

Module Code (second/third year) EN3007	Seminar Code EN3007	Seminar Title America With[out] Borders	Seminar Leader Donna Maria Alexander
Teaching Period 2	Day	Time	Venue
<p>Seminar Content</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Born down in a dead man’s town The first kick I took was when I hit the ground End up like a dog that’s been beat too much Till you spend half your life just covering up”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">– Bruce Springsteen, “Born in the USA”</p> <p>This seminar explores a range of borderland, Chicana/o, and black expressions of identity formation in the Americas. In particular, we will examine the role of geographical, linguistic, political, violent and emotional borders in literatures of the Americas in terms of race, gender, class and sexuality. We will question the trans-American, transnational and postcolonial nature of identity in the Americas. A selection of contemporary fiction, poetry and essays will be investigated. Supporting materials including art, music and film will also be considered.</p> <p>This seminar focuses on the ways in which literature and other cultural forms can access histories, voices, and perspectives often not included in official records of the past and present. Civil rights issues in the U.S. from the 1960s to the present day provide an important socio-political backdrop to this. Literatures that challenge the status quo, upend traditional narratives, and challenge accepted notions of American selfhood are central to this seminar.</p>			
<p>Primary texts/Required textbooks</p> <p>Anzaldúa, Gloria. Selected Essays*</p> <p>Cervantes, Lorna Dee. A Selection of Poems.*</p> <p>Díaz, Junot. <i>The Brief, Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao</i>. NY: Riverhead Books, 2007.</p> <p>McCarthy, Cormac. <i>All the Pretty Horses</i>. NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992.</p> <p>Moraga, Cherríe. Selected Essays*</p> <p>Rankine, Claudia. <i>Citizen: An American Lyric</i>. MN: Graywolf, 2014.</p> <p>*Texts marked with an asterisk are available in the course booklet.</p> <p>Other required reading will be made available on Blackboard.</p>			

Learning outcomes

On successful completion, students should be able to:

- Critically read and analyse a selection of texts, in various genres, by contemporary American authors from the 1970s onwards
- Relate the set texts to one another, and to their wider historical and cultural contexts
- Discuss the cultural and historical backgrounds which framed and informed these texts
- Define terms and concepts central to the topic
- Apply these terms and contexts to the set texts
- Deliver fluent written and oral responses to the set texts
- Discuss and debate the set texts and the issues raised by the module topic in class