Themes in Canadian Literature:  
Black Canadian Writing  
ENGL 214 Fall 2011, Prof. Winfried Siemerling  
TUES 6:00 – 8:50, HH 2107  
----------------------------------------------  
SCHEDULE  
Website: http://artsonline.uwaterloo.ca/~wsiemerl/  

(1) Sept 13  Introduction  
(2) Sept 20  Revisiting Slavery in what is now Canada:  
Lorena Gale, Angélique  
(3) Sept 27  Nova Scotia and the Black Atlantic:  
1. Carleton’s “Book of Negroes” (1783) Searchable Transcription of the British version on the site of the Public Archives of Nova Scotia or at Black Loyalist.com  
2. Extracts from David George’s Account  
3. Short extract from Boston King’s Memoir  
4. Loyalties (Film by Leslie Ann Patten, NFB 1999, with Carmelita Robertson and Ruth Whitehead  
(4) Oct 4  Nova Scotia and the Black Atlantic:  
Lawrence Hill, The Book of Negroes  
(5) Oct 11  The Underground Railroad, Canada West as Canaan:  
(6) Oct 18  Osborne Anderson, A Voice from Harpers Ferry selections:  
Preface, Chapters I-II, VI, VIII-XV, XIX  
(7) Oct 25  QUIZ TEST  
(8) Nov 1  United States background  
W.E.B. Du Bois, chapter 1 from The Souls of Black Folk  
The Harlem Renaissance:  
Langston Hughes, "The Negro Speaks of Rivers," "Mother to Son," "The Weary Blues"  
Martin Luther King, “I Have a Dream” (+ video)  
(9) Nov 8  Dionne Brand, “Photograph”  
Austin Clarke, "Doing Right"  

1 of 3
Jazz and the Blackening of Quebec:
Mairuth Sarsfield, *No Crystal Stair*.

Black British Columbia:
Wayde Compton, *49th Parallel Psalm*

Background: Wayde Compton, “The Reinventing Wheel: On Blending the Poetry of Cultures Through Hip Hop Turntablism” / (Flash version with sound sample); see also Shango, Papa Legba, Baron Samedi.

TERM PAPER DUE

Africville, Nova Scotia Revisited:
From George Elliott Clarke, *Saltwater Spirituals and Deeper Blues*: Introduction by Sylvia Hamilton (5-9); "Guysborough Road Church" (14); "Campbell Road Church: (15); "Crying the Beloved Country" (38); "Watercolour for Negro Expatriates in Paris: (39-41); "East Coasting" (49)

Africville (videos from CBC Archives – enter "Africville" in the search box on the site, and sample some of the 13 short sound and video clips that the search produces)

EXAMINATION PERIOD: Dec. 8-22

ENGL 214: Themes in Canadian Literature: Black Canadian Writing
HH 2107 -- TUES 6:00 – 8:50, Fall 2011
Prof. Winfried Siemerling
Office Hours: Tuesday 4:30-5:30; HH 222 – ext 32118

The course looks at black writing in Canada from texts from the eighteenth century to the present. Both theoretical and literary texts will be studied to explore this field, which has become crucial to literary and cultural studies in the United States for quite some time but has only recently emerged as a major preoccupation in Canadian literary discussion. One aim of the course is to demonstrate how black writing and culture have been part and parcel of Canada from the very beginning, and give an idea of the wealth of this material especially in the nineteenth century and in the last few decades. We will look at different regional contexts—Ontario (or earlier Upper Canada), Quebec (Lower Canada), Nova Scotia, and British Columbia—and in some cases create links with other contemporary art forms such as jazz and turntablism.

The course will begin with slavery in Canada/ New France and texts relating to some of the first black settlers in Nova Scotia, which will help us to explore Lawrence Hill’s award winning novel *The Book of Negroes*. We will then examine narratives produced by ex-slaves and other blacks in the nineteenth century who settle in what is now Ontario after leaving the United States. In the second half of the course, a few important United States texts will offer some background before we look at contemporary black writing in Canada and Quebec from the 1960s on. Besides Lawrence Hill, other contemporary authors under consideration include Mairuth Sarsfield, Lorena Gale, Dionne Brand, Wayde Compton, and George Elliott Clarke.
Required Core Texts - Print
Lorena Gale, *Angélique* (Playwrights Canada Press)
Lawrence Hill, *The Book of Negroes* (HarperCollins)
Mairuth Sarsfield, *No Crystal Stair* (Stoddart)
Wayde Compton, *49th Parallel Psalm* (Advance Editions)

**Required Core Texts** – Print or free internet edition via course website
Josiah Henson, *Autobiography of Josiah Henson* (Dover Publications)
Mary Ann Shadd, *A Plea for Emigration* (Mercury)

A number of other texts are linked via the course website.

Background Text – of interest

**Evaluation:**
- 10 % Text preview comment on course website
- 20 % Quiz test
- 30% Term paper (approximately 2,000 words/8-10 pages)
- 30% Final exam
- 10% Participation

**Academic Integrity:** In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.
[Check http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/ for more information.]

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm. For typical penalties check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm.

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm. When in doubt please be certain to contact the department’s administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

**Appeals:** A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm.

**Academic Integrity website (Arts):** http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html

**Academic Integrity Office (UW):** http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/

**Note for students with disabilities:** The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.