

EN 6582 3.0: "You Better Work:" Sexuality, Labor, Blackness

Instructor: Tiana Reid

Brief Description

This seminar explores the fraught relationship between sexuality, labor, and blackness in the United States. Reading black literary and theoretical texts, we may take up a number of questions, including: slave labor, the afterlife of slavery, gendered labor, proletarian literature, domestic work, libidinal economy, captive maternal labors, social reproduction, Marxisms, sex work, sexual difference, sexual violence, abolition, black feminism, labor refusals, strikes, and more. We also consider the limits of labor (understood broadly) as a conceptual apparatus for examining contemporary anti-black conditions.

Assessments

2 short reading response papers (approx. 500 words), each worth 10%
1 oral presentation, worth 20%
1 final essay (approx. 4000 words), worth 40%
participation, worth 20%

Readings (tentative)

Ella Baker and Marvel Cooke, "Bronx Slave Market"
Samuel R. Delany, *Times Square Red, Times Square Blue*
W. E. B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America* (selections)
Alice Childress, *Like One of the Family: Conversations from a Domestic's Life* (selections)
Langston Hughes, "When the Negro was in Vogue"
Zora Neale Hurston, "Sweat"
Gayl Jones, *Eva's Man*
Claude McKay, *Harlem Glory: A Fragment of Aframerican Life*
Toni Morrison, *Sula*
Paule Marshall, *Daughters*
Mary Prince, *The History of Mary Prince*
Kiley Reid, *Such a Fun Age*
Assata Shakur, *Assata*
Wallace Thurman, "Cordelia the Crude"

+ a selection of texts by William Attaway, James Boggs, Hazel Carby, Denise Ferreira Da Silva, Angela Davis, Patrice Douglass, Frantz Fanon, Thavolia Glymph, Harriet Jacobs, Saidiya Hartman, C. L. R. James, Joy James, Karl Marx, Cedric Robinson, Karl Marx, Jennifer Morgan, Fred Moten, Hortense Spillers, Alys Eve Weinbaum, Ida B. Wells, Harriet Wilson, Frank Wilderson, Sylvia Wynter, and others