

**COLT 52.09/LACS 25.13/AAAS 83.10:
Childhood, Memory, and the Caribbean
10A Hour**

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Office hours: TBD

Course Description:

Have you ever wondered what it's like to grow up in Haiti, Surinam, Guadeloupe, Cuba, or the Dominican Republic? In this course, students will embark on a literary journey through the Caribbean, examining coming-of-age stories that unravel the complex tapestry of postcolonial experiences.

Through a critical exploration of the Caribbean bildungsroman, students will delve into the profound impact of colonialism on various facets of life, including family structures, the roles of women, education, languages, socioeconomic status, mobility, and the intricate development of identity.

The course will introduce students to a diverse array of literary works from the Caribbean, offering insights into the nuanced perspectives of postcolonial authors. Engaging with critical theories from key thinkers such as Frantz Fanon, Edouard Glissant, Carole Boyce Davies, and Antonio Benitez-Rojo, students will analyze the intellectual frameworks that shape Caribbean literature.

Learning goals: Students will

- Recognize and analyze the impact of revolutions, colonization, education systems, and political instability on childhood development in the Caribbean.
- Critically assess and challenge representations of the Caribbean region, moving beyond a tourist-centric perspective to recognize it as a hub for knowledge production and cultural richness.
- Foster personal connections by sharing and reflecting on their own memories of childhood, creating a bridge between theoretical concepts and lived experiences.
- Strengthen research and analytical skills by incorporating external sources to enrich the understanding of literary texts and historical contexts.
- Explore and analyze recurring themes and motifs, understanding their significance in the context of the text and broader literary traditions.

OPENING REMARKS

In our classes we promote a safe, welcoming, and anti-discriminatory environment where people of all ethnicities, nationalities, socioeconomic backgrounds, genders and gender identities, sexual orientations, disabilities, religions, and ages are encouraged to share their rich array of experiences and perspectives.

Through learning another language, we also hope to foster critical reflection on cultures, identities, stereotypes, and biases. We acknowledge that our offices and classrooms stand on lands that were originally inhabited by the first people of this area, the Abenaki. We are committed to the recognition and inclusion of racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity in the classroom.

Course Information and Policies

Student Accessibility and Accommodations

Students requesting disability-related accommodations and services for this course are required to register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS: [Apply for Services webpage](#); student.accessibility.services@dartmouth.edu; 1-603-646-9900) and to request that an accommodation email be sent to me in advance of the need for an accommodation. Then, students should schedule a follow-up meeting with me to determine relevant details such as what role SAS or its [Testing Center](#) may play in accommodation implementation. This process works best for everyone when completed as early in the quarter as possible. If students have questions about whether they are eligible for accommodation or have concerns about the implementation of their accommodations, they should contact the SAS office. All inquiries and discussions will remain confidential.

Academic Honor Principle

The faculty, administration, and students of Dartmouth College acknowledge the responsibility to maintain and perpetuate the principle of academic honor, and recognize that any instance of academic dishonesty is considered a violation of the [Academic Honor Principle](#).

In this course all your work must be your own, including the weekly comments on Canvas as well as the longer assignments. If you use a source for support, include quotes and a citation.

Academic dishonesty includes taking content from an Internet search, another person/entity, or AI technology such as ChatGPT (either directly or with modification) and representing it as your own. Please review Dartmouth Academic Honor Principle: <https://student-affairs.dartmouth.edu/policy/academic-honor-principle> and this [resource on proper citation of sources](#).

Religious Observances

Dartmouth has a deep commitment to support students' religious observances and diverse faith practices. Some students may wish to take part in religious observances that occur during this academic term. If you have a religious observance that conflicts with your participation in the course, please meet with me as soon as possible—before the end of the second week of the term at the latest—to discuss appropriate course adjustments.

Books To Purchase:

- Jamaica Kincaid, *Annie John*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux; Reprint edition (June 30, 1997)
- Patrick Chamoiseau, *Childhood*. University of Nebraska Press, 1999

Our community is composed of students from a variety of financial backgrounds. Socioeconomic diversity can be invisible, and you may be experiencing financial difficulties related to the cost of textbooks, materials, or other necessities for our class of which I am not aware. If you encounter financial challenges related to this class, there may be sources of support for you. If you feel

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comfortable sharing your experience with me, you may. You may also consider meeting with a financial aid officer to discuss options, reaching out to the First-Generation Office if you are a first-generation student, browsing the [Funding Resources](#) page, or, for unexpected expenses, applying to the Barrier Removal Fund through the Financial Aid tile in [DartHub](#).

Critical and secondary texts (all will be available on Canvas)

Films

Juan Carlos Cremata, “Viva Cuba” (2013)

Mariana Rondón, “Pelo Malo” (2013)

Readings

Readings must be completed for the dates listed on the schedule. I encourage you to take notes as you read each text. Each week, you are responsible for creating a paragraph-long post (5-7 sentences). Your post will reflect on the following questions:

1. What stood out to you about the reading thus far?
2. How do they inform your understanding of memory, childhood, knowledge etc.?
3. What question would you like the class to discuss together based on the readings?

Posts will be due by 9:30am on Tuesdays before class.

Some additional questions you may want to ask yourself to discuss in class:

1. What is/are the main arguments of the work?
2. What specific quotes or examples tell you this?
3. How has this work challenged, contested prior texts that you have read on childhood?

Throughout the course, please bring a physical copy of the works we are engaging in for that week, as we will be referring to specific passages and will read together. We will read one creative work each week accompanied by at least one other short critical piece, which could be written, visual, or auditory to enhance our discussion of the texts. These readings will guide our discussions, bringing relevant themes to the fore.

Grading Criteria

Your final grade will result from the following components:

1. **Class preparation, participation, and attendance.** This is a discussion-based seminar. The success of the course will depend on your preparation and in-class participation. To fulfill class participation requirements, you will need to attend at least **one session of office hours**. Your participation in class discussions is required and should focus on a critical engagement with the course readings, music, films, guest speakers, instructor and peer comments. Due to the discussion-based nature of the course, you need to be present.

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You are permitted two absences. If you have had more than two unexcused absences one full letter grade will be deducted from your final grade. No laptop, tablet, or cell phone use is permitted during class discussions, unless you have made personal arrangements with me (**20 points of final grade**).

2. **In-Class Group Presentations** (One 15-20 minutes oral presentation): During the trimester, your group will lead a class discussion. The presentation you make is worth 15 points possible. You will present the central arguments of the readings and pose two discussion questions for the class to consider. This presentation should be no more than 800 words and take no more than 20 minutes to present. Submit your 800-word remarks online the day before your presentation so students can read your presentation and be prepared to discuss the questions you posed. You will choose the time you would like to present on the 11th of January 2024. (**15 points**)
3. **Canvas Discussions (Weekly)**: Each week, you are responsible for creating a paragraph-long post (8-10 sentences). Your post will reflect on the following questions:
 1. What stood out to you about the reading thus far?
 2. How do they inform your understanding of space and context?
 3. What question would you like the class to discuss together based on the readings?Posts will be due by 8:00am on Tuesdays before class. (**20 points**)
4. **Abstract and bibliography**: You will write a 250-300 word abstract with an annotated bibliography for one of the call for papers provided. The abstract should clearly communicate the scope, significance, and specific themes of the proposed papers. (**15 points of final grade**) (See canvas for guidelines)
5. **Final Project**: The format of the final project will be left at the students' discretion. Students can choose to create a film, do an interview/podcast, or write a traditional final paper that explore one of the topics discussed in class. (**30 points of final grade**) (see Canvas for guidelines)

CALENDAR

Week 1 Intro	01/07 Introduction “XIV” from <i>Midsummer</i> by Derek Walcott “To Celebrate a Childhood” by St-John Perse
	01/09 Introduction of <i>The Repeating Island</i> by Antonio Benitez-Rojo “History of the voice” by Kamau Brathwaite

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Week 2 The Caribbean as a Space	14/01 “The Antilles: Fragments of epic memory” by Derek Walcott
	16/01 <i>Miguel Street</i> Chap 1-3 by V.S. Naipaul
Week 3 Family	21/01 <i>Childhood</i> by Patrick Chamoiseau (Translator’s Note to p.71) Critical reading “The situation of the spoken” by Edouard Glissant
	23/01 <i>Childhood</i> by Chamoiseau (p. 75-111)
	24/01 X hour “Family portrait” and “The bluest eye” by Maryse Condé Critical Reading “Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse” by Homi Bhabha
Week 4 Education and Language	28/01 “My English” by Julia Alvarez “Hiccups” by Leon Damas Critical reading Excerpt of <i>Decolonizing the mind</i> by Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o

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	30/01 “History Lesson” by Maryse Condé <i>In the Castle of My skin</i> by George Lamming p. 35-58. Critical reading Excerpt from <i>Silencing the Past</i> by Trouillot
	31/01(X hour) Workshop with Librarian (sources, citation, bibliography)
Week 5 Race Relations	04/02 “The day they burned the books” Jean Rhys Critical Reading “The Woman of Color and The White Man” or “The Man Of Color and The White Woman” from <i>Black Skin and White Masks</i> by Frantz Fanon
	06/02 “The Loveliest Woman in the World” by Maryse Condé Critical Reading Introduction of <i>Black Skin and White Masks</i> by Frantz Fanon
	Midterm (Abstract and Bibliography) is due on February 8th, 2025
Week 6 Colorism	11/02 Mariana Rondón, “Pelo Malo” (2013) Critical Reading “All Tangled Up: Intersecting Stigmas of Race, Gender, and Sexuality in Mariana Rondón's Bad Hair”, Reighan Gillam

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	13/02 “Caribbean GPS Compasses of Racialization” by Carole Boyce Davies “Behind Closed Doors: 'Colorism' in the Caribbean” by NPR
Week 7 Natural Disasters	18/02 “The Five Plagues of The Return to The Native Land” By Gisele Pineau
	20/02 <i>Eight Days: A Story of Haiti</i> by Edwidge Danticat ““Haiti, I Can See Your Halo!” Living on Fault Lines” by Carole B. Davies
Week 8 Political Conflicts	25/02 “Viva Cuba” (Cuban Film directed by Juan Carlos Cremata Malberti, Iraida) Excerpt of <i>Waiting for Snow in Havana: Confessions of a Cuban Boy</i> by Carlos Eire
	27/02 “The Blood of the Conquistadores” by Julia Alvarez
Week 9 Girlhood	04/03 “Girl” and <i>Annie John</i> chap. 1-4 by Jamaica Kincaid
	06/03 <i>Annie John</i> chap. 5-8 by Jamaica Kincaid Romantic Struggles: The Bildungsroman and Mother-Daughter Bonding in Jamaica Kincaid's <i>Annie John</i> by Louis F. Caton

The final project is due on March 15th, 2025.

Class Assignment Directives:

Midterm - Abstract and Bibliography

Objective: The purpose of this assignment is to develop your skills in crafting a well-structured abstract for a call for papers and compiling an appropriate bibliography. You will engage with the research process, summarizing key themes, and identifying relevant sources to support your work.

Part 1: Abstract

Task: Write an abstract for one of the 3 provided call for papers on a topic of your choice. Your abstract should clearly communicate the scope, significance, and specific themes of the proposed paper.

Guidelines:

1. **Title:** Choose a concise and engaging title that reflects the essence of the call for papers.
2. **Content:** Clearly outline the main topics of interest and any specific areas or questions you want contributors to address.
3. **Length:** Aim for a well-crafted abstract of 250-300 words. Be concise while ensuring that key information is conveyed effectively.
4. **Topics of Interest:** Identify and list at least three themes you would like to explore in your abstract.

Part 2: Bibliography

Task: Compile a bibliography containing a minimum of five scholarly sources relevant to your chosen topic. These sources should provide a foundation for understanding the key issues, debates, and perspectives related to your call for papers.

Guidelines:

1. **Diversity:** Include a mix of academic books, journal articles, and reputable online sources to ensure a well-rounded bibliography.

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2. **Citation Style:** Use the MLA citation style and apply it consistently throughout your bibliography.
3. **Annotations:** Provide a brief annotation (1-2 sentences) for each source, summarizing its main findings or arguments and explaining its relevance to your chosen topic.
4. **Publication Date:** Include the publication date of each source to demonstrate the recency and relevance of the literature.

Submission Guidelines:

1. **Format:** Submit a typed document in Microsoft word document via canvas
2. **Due Date:** The completed assignment is due on 5 February 2024
3. **Evaluation Criteria:** Your assignment will be assessed based on clarity, coherence, relevance of sources, and adherence to guidelines.

Note: Be creative in choosing your abstract topic, and make sure to select sources that provide depth and breadth to your bibliography.

This assignment is designed to enhance your research and writing skills, preparing you for future academic endeavors and professional engagement. If you have any questions or need clarification, feel free to consult with the instructor.

Final Project Guidelines

Objective: The final project is an opportunity for students to delve deeper into one of the topics discussed throughout the course. Students have the freedom to choose their preferred format, whether it's a film, interview, or a traditional paper, to explore and present their chosen topic in a creative and comprehensive manner. Students who choose to do film/interviews/podcasts for their final project have to provide a script/ summary of their project. Students can make use of the bibliography/abstract that they have written for the midterm if they choose the final paper.

Project Options :

1. **Film:**
 - Produce a short film (5-10 minutes) that explores a specific theme or issue related to childhood in the Caribbean and the course content.
 - Include interviews, visuals, and narrative elements to convey your message effectively.
2. **Interview/Podcast:**
 - Conduct an in-depth interview with a friend or family member about their childhood. (15-20mn)
 - Present the interview in a well-edited format, providing insights and reflections.
3. **Final Paper:**
 - Write a comprehensive final paper (3500-words, approximately 14 pages, double spaced) that delves into a specific theme discussed in class.
 - Use academic sources and course materials to support your arguments.
 - Provide a bibliography.

Submission Requirements :

1. Outline the chosen format (film, interview/podcast, or final paper).
2. Include a brief project proposal indicating the specific topic or theme you intend to explore.
3. For films and podcasts, provide a 2-page summary or script outline. For papers, include an abstract.
4. Films and interviews should be submitted in a shareable digital format. Papers should be submitted as a WordDoc.

Evaluation Criteria:

1. **Content (50%):**
 - Depth of exploration and understanding of the chosen topic.
 - Relevance to course themes and discussions.
 - Effective use of theories and concepts from the course.
2. **Creativity (30%):**
 - Innovation and originality in the chosen format (film, interview, or paper).
 - Creative/original presentation of ideas and arguments.
3. **Communication (20%):**
 - Clarity and coherence in conveying the message.
 - Effective use of visuals (for films) or engaging dialogue (for podcasts).

Due Date: The final project is due on March 15th, 2024, allowing ample time for preparation and submission.

Notes:

- Ensure that your project reflects the depth of your engagement with the course materials.
- Seek feedback from peers or the instructor during the preparation phase.
- Choose a format that aligns with your strengths and interests to showcase your understanding effectively.

This flexible approach to the final project allows students to demonstrate their understanding in a way that aligns with their skills and interests, fostering creativity and personal engagement with the course materials.

In-Class Group Presentation Guidelines

Overview:

Purpose:

The purpose of this in-class group presentation is to provide an opportunity for you and your group members to engage with the central arguments of the assigned readings, demonstrate critical thinking skills, and foster class discussion on relevant topics.

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Duration:

The presentation should last between 15 to 20 minutes, allowing time for a concise summary of key arguments and the introduction of engaging discussion questions.

Presentation Content:

1. **Introduction (3 minutes):**
 - Briefly introduce the title, author, historical context, and main themes of the readings.
 - Clearly state the purpose of your presentation.
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2. **Summary of Central Arguments (7-11 minutes):**
 - Provide a concise summary of the central arguments and key points from the assigned readings.
 - Highlight any contrasting viewpoints or areas of debate among the authors.
3. **Discussion Questions (4-5 minutes):**
 - Pose two thoughtful and open-ended discussion questions for the class.
 - Questions should encourage critical thinking, debate, and engagement with the material.
 - Relate the questions to real-world applications or contemporary issues, if applicable.
4. **Visual Aids (2-3 minutes):**
 - Use slides or other visual aids to enhance the presentation.
 - Ensure visuals are clear, relevant, and support key points without overwhelming your audience.

Presentation Style:

1. **Clarity and Cohesion:**
 - Organize the presentation in a clear and logical sequence.
 - Use transitions between topics to ensure a smooth flow.
2. **Engagement:**
 - Maintain eye contact with the audience.
 - Speak clearly and audibly to ensure everyone can follow the presentation.
3. **Time Management:**
 - Adhere to the specified time limit.
 - Allocate time appropriately for each section of the presentation.

Discussion Facilitation:

1. **Encouragement:**
 - Encourage class participation by inviting responses to your discussion questions.
 - Facilitate a respectful and inclusive discussion environment.
2. **In-depth Responses:**

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- Be prepared to respond to student comments with insightful reflections or additional questions to deepen the discussion.
- 3. **Moderation:**
 - Ensure that the discussion remains focused on the assigned readings and related topics.
 - Moderate the discussion to allow multiple perspectives to be heard.

Evaluation:

1. **Criteria:**
 - The presentation grades will be determined through a combination of assessments from both peers and the course instructor. Evaluation criteria include clarity, comprehension of materials, research quality, conciseness, and active engagement with the classroom, and the effectiveness of discussion questions.
2. **Feedback:**
 - Constructive feedback will be provided by both the instructor and peers to aid in your ongoing development.

Submission:

1. **Materials:**
 - Submit any presentation materials (slides, handouts) in advance.
2. **Coordinated Effort:**
 - Collaborate with your group members to ensure a coordinated and cohesive presentation.

Important Dates:

1. **Presentation Date:**
 - Your group's presentation is scheduled for [insert date].
2. **Preparation:**
 - Adequate preparation is essential. Ensure all group members are familiar with their roles and responsibilities.

These guidelines are designed to help you deliver a well-organized and engaging in-class presentation that stimulates thoughtful discussion among your peers. If you have any questions or need clarification, feel free to reach out to the instructor. Good luck!

Sample Syllabus