

ENG 485/AMS 322**American Literature from 1945-present: The End of the American Century
Fall 2020**

MW 3:35 - 4:50 pm US Eastern

Online only

Course site: <https://eng485202f20.lindsaythomas.net>

Professor Lindsay Thomas

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Virtual office hours: MW 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm, and by appointment

- Please email me to schedule a time to meet. The best time to meet with me is during the above time slot, and slots will be reserved on a first-come, first-served basis. But if you can't make my virtual office hours (if you have other classes during this time, or if you are taking this course asynchronously), just let me know and we'll set up an appointment that works for both of us.

Course Description

What is American empire, and what does its end look and feel like? This course examines U.S. literature from WWII to the present, or from a period that has been termed the “American century” because of the dominant role the U.S. played in shaping global politics and culture during this time. However, as many events of the 21st-century have demonstrated, this period of dominance is now drawing to a close. While we will emphasize how the fiction and poetry we read address many different historical, political, and social issues important to this era, we will pay special attention to how these works negotiate and challenge the police, military, and imperial powers of the U.S. state. We will also place these texts in conversation with historical documents and policies that have shaped these powers. In general, we will consider both what the texts and other objects we examine have to say about the foundations of this power and how they critique it.

Required Course Materials

All required novels are available via the UM bookstore or the links below. You can order your course materials from the bookstore and have them shipped to you.

- John Okada, *No No Boy* (1957), University of Washington Press 2014 edition, ISBN-10: 0295994045, ISBN-13: 978-0295994048
 - Available via the publisher's website (<https://uwapress.uw.edu/book/9780295994048/no-no-boy/>) or on Amazon (<https://www.amazon.com/No-No-Classics-Asian-American-Literature-ebook/dp/B00PAM0KZS>)
 - Please DO NOT purchase the Penguin Classics edition of this book OR the 1978 University of Washington Press edition (both are also available on Amazon).
- Toni Morrison, *Home* (2013), Vintage International, ISBN-10: 9780307740915, ISBN-13: 978-0307740915
 - Available via the publisher's website (<https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/204832/home-by-toni-morrison/>),

or on Amazon (https://www.amazon.com/Home-Vintage-International-Toni-Morrison/dp/0307740919/ref=sr_1_2?dchild=1&keywords=home+toni+morrison&qid=1593707683&s=books&sr=1-2)

- Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony* (1977), Penguin Books 2006 edition, ISBN-10: 0143104918, ISBN-13: 978-0143104919
 - Available via the publisher's website (<https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/534116/ceremony-by-leslie-marmon-silko/>), or via Amazon (https://www.amazon.com/Ceremony-Classics-Leslie-Marmon-Silko/dp/0143104918/ref=sr_1_2?crd=E734RLZD2YAR&dchild=1&keywords=ceremony+leslie+marmon+silko&qid=1593707835&s=books&sprefix=ceremony%2Cstripbooks%2C153&sr=1-2)
- Octavia Butler, *The Parable of the Sower* (1993), Grand Central Publishing 2019 edition, ISBN-10: 1538732181, ISBN-13: 978-1538732182
 - Available at many retailers via the publisher's website (<https://www.grandcentralpublishing.com/titles/octavia-e-butler/parable-of-the-sower/9781538732182/>)
- Jordan Peele, dir., *Get Out* (2017)
 - Available to rent on Amazon Prime, YouTube, Vudu, and Google Play from \$1.99 - \$3.99
- Stanley Kubrick, dir., *Dr. Strangelove, Or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb* (1964)
 - Available to rent via Amazon Prime for \$3.99; also available for free via the Internet Archive
- All other course readings are available via our course website. I will provide pdf's of or links to all other course readings. Whenever possible, I highly recommend you print these readings out and practice active reading (we will discuss what this means on our first day of class).

How This Course Will Work

This course will be delivered fully online. There are 2 ways to take this course: synchronously, and asynchronously. Everyone who is physically able to take the course synchronously (i.e., residing in a time zone where this is possible) will take the course synchronously. Each synchronous class session will be conducted via Zoom. Synchronous class sessions will be recorded for later viewing by those who are taking the course asynchronously. Each synchronous class session's chat will also be saved as another record of class discussion.

Our class is scheduled to meet two times per week, on Mondays and Wednesdays, and we will meet synchronously over Zoom each of those class days. If campus closes down, or if our semester is otherwise interrupted (by a hurricane, for example), we will re-evaluate this schedule and some of our class sessions may become asynchronous.

A) If you are taking the course synchronously:

On Mondays and Wednesdays, you will sign in to our class Zoom session for our class discussion. Each class day, someone will be designated the class note taker, and someone will be designated the assistant. The note taker will take notes about what we discuss in class in a shared Google doc for the whole class to use, and the assistant will be in charge of monitoring the class chat and, during

discussion, the class stack (the order of people who want to speak). We will share this labor equitably by keeping track of who has done what in a spreadsheet in our shared class folder on Google drive. When we have group discussions in breakout rooms, sometimes your group will record your discussion/complete your discussion activities in a shared class Google doc. Sometimes designated reporters will report out to the rest of the class, and sometimes I will call on people from each group to report.

B) If you are taking the course asynchronously:

After each synchronous class meeting, I will upload the recording of our class session to our shared class folder on Google drive. You will have until our next synchronous class meeting to view the recording and complete the activities announced during the recording. Often, these activities will be the same as those people did during class, but sometimes they will be different. You will complete these activities using the class notes and group activities shared Google docs. If you have specific questions about something that comes up during class or about something in the notes, please use the comment feature to add your questions to the Google doc, and I will review and answer them.

Grading

- Participation: 20%
- Quizzes: 15%
- Historical Context Explainer: 10%
- Close Reading Paper 1: 10%
- Close Reading Paper 2: 20%
- Final project: 25%

Additional details on all course assignments are detailed on separate pages below.

Course Digital Infrastructure

We will make use of multiple online systems and programs in this course: a course site, Zoom, Google drive, and Blackboard. The “Passwords and Login Instructions” doc in our shared class folder on Gdrive will contain the passwords and other information you need to use our course digital systems.

Course site:

We will use our course Wordpress site to manage course information and our schedule, to distribute course readings, and for online discussion (sometimes I will ask you to post a response to our class discussion forum during class or as part of a weekly quiz). You will find an online version of our course calendar there (including the most up-to-date version of reading assignments and due dates), as well as a copy of our course syllabus. You will also find all course assignment sheets there.

Our course site is password protected, and you will receive this password via your UM email address. You will also be signed up for an account on our course site at the beginning of the semester. This account will allow you to post to the discussion forum.

Once you have an account on our course site, follow these instructions to sign in:

1. Go to our course site: <https://eng485f20.lindsaythomas.net/>. If prompted, enter our course site password (sent to you via email, and listed in the “Passwords and Login Instructions” doc in our shared class folder on Gdrive). This is the password for the course site itself, and all members of the class will use the same password. If you select “Remember me,” the course site will remember your login information for 120 days, or about the duration of a semester, and you will not need to log in again unless you access the site from a different device.
2. Click on the “Discussion Forum” link in the menu. Once you sign in to the course site, you can see the discussion forum responses that others have posted, but you will not be able to post any responses yourself until you sign in to the forum with your personal account.
3. If you need to log in with your personal account, you will see the sentence “You need to log in to create posts and topics” at the top of the Discussion Forum page.
4. To log in, click “Login” on the menu on the Discussion Forum page. You will now see the standard Wordpress login page. Enter your personal course site username and password and select “Log in” (only you should have access to this username and password).
5. That should take you back to the Discussion Forum page, where you will now be able to post responses.

Our discussion forum is organized into top-level “categories” (“Quizzes,” etc.). Within each category, there are “forums” (“Week 1 Quiz,” etc). For each quiz that asks you to post to the discussion forum, you will post your responses to the prompt in that week’s forum.

To post your own response to weekly quiz questions or prompts:

1. You should draft your response first in a Word or Google doc on your own computer. This way, you can save your response in case something happens while you are posting it, or in case it somehow gets erased from the site.
2. After you’ve finished writing your response, it’s time to post it to our discussion forum. To do this, navigate to the appropriate forum for that week. For instance, for the week 1 quiz, that means clicking on the forum titled “Week 1 Quiz” in the “Quizzes” category.
3. You will post your response to the prompt as a “topic” in this forum. To do this, click on the blue “New Topic” button at the top of the forum.
4. Give your post a Subject; this can be something as simple as “[Your Name’s] week 1 quiz” to something more thematic. Then, paste in your response that you wrote in Word or in a Google doc.
5. Make any formatting changes you would like to make using the forum’s WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) editing interface.
6. When you’re ready, click “Submit” (if you hit “Cancel” before you click “Submit,” your post will be erased). Your post should now be visible as a topic within that week’s forum.

To post a reply to a topic:

1. Again, I recommend drafting your reply in Word or Google docs so that you can save it.
2. When you’re ready, navigate to the appropriate forum. For instance, for the week 1 quiz, that means clicking on the forum titled “Week 1 Quiz” in the “Quizzes” category.
3. Click on the title of each post/topic to read it (this is the title that appears in grey and/or as a link).
4. To post your reply, click the blue “Reply” button below the post.

5. Paste in the reply that you wrote in Word or in a Google doc and make any formatting changes you would like.
6. When you're ready, click "Submit" (if you hit "Cancel" before you click "Submit," your reply will be erased). Your reply should now be visible below the initial post.

Zoom:

All of our synchronous class sessions will take place over Zoom. If you don't have a Zoom account already, you will need to sign up for one via UMIT (<https://www.it.miami.edu/a-z-listing/zoom/>). You will need a laptop or a smartphone that can run Zoom, with a working microphone and camera.

You will receive our class Zoom call info via your UM email address, and it will also be listed in the "Passwords and Login Instructions" doc in our shared class folder (you will also be able to access Zoom information via Blackboard and our course site). We will use this Zoom call link and password for all class sessions. We will use a separate Zoom session link for office hours.

To access recordings of class sessions:

1. Select "Zoom Class Meeting Info" from the left-hand menu on our Blackboard site.
2. You will be taken to a screen with a link to our class Zoom meeting. This is how you will access this link throughout the semester.
3. Select "Cloud Recordings". There, you will see a list of all of the class session recordings from the past 30 days. This is also how you access the class chat from each session. A class session recording is automatically deleted after 30 days.

Google drive:

We will use Google drive to store slides from class, and notes from our synchronous class sessions. You will also use Google drive to hand in all assignments in the course.

To protect your privacy, you will need to sign in to Google drive using your UM CaneID and password, and to use this account when working on materials related to this class. You will be shared into our class Gdrive folder via your UM email address. You will also create a folder on your UM Gdrive account that you will share only with me. You will turn in all of your quizzes and other course assignments using this folder.

To set this account and folder up, please follow these directions:

1. Go to drive.google.com and log in using your UM email address (the one given to you by UMIT, with the numbers in it, NOT an aliased email). If you are signed into Google drive via another account, you will need to sign out or select "add another account" by clicking on your account icon in the upper right corner of the screen.
2. Entering your UM email address will redirect you to the UM single sign on page, where you will enter your CaneID and password.
3. You will now be signed into Gdrive with your UM credentials. You will know you are signed in with your UM credentials because the U logo will appear in the upper right corner of your screen. If you do not see this logo, you are not signed in with your UM credentials. Signing in with your UM credentials is important because it protects your academic work behind UM's firewall and ensures your privacy.

4. Create the folder (wherever you want to put it) that you will share with me for this class. Title your folder like this: **ENG485-f20-YourLastName**. This is the folder where you will deposit course assignments for grading.
5. Right click (Windows) or control click (Mac) on the folder and select “Share.” A dialog box titled “Share with people and groups” will pop up. Enter my email address (**please use this one: lxt308@miami.edu**) into that box and click “Done.” I should now receive an email inviting me to access this folder.
6. Whenever an assignment is due, you will place it in this folder in EITHER .docx OR Google doc form. I will respond to your writing using Microsoft Office’s track changes and upload your assignment with my comments back to this folder when it’s ready.
7. Finally, you will also receive an invitation from me to join our shared class Gdrive folder. We will use Gdrive’s “Team drives” feature to organize this. Once you are shared into the folder, it will appear under “Shared drives” in the far left side of the screen when signed into your UM Gdrive account.

Blackboard:

I hate Blackboard, but I will use Grade Center to record your grades on course assignments. You will also be able to access recordings of class sessions and chats via Blackboard.

Class Participation

Participation makes up 20% of your grade in this class. It is assessed on the following metrics:

1. **Attendance.** This is a discussion-based class whose success depends on your consistent presence. When you’re not here, it disrupts our collective work. This is only more important under the current circumstances, when we all need to rely on each other more than ever. Attendance includes completing asynchronous class activities. You may miss up to 4 class sessions/asynchronous activities (i.e., discussion posts) for any reason without penalty, and you don’t need to inform me of these absences in advance. Barring extended illness or emergency, any absence beyond this will lead to a drop not only in your participation grade, but also in your overall grade for the course. I will take attendance every day. If you would like to check on your attendance record, just ask. In general, if something comes up and you will need to be absent from class for an extended period, just communicate with me. We will work it out. Finally, I realize that wifi connection issues may occasionally interfere with your ability to attend class on a particular day. If this happens to you, you may attend the course asynchronously that day by viewing the synchronous class session and completing the asynchronous class activities for that day. You may also simply elect to miss class that day, and use it as one of your 4 allowed absences.
2. **Preparedness.** Sign in to class having completed the reading and ready to discuss it. Conducting classes over Zoom requires that I call on people during class discussion. Therefore, you should come to class expecting to be called on and ready to contribute.
3. **Contributions to class discussion.** These contributions can take multiple forms: participation in small-group discussions, contributions to whole-class discussions, contributions to the class chat during class, contributions to the class Google doc with comments and questions after or during class, meeting with me in virtual office hours, and responding to discussion questions posted on our class discussion forum. It’s perfectly fine to be shy (I am also very shy!), and I understand that Zoom often rewards the gregarious (this is also why I will call on people during discussion). But if you are shy, make sure to take

full advantage of the many written and asynchronous forms of participation available to you in this class.

4. Thoughtful and respectful engagement with all members of the class community.

This means giving the class your full attention while it is happening, and setting aside distractions, especially online distractions. I realize this is hard to do while you are attending a class online, but it is an important way of showing respect for others. This also means listening actively to everyone, acknowledging and interacting with the ideas of others, and speaking to others with respect and dignity. It means refraining from interfering with or dominating class conversation. Finally, it means refraining from posting confidential recordings or transcripts of class sessions on public forums (see below for more on that).

This semester is going to be hard and taxing for all of us. I recognize that many of you simply want things to go back to normal. I do, too -- desperately. Unfortunately, this is not possible right now. If there is something happening in your life that is affecting your work in this class and you feel comfortable talking to me about it, please do so. I am on your side and I want to work with you, not against you. I will extend the benefit of the doubt to you, and I ask that you please extend it to others in the class in turn.

Zoom Etiquette

Our synchronous class sessions will be conducted over Zoom. During our synchronous sessions, I ask that you please mute your microphone unless you are speaking. The university recommends that I require you to turn on your video during class, but I find that requirement distasteful. While I strongly encourage you to turn your video on if possible because I would like to be able to see your face, I do not feel it is my place to require it, and wifi connection issues can sometimes make it impossible.

Please do not attend our synchronous class sessions while you are laying down in bed or on the couch.

I encourage you to participate in discussion via Zoom's chat feature during class. Each class, the person working as the assistant for the day will be assigned to monitor the class chat and alert me to any salient points of discussion or questions, and the chat will be saved after each class session and shared with the class for future reference. You should feel free to ask and answer questions about the class or what we are discussing there. You should also use the chat feature to place yourself on stack if you would like to speak during class discussion. The assistant will also manage the class stack via chat. Please remember that the class Zoom chat will be automatically saved after every class session, so do not post anything there that you are not comfortable with everyone being able to read after the fact.

Finally, I ask that you refrain from using Zoom's private message feature to try to message me during class. Because I'll be busy leading discussion, it is unlikely that I will see your message. Instead, email me. (In general, just be careful with Zoom's private message feature. When Zoom chats are active, I find it can be difficult to tell which messages are private and which are public. Please be careful and respectful.)

Discussion Guidelines: On trust, on difficulty and on being wrong

Class discussion is a process of creating knowledge together. This is not a lecture course, and the success of this class does not depend on me delivering information to you as you sit there passively.

Rather, it depends on your continual engagement and participation in a collective project of meaning making. This is why your participation in class is so vital. This is hard work -- especially online -- and it *only* works if we all commit to respecting each member of this class through our words and our actions. This doesn't mean that you agree with everyone else, or with me, or with the author of the piece we are reading. It does mean that we all commit to supporting and trusting one another.

As you know, synchronous class discussion will be recorded for viewing by those who will be taking this class asynchronously. You will break our collective trust if you share recordings of class conversations with people outside of this class, or on public forums. Doing so will result in a failing grade in this class. Do not do this.

The things we read in this class will be difficult – at times *really* difficult. It's ok to not understand them when you first read them! It's ok that you've never taken a class like this before, and/or that you feel frustrated by the reading. In fact, I expect this to be the case more often than not. Figuring difficult things out together as a group is what class discussion is for. We will all be entering into uncharted territory in this class, and some of the ideas we discuss may confuse you, or make you uncomfortable and angry, or both. We will all experience moments of panic, of flailing, and of error. I ask that you accept this chance to make mistakes, and that you extend this acceptance to your classmates as well.

Language, Power, and History

This class takes seriously the need to examine rather than censor or look away from the messiness, complexity, and – often – ugliness of history. At the same time, our classroom is a contingent community and I treat it as such: we must be accountable to and respectful of each other as we collectively create a space for discussing difficult, and at times uncomfortable, issues.

In that spirit, I want to make explicit that many of the texts we will study this semester use the n-word and other racial slurs. We will not repeat these words aloud in class.

While, like many derogatory expressions, these words have a complex history of reclamation and resignification, they are not appropriate for casual classroom use. In each elision – in each unsaid syllable of this word – exists a moment to reflect on this country's ongoing legacy of racial violence.

Reading Expectations for This Class

The reading in this class is no joke, and it will require your time and attention. You'll be expected to do somewhere in the neighborhood of 45 minutes of reading a night (including the weekend!) for this class. (The estimated reading speed for this calculation is 138 words a minute, based on some research which I'm glad to discuss with you!) Sometimes, you'll be asked to read (or watch) a little more than this; sometimes, you'll be asked to read (or watch) a little less.

A few tips for staying on top of the reading: (1) Read every day. Make some leisure time for this, and don't try to cram all the pages into the night or morning before class. (2) Read at odd hours. Read between classes. Read before you fall asleep. Read instead of endlessly scrolling your social media of choice. (3) Read ahead. If you ever find yourself with some extra prep time, do your future self a favor.

Late Work

All assignments should be submitted on the due date and in the format indicated in the assignment sheet. Due dates are important because they allow me to organize the work of responding to your assignments in ways that best contribute to your learning. Unless you make prior arrangements with me at least 24 hours in advance of an assignment's due date, late assignments will be penalized a full letter grade for each day that they are late, and I will not accept assignments that are more than 4 days late. Unless prior arrangements have been made, late final projects will not be accepted at all.

However, life also sometimes gets in the way (especially this semester). If you find that you need an extension on a particular assignment, please contact me as soon as possible to arrange an alternative due date (again, you must contact me at least 24 hours before the assignment is due, but the sooner the better). Assignment extensions will not generally be granted retroactively.

On a personal level, like everyone else, I dislike being lied to. You do not need to concoct elaborate stories if requesting an extension on an assignment, or if your work will be late. Simply be honest with me about whatever is going on and we will work it out.

Email

All students are required to check their official UM email accounts regularly. I will send course information and announcements through email, and we will all be relying even more than usual on email this semester. I endeavor to respond to all emails that you send me within 24 hours during the week and within 48 hours over the weekend, but please do not send me urgent emails regarding your assignments in the hours before they are due and expect a reply.

If you have more involved questions about course material, assignments, or policies, the best thing to do is to talk to me in a one-on-one appointment over Zoom. In fact, the best thing to do in almost any situation that affects your class work is simply to talk to me about it. I am happy to answer questions about the course via email, but I recommend that more involved questions and conversations be conducted over Zoom. I am also happy to read and discuss advance drafts of your assignments with you over Zoom, but I will not read and comment on drafts of assignments via email before they are due.

Technological Failures Are Not Emergencies

Technological failures and mishaps – file corruption, computer crashes, wifi connection problems, uploading the wrong file to Google drive – are predictable facts of twenty-first century life. They happen all of the time and are thus NOT emergencies. For this course, for all of your courses, for your career, for the rest of your life on this earth, and especially now that most everything has moved online for the time being, you need to develop strategies that take such failures into account. Start your work early, save it often, and save backup copies of important documents off-site on an external hard drive or in the cloud using services like Dropbox and Google drive. Technological failure or mishap – including uploading the wrong file to Google drive – is not an excuse for late or unfinished work (although it may very well make it difficult for you to attend class on a given day – I understand this).

Please note that I will grade whatever you upload to your Gdrive folder for grading. If that file is obviously the wrong file, or otherwise incomplete or corrupted in some way, your assignment will be counted as late. If you fail to turn in your assignment after 4 days, you will receive a 0 on that

assignment, as per the late work policy. It is your responsibility to turn in the correct version of your assignment for grading.

Plagiarism

The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations, especially plagiarism, are treated gravely. In terms of this course, academic integrity means that when you are responsible for a task, you – and no one else – will perform that task. When you rely on someone else's work in performing an aspect of that work, you will give full credit in the proper, accepted form. Turning in work for this class that you have not done yourself or that you have previously completed for other courses is a violation of academic integrity. The University of Miami's honor code can be found here: <https://doso.studentaffairs.miami.edu/honor-council/honor-code/index.html>. Ignorance of what constitutes academic dishonesty is not an acceptable excuse for academic dishonesty.

Violations of academic integrity constitute grounds for failure of the course and possible expulsion from the university. If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism, please contact me.

Writing and Tutoring Resources

The Writing Center offers **free**, one-on-one assistance with any aspect of the writing process. I strongly suggest you take advantage of this resource. You can schedule a consultation via their website at <https://english.as.miami.edu/writing-center/index.html>.

The Camner Center for Academic Resources also offers **free** tutoring for UM students. You can learn more and schedule an appointment here: <https://camnercenter.miami.edu/tutoring-services/index.html>.

Counseling Resources

UM offers counseling **free of charge** to students who have already paid the Health and Counseling Center fee. The Counseling Center website is <https://counseling.studentaffairs.miami.edu/index.html>, and you can make an appointment by following the steps outlined here: <https://counseling.studentaffairs.miami.edu/appointments/make-an-appointment/index.html>.

Resources for Students with Disabilities

It is important to me that all learning experiences be as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers due to your disability (including mental health, learning disorders and chronic medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, you also need to contact the Office of Disability Services, <https://camnercenter.miami.edu/disability-services/index.html>.

Calendar

Readings are due – meaning they should be completed – on the dates indicated. You should come to class prepared to discuss them. Our course website will link to each reading (unless it's a novel).

The most accurate and up-to-date version of this calendar can be found on our course site. Use the online calendar to check on reading assignments, rather than this print version, since the print version of this syllabus will not be updated throughout the semester.

I reserve the right to change the course calendar as needed if it will benefit the class; adequate advance notice will always be given of any changes.

Reading Schedule

Week 1

Monday, August 17

- Introductions
- Watch "ENG 485/AMS322 Intro to Online Systems" video before class (15:46 min). Access this recording via our Blackboard site > Zoom Class Meeting info > Cloud Recordings.

Wednesday, August 19

- Henry Luce, "The American Century," *Life* (1941)
- Richard Stengel, "The End of the American Century," *The Atlantic* (January 26, 2017)
- **Quiz #1 posted after class. Due Friday, August 21 by 10 pm US Eastern.**

Week 2

Monday, August 24

- John Okada, *No No Boy* (1957), Foreword, Introduction, Preface, Ch 1 (pgs VII - 46)
- Franklin D. Roosevelt, "Executive Order No. 9066" (1942)
- Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum, "FDR and Japanese American Internment" (1941-2)

Wednesday, August 26

- John Okada, *No No Boy* (1957), Ch 3-5 (pgs 47-105)
- **Quiz #2 posted after class. Due Friday, August 28 by 10 pm US Eastern.**

Week 3

Monday, August 31

- John Okada, *No No Boy* (1957), Ch 6-8, Afterword (pgs 106-167)
- Selections from William L. Patterson and the Civil Rights Congress, *We Charge Genocide: The Historic Petition to the United Nations for Relief From a Crime of The United States Government Against the Negro People* (1951), as excerpted here: <https://www.blackpast.org/global-african-history/primary-documents-global-african-history/we-charge-genocide-historic-petition-united-nations-relief-crime-united-states-government-against/>

Wednesday, September 2

- John Okada, *No No Boy* (1957), Ch 9-11, Afterword (pgs 168-232)
- **Quiz #3 posted after class. Due Friday, September 4 by 10 pm US Eastern.**

Week 4

Monday, September 7

LABOR DAY -- NO CLASS

Wednesday, September 9

- Discussion of how to research historical events
- NSC 68, “A Report to the National Security Council by the Executive Secretary on United States Objectives and Programs for National Security” (April 14, 1950), pgs 1-12, 60-66 (Sections I-IV, Conclusions, Recommendations)

Friday, September 11

- **Close reading paper 1 due**

Week 5

Monday, September 14

- Toni Morrison, *Home* (2012), Ch 1-7 (pgs 3-84)
- “University of Miami Desegregation,” online exhibit created by University of Miami Libraries, <http://scholar.library.miami.edu/umdesegregation/index.php.html>
 - Read the landing page, 1950s, 1960s, 1970s, plus all links in the left menu (which are little blurbs about specific events)

Wednesday, September 16

- Toni Morrison, *Home* (2012), Ch 8-17 (pgs 85-147)
- **Quiz #4 posted after class. Due Friday, September 18 by 10 pm US Eastern.**

Week 6

Monday, September 21

- Stanley Kubrick, dir., *Dr. Strangelove, Or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb* (1964)
 - Available to rent via Amazon Prime for \$3.99; also available on the Internet Archive for free, https://archive.org/details/DRStrangelove_20130616
- Louis Menand, “Fat Man: Herman Kahn and the Nuclear Age,” *The New Yorker* (2005)

Wednesday, September 23

- Gwendolyn Brooks, “the mother” (1963), <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/43309/the-mother-56d2220767a02>

- Anne Sexton, “The Abortion” (1962), http://famouspoetsandpoems.com/poets/anne_sexton/poems/18154
- Anne Sexton, “Menstruation at Forty” (1966), <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/42572/menstruation-at-forty>
- Lucille Clifton, “the lost baby poem” (1972), <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/53239/the-lost-baby-poem>
- **Quiz #5 posted after class. Due Friday, September 25 by 10 pm US Eastern.**

Week 7

Monday, September 28

- Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), Ch 1 “The Problem that has No Name”
- Angela Davis, “The Legacy of Slavery: Standards for a New Womanhood,” in *Women, Race, & Class* (1981)

Wednesday, September 30

- Clips from The Last Poets, *Right On!* (1970)
- Amiri Baraka, “Black Art” (1966) (6:33 min), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dh2P-tlEH_w
- Amiri Baraka, “Dope” (1979) (listen to the recording on poetryfoundation.org: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/58015/dope>)
- Larry Neal, “Don’t Say Goodbye to the Pork-Pie Hat” (1969)
- Sonia Sanchez, “a/coltrane/poem” (1970)
- Carolyn M. Rodgers, “The Last M.F.” (1973)
- Audre Lorde, “Power” (1978), <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/53918/power-56d233adafeb3>
- Audre Lorde, “A Litany for Survival” (1978), <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/147275/a-litany-for-survival>
- **Quiz #6 posted after class. Due Friday, October 2 by 10 pm US Eastern.**
 - You will need to name the text(s) you are writing about in your close reading paper 2 assignment in this quiz.

Week 8

Monday, October 5

- James Baldwin, “Letter from a Region in My Mind,” *The New Yorker* (November 10, 1962)
- Interview with James Baldwin, “How to Cool It,” *Esquire* (July 1968), <https://www.esquire.com/news-politics/a23960/james-baldwin-cool-it/>

Wednesday, October 7

- Tim O’Brien, “How to Tell a True War Story,” from *The Things They Carried* (1990)
- Newsreels on anti-Vietnam War protests in 1967 and 1968:

- April 18, 1967, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gB0CNTdYOXE>
- Anti-Vietnam Protests at DNC, Aug 28, 1968, *ABC News* (3:51 min)
<https://abcnews.go.com/Archives/video/aug-28-1968-anti-vietnam-protests-10690501>
- Clip about Richard Nixon’s “silent majority” speech in 1969, PBS American Experience (1:33 min), <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/nixon-silent-majority/>

Friday, October 9

- **Close reading paper 2 due**

Week 9

Monday, October 12

- Selections from Richard H. Pratt, “The Advantages of Mingling Indians with Whites,” from *Official Report of the Nineteenth Annual Conference of Charities and Correction* (1892), pgs 46-59
- Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, “Indian Education: A National Tragedy -- A National Challenge” (1969), Foreword and Summary (pgs IX-XIV)
- Roxanna Asgarian, “How a white evangelical family could dismantle adoption protections for Native children,” *Vox* (Feb 20, 2020),
<https://www.vox.com/identities/2020/2/20/21131387/indian-child-welfare-act-court-case-foster-care>
- Start reading Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony* (1977), pgs xi-26 (including Preface and Introduction)
 - Start with Preface, end with “So he scratched a hole in the dry sand beside him, and when the glare of that light finally blinded him, he turned to his right side and vomited into the hole.”

Wednesday, October 14

- Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony* (1977), pgs 27-67
 - Start with “When he got off the train at New Laguna, his legs were shaky...” and end with “...but he knew that she always hoped, that she always expected it to happen to him, not to Rocky.”
- **Quiz #7 posted after class. Due Friday, October 16 by 10 pm US Eastern.**

Week 10

Monday, October 19

- Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony* (1977), pgs 67-154
 - Start with “Part of the five hundred dollar deal was that Ulibarri would deliver the cattle,” and end with “...and she wasn’t going to waste any more time fooling around with Indian war heroes.”

Wednesday, October 21

- Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony* (1977), pgs 154-244

- Start with “He sat back in the chair and rested his head against the cool plaster wall,” and end with “Sunrise, / accept this offering, / Sunrise.”
- **Quiz #8 posted after class. Due Friday, October 23 by 10 pm US Eastern.**

Week 11

Monday, October 26

- President Nixon Declares Drug Abuse “Public Enemy Number One,” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y8TGLLQID9M> (June 17, 1971) (4:37 min)
- Nancy Reagan, clip from “Just Say No” campaign speech, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lQXgVM30mIY> (1986) (5:02 min)
- 3 articles from *LA Times* in 1990 on then-police chief and founder of “D.A.R.E.”, Daryl Gates:
 - “Casual Drug Users Should Be Shot, Gates Says” (Sept 6, 1990)
 - “‘Yeah, I Mean It!’ Gates Says of Idea to Shoot Drug Users” (Sept 8, 1990)
 - “Police Board Won’t Probe Gates Furor...” (Sept 19, 1990)
- Start reading Octavia Butler, *The Parable of the Sower* (1993), “Three Reads,” Ch 1-6 (pgs vii-76)

Wednesday, October 28

- Octavia Butler, *The Parable of the Sower* (1993), Ch 7-13 (pgs 77-149)
- **Quiz #9 posted after class. Due Friday, October 30 by 10 pm US Eastern.**

Friday, October 30

- **Optional: Close reading 2 revision due**

Week 12

Monday, November 2

- Octavia Butler, *The Parable of the Sower* (1993), Ch 14-19 (pgs 154-244)
- Discussion of final projects

Wednesday, November 4

- Mental health day -- NO CLASS

Week 13

Monday, November 9

- Octavia Butler, *The Parable of the Sower* (1993), Ch 20-25, “A Conversation with Octavia E. Butler” (pgs 245-341)

Wednesday, November 11

- NYPD, “Radicalization in the West: The Homegrown Threat” (2007), Executive Summary and The Threat (pgs 5-14)
- DHS, “If You See Something, Say Something” public awareness video, <https://www.dhs.gov/nationwide-sar-initiative-nsi/if-you-see-something-say-something-public-awareness-video>
- **Quiz #10 posted online. Due Friday, November 13 by 10 pm US Eastern.**
 - Quiz #10 will include your final project abstract.

Week 14

Monday, November 16

- Tananarive Due, “*Get Out* and the Black Horror Aesthetic,” in *Get Out: The Complete Annotated Screenplay* (2019)
- Jordan Peele, dir., *Get Out* (2017)

Wednesday, November 18

- *Get Out* con’t, wrap-up
- Course evaluations

Week 15

Monday, November 23

- Office hours to discuss final projects

Wednesday, December 2

- **Final project due by 4:30 pm US Eastern** (end of this class’s final exam period)

Quizzes: 15%

Each week that you do not have another assignment due, you will complete a short online quiz. The quizzes will assess your familiarity with and comprehension of class material. You will have access to all course materials in completing these quizzes, and they will not be proctored. Questions will evaluate your proficiency with course materials and ask you to reflect on them. You will complete 9 quizzes total (out of 10).

I will post quiz questions to our class discussion forum on Wednesdays after class, and you will have until Friday at 10 pm US Eastern to complete the quiz. In the Gdrive folder you share with me, you should create a Google doc titled “Quizzes” and write your responses to each quiz in that document. Occasionally, a week’s quiz will direct you to post a response to our course discussion forum instead or in addition to Gdrive.

Historical Context Explainer Video: 10%

- **During the first weeks of the semester, you will sign up for a designated class day in which to present your explainer video. Your explainer video will be due by 10 pm US Eastern the night before this date.**
 - You will email me no later than 3 days before your explainer video is due to tell me what historical event, document, policy, or figure you have chosen to focus your explainer video on.
- **1-2 minutes long**
- **Turn in to our class Gdrive folder; video in .mp3 or .mp4 format; bibliography in .docx or Google doc format**

An “explainer video,” a term used in video marketing, is a short, catchy, and clever video that presents information; they are usually produced by a company to explain a product. To learn more about the explainer video format and to see lots of examples from the video marketing world, see this post: <https://visme.co/blog/explainer-videos/>. In this assignment, we are going to borrow this format for the purposes of education rather than sales.

On a designated day during the semester, you will be responsible for producing a 1-2 minute explainer video highlighting one specific aspect of the historical context of the reading due that day. This video should *historicize* the reading due that day for the class (we will talk a lot in class about what “historicize” means). This can mean highlighting a historical event, document, policy or figure mentioned explicitly or alluded to implicitly in the reading, and/or an event, document, policy or figure important to the creation/production of the reading and that you believe shapes our understanding of the reading (i.e., an event, document, policy or figure important to the historical moment in which the reading was written or produced, whether or not it’s mentioned or alluded to in the text itself). This historicization will be based on preliminary research on this historical event, document, policy, or figure that you will perform.

Your video should contain the following elements:

- An accessible explanation/description of the specific historical event, document, policy or figure you have chosen for your video, based on the research you have performed. You

should imagine that you are producing this explainer video for an audience who knows nothing about the historical event, document, policy or figure you are discussing.

- Images and/or archival footage of your chosen event, document, policy, or figure (to the extent this is possible)
- An explanation of how this event, document, policy, or figure relates to the reading due that day, using specific examples from the text to tie the text to your chosen event, document, policy, or figure.

You will also submit a bibliography with your video. This bibliography should list 3-5 secondary sources about your historical event, document, policy, or figure that you consulted in creating your video. For each source, you should write 1-2 sentences about how you used that source in creating your video.

Grading:

This is important: Your video should be no longer than 2 minutes! And it does not need to be fancy! The examples in the post linked to above were created by teams of people with actual production budgets. You are just one person operating with no budget. I encourage you to have fun and to be creative with this assignment, but your explainer video can be as simple as a Zoom recording of you talking over some PowerPoint slides. What matters to me is that your video: 1) is 1-2 minutes long; 2) contains accurate and thoroughly researched information about your chosen historical event, document, policy, or figure, presented in an accessible way; and 3) connects this historical information to the reading due that day in a compelling and convincing way.

You do not need to complete the weekly quiz for the week your explainer video is due.

How to turn in your video:

You will share both your explainer video and your bibliography with the class. You will submit them to our class Gdrive folder (in the folder titled “Historical Context Explainers”). Your video should be in .mp3 or .mp4 format, NOT in .mov (proprietary to Apple devices) or .wmv (proprietary to Windows devices) format. If you need to convert your video file, follow the instructions in the below links to do so:

- Converting .mov to .mp4: <https://www.digitaltrends.com/computing/how-to-convert-mov-to-mp4/>
- Converting .wmv to .mp4: <https://www.digitaltrends.com/computing/convert-wmv-to-mp4/>

Alternatively, you may post your video on YouTube or Vimeo (or another streaming platform) and provide the class with a link.

Close Reading Papers: 30%

You will write 2 close reading papers in this class. We will talk a lot in class about what close reading means. You will have the opportunity to revise your second close reading paper for a potentially higher grade if you choose.

Close Reading Paper 1 -- 10%

- **Due Friday, September 11 by 10 pm US Eastern**

- **A list + 500-750 word discussion (2-3 pages double-spaced)**
- **MLA citation style**
- **Turn in via the Gdrive folder you shared with me; .docx or Google doc format**

The first paper assignment is designed to hone your skills as a close reader. You will focus on just one specific section/scene from Okada's *No No Boy*. I will provide the class with 3-4 sections/scenes to choose from; you may select another section/scene from the novel to write about, but you must clear this selection with me by Monday, September 7.

Your task in this paper will be two-fold:

- 1) Closely observe the section/scene and create a list of each of your observations tied to a specific quote(s) from the text. This means simply identifying as many different features of your selected section/scene as you can. These features can range from the thematic ("this passage includes a lot of words about x topic," "this is a flashback scene", etc.) to the technical ("the author uses synecdoche in this sentence") to the structural ("the structure of this scene emphasizes the trauma of war for x, y, z reasons," "this scene is organized in a contradictory way for x, y, z reasons") to the affective ("the tone of this sentence is nostalgic"). There are many more possibilities. The point here is to simply write down everything you notice about your selected section/scene, and to tie these observations to specific words, sentences, and/or structures in the section/scene. Try to list as many different observations as you can. **There is no specific number that is required, but I'm expecting you to attempt to exhaust all possibilities.** Don't worry about what these observations might mean, just write them down. Think of this as brainstorming -- there are no bad ideas.
- 2) Select 1-3 of the most interesting observations you've made and write 500-750 words speculating on what these observations might mean in terms of the text overall. Do these observations connect to any other moments in the text? If so, what are these moments? Do they form a larger pattern? What does this pattern mean, in terms of the text as a whole? Why/how is it important to our understanding of the text as a whole? You don't have to come to any definite conclusions or make any arguments in this discussion -- you just need to think about what the things you've observed in the text might mean. Your writing can be informal, and don't be afraid of confusion, ambiguity, complexity, or complication.

Close Reading Paper 2 -- 20%

- **Due Friday, Oct 9 by 10 pm US Eastern**
- **1000-1250 words (4-5 pages double-spaced)**
- **MLA citation style**
- **Turn in via the Gdrive folder you shared with me; .docx or Google doc format**

The second paper assignment asks you to apply the skills you honed in the first paper to write a fully realized close reading paper. You may write this paper on any of the *literary* texts we have read so far in class: Okada's *No No Boy*; Morrison's *Home*; the poems assigned on Wednesday, September 23; or the poems assigned on Wednesday, September 30. If you choose to write about a novel (*No No Boy* or *Home*), you may only write about that text and no others. If you choose to write about poetry, you may choose up to 2 poems to write about (up to 3 if you make a strong argument for why you want to write about 3). You will need to name the text(s) you are writing about in quiz #6, which is due Friday, Oct 2 by 10 pm US Eastern.

If you choose to write about Okada's *No No Boy*, you may further develop the ideas you began to think about in close reading paper 1.

Your task in this paper is again two-fold:

- 1) Start by finding a pattern in your chosen text. One way to think about close reading papers is that they are attempts to **argue for the significance of specific textual patterns** that you discover in the text you are writing about. Think about the process you went through in writing close reading paper 1. Closely observe your chosen text and create a list of as many observations as you can find. Then, start to connect these observations in order to see if any form larger patterns. A pattern is simply a repeated textual element. Your pattern might be organized around repetition: repeated words, repeated symbols, repeated metaphors, repeated settings. It might also involve change: how the meaning of a specific image seems to change throughout the text, for example, or how a particular character changes, or how the style of narration changes at a particular point. It might also have to do with the structure and/or form of the text: you might notice that certain chapters are organized in a particular way, or that the plot is repetitive or otherwise structured in a different or unexpected way. There are endless possibilities. **Choose one specific pattern to write about.** IMPORTANT: You should not already know what this pattern means / why it exists in the text.
- 2) The next step is harder: you need to interpret what this pattern means in terms of the text as a whole, and write a paper designed to convince your reader of the validity of this interpretation. In a close reading paper, you are trying to answer the question: **"so what?"** So you've found a specific pattern in the text: so what? What does this pattern mean, in terms of the text as a whole? Why/how is it important to our understanding of the text as a whole, and what specific textual evidence can you marshal to back up this interpretation?

You should organize your essay around one central idea, as opposed to providing a list of claims and observations. Remain aware of the need to make specific claims rather than vague generalizations, building your argument around specific passages, pages, scenes, or other textual elements. I expect you to present an original thesis and to work closely through the text on your own, NOT to synthesize and then regurgitate interpretations we have worked through in class.

Grading:

This paper is worth 20% of your final grade in this course. You will be graded on the complexity, originality, specificity, and overall success of your argument, as well as on the overall presentation and polish of your writing. Do you make a compelling and effective case for your interpretation of your chosen text? Does your argument invite and engage with complexity? Is it specific? Is it original to you, or have we already worked through it entirely together in class? Is it an argument about the text's meaning (or one of its meanings), rather than a collection of loosely organized summaries or observations about the text? Is your writing clear, polished and effectively organized?

Because doing this kind of writing is difficult and takes practice to do well, you will have the chance to revise this paper for a potentially higher grade if you choose. If you choose to revise your paper, your revision will be due Friday, October 30.

Final Project: 25%

- **Due Wednesday, December 2 by 4:30 pm US Eastern (the end of the final exam slot for this class)**
 - Final project abstract (included in quiz #10) due Friday, Nov 13 by 10 pm US Eastern.
- **1750-2000 words (7-8 pages double-spaced); 10-12 minute video; or something of your own choosing**
- **MLA citation style**
- **Turn in via the Gdrive folder you shared with me; writing should be in .docx or Google doc format**

The final project in this class builds on the work you did in your historical context explainer video by asking you to historicize an aesthetic object from the past 10 years that we have not discussed in class. This can be a work of literature, a film, a television show, a work of art, or something else--but it should be an aesthetic object. We'll talk more about what this means in class, and I'll provide a list of possibilities later on in the semester. In most cases, you should choose just one object to work with, but there might be situations in which choosing more than one object makes sense.

You may complete your final project in your choice of medium: you may write an analytic paper (1750-2000 words), you may create a longer-format video (about 10-12 minutes in length, incorporating images and clips with your own scripted narration), or you may suggest your own approach (for example, if you're artistically inclined, you might organize your final project in the form of a comic book). No matter what medium you choose, your project should:

1. Place your chosen object in some historical context and consider the significance of that context for understanding your chosen object.
2. Advance an argument that shows why understanding your chosen object in this context is important. What does understanding your chosen object in this way teach us (about the object, about our culture, about the historical context, etc.)?

When you turn in your final project abstract, you will need to include the object(s) you are writing about; a short description of the historical context (i.e., the historical event, document, policy or figure) related to the object that you are writing about; and at least one primary source documenting/about that context. We will talk more about the final project as the semester progresses.