (117),” “American Heartbreak (148). Read the biography of Hughes posted on the Poetry Foundation’s site:

<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/langston-hughes>

M: Lecture: Legacies of Resistance, 1917 to 1986 (Legacies)

W: Discussion + Collectives Report Back on Issues

F: Poetry Workshop: Haiku

Week Five: In the Life

February 5-9

This week we begin to examine the origins of Queer Black Literatures of Resistance, beginning with “Smoke, Lilies, and Jade” we will examine the ways that African American men have used poetry, prose and film to challenge racialized homophobia.

CQ: Reader: “Looking for Langston” (216); “Undressing Icons” (255). *Hughes*: “Café 3am” (202), “Harlem (2)” (238).

Optional 5pts, e.c. if you know the names of all classmates by the beginning of class today.

Lecture: From Nugent to Hemphill, Lorde and Parker, Three Generations of Queer Black Poetry

Video: *Looking for Langston*

Week Six: Contemporary

February 12-16

“Everything I Know” Due Monday.

Monday: Haiku challenge

Wednesday: One Poem, Two Poem

Friday: Theirs, mine, *ours*; Workshops “Editing Poetry”; extended metaphors

Week Seven: Mid-Term Exam

February 19-23 (Monday Federal Holiday)

Wednesday: Review

Friday: Exam

Week Eight:

Feb. 26- March 2

CQ: Read Moraga: *Heroes and Saints*. Reader: Timeline Chicanx Resistance to Racist Oppression

M: Lecture: Chicanx Histories of Resistance

W: Heroes and Saints: Act One

F: Heroes and Saints: Act Two.

**Week Nine: Queer Chicana/o Foremothers
March 5-9**

CQ: *Reader* “Demetria Martínez,” “I looked up one day”; *Three Times a Woman*: Martínez (all)

Monday: Lecture: Chicana Feminisms

Wednesday: Bring *Three Times a Woman* to Class

Friday: Challenges and Workshopping

**Week Ten: March 12-16
Spring Break**



**Week Eleven
RESEARCH PAPERS ARE DUE WEDNESDAY
March 19-23**

Monday: Lecture Queer Chicana Poets

Wednesday: Overview: Using *Publisher*; craft exam questions

Friday: Derived Poems (Bring *Three Times a Woman* to class)

**Week Twelve
March 26-30**

CQ: Grise, *Your Healing is Killing Me*

Monday: Writing your cards

Video Clip: Virginia Grise: 11/21/16 dBML Weekly Oracle Reading

Wednesday: Discussion *YHKM*

Friday: Workshop + Review Guide Distributed

**Week Thirteen
(NACCS)
April 2-6**

Monday: Introduction to RedBone Press and Ana Maurine Lara

Wed/Friday: *Kohnjerhr Woman*, Packet Due Monday April 9

Week Fourteen: Cumulative Exam
April 9-13

Monday: Lara/Grise Packet Due
Wednesday: Review
Friday: Cumulative Exam

Week Fifteen: Old Queers
April 16-20

No CQ but please do view “Sekiya Dorsett Discusses The Beauty Behind Her Latest Film ‘The Revival: Women and the Word’” online @ <http://hollywoodsblackrenaissance.com/revival/>

Monday: Film: *The Revival*
Wed. Discussion: *The Revival*
Last day collective work

Week Sixteen: Project Presentations
April 23-27

M: Poetry Readings groups 1-2
W: Poetry Readings groups 3-4
F: Optional Chapbook Distribution

Remember that attendance at presentations is mandatory and that missing any presentations will cause you to forfeit 10 points from your own project grade.

All Final Projects are Due Wednesday May 2 by 12 noon (bring to Wilson 10F)

Plagiarism

Plagiarism or cheating of any kind on *any* assignment or exam will not be tolerated and will result in a *failing grade on the assignment* and a report to Student Conduct. At Washington State University, plagiarism and/or cheating can result in dismissal from the university.

Turning in work downloaded from the Internet, or turning in any work without citing your sources is plagiarism. Cutting and pasting information into a document, *including an annotated bibliography*, is a form of plagiarism. Always cite the source of your work and never “cut and paste” another’s work and call it your own. Other people (your professors, fellow students, tutors in the writing lab) may give you suggestions for improving a piece of written work, but the work itself must be your own. If you are at any time unclear about what constitutes plagiarism or cheating, please see me.

Among undergraduates, one of the most common forms of plagiarism is the use of other scholars’ words or ideas without citations. This sort of plagiarism often occurs because of unfamiliarity with the conventions of documentation in academic papers. In this class, it is your responsibility to always cite the source of your work and to use quotation marks or “block quotations” when you use other peoples’ words.

For example, I really like the work of Cherríe Moraga and think that she can explain differences better than I ever could. If I were to use her words in my paper, I might write something like this...

Coalition among and between women, even working class women, is often a difficult task. Too often, we assume we have many things in common without acknowledging that we bring different resources to the table: different struggles, different histories. In order to build useful coalition, we need to identify and talk about our own subject positions. As Cherríe Moraga argues, “The danger lies in ranking the oppressions. The danger lies in failing to acknowledge the specificity of the oppression. The danger lies in attempting to deal with oppression purely from a theoretical base” (52).

My words begin with “Coalition among and between women...” and end with “As Moraga argues.” As soon as I begin to use Moraga’s words, I must use quotation marks (or indent the quotation). I must also cite my source.

Another form of plagiarism is turning in a paper that someone else has written and claiming it as your own. In our information age, the most common form of “turning in a paper that someone else has written” occurs when students take information from the Internet and turn it in as their own. At times a student downloads an entire paper. At other times they cut material from several sources, reassemble the material, and turn product in as their own work. Utilizing the Internet in

either of these ways constitutes plagiarism and, as with any form of plagiarism in this class, will result in a failing grade for the assignment and a letter to student conduct.

Finally, you cannot turn in work for one class that you have already turned in for another class/requirement.

If you have any questions at all regarding plagiarism or academic dishonesty, please speak to your professor and/or consult your WSU Student Handbook (Topic: Academic Dishonesty), or go to the website: “Plagiarism: how to avoid it.

<http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/plagiarism/> has a useful tutorial for all students. For WST 300 students completing this tutorial is a course requirement.

Taking Steps to Avoid Plagiarism:

- Complete the tutorial located at <http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/plagiarism/> .
- When doing research, take care to mark quotations and always make a note of the source.
- Proof your paper to make sure that all quoted material **and** all paraphrased material has been attributed to its source.
- Never cut and paste from another source; never cut information from an abstract and paste it into an annotated bibliography.
- Never “borrow” a paper from a friend.
- Never turn in work that is not your own.
- Do not turn in the same paper for two different assignments.