"I am deliberate and afraid of nothing."
- Audre Lorde

"My feminism will be intersectional or it will be bullshit."
- Flanna Diggijn

"Until I Am Free, You Are Not Free Either"
- Fannie Lou Hamer

#black girl magic

Fall Semester 2019 @ Texas Christian University

"Honor our Dead & Fight like Hell for the Living"

In June 2011, CeCe McDonald fought off a racist, transphobic attacker. She was sentenced to 41 months in a men’s prison for 2nd degree manslaughter, despite clear evidence of self-defense. CeCe was released from prison on Jan. 13, 2019.

FREE CeCe
support trans women of color

"Until I Am Free, You Are Not Free Either"
- Fannie Lou Hamer
Welcome to fall 2019 and your syllabus zine for #BlackGirlMagic: @The Intersections of Literacies, Public Pedagogies, and Black Feminisms!

This syllabus was designed as an old skool Hip Hop zine where we have limited printing/production resources but UNlimited imaginations. It is as home-grown and home-made as collard greens in your backyard, intentionally so, in order to reduce the possibility of the floss and gloss of a consumerist, corporate brochure. I am trying to be different from today’s usual college syllabus/course outline that looks like just another bureaucratic form filled with cut-and-paste policy statements. Too many of us have gone through hell and high water to get here. We deserve teachers with backbone and commitment to a decolonized education who won’t comply with and replicate dominant culture. This is part of my attempt.

As many of you already know, professors are most often required to submit their syllabi to their departments for review and/or filing. Unfortunately, most departments still want paper vs. something more appropriate for the 21st century. If I had it my way, our syllabus would be a hologram that each one of us could travel with. It would be a bunch of dope sistas who live somewhere between being bgirls, professors/educators, and conjurewomen who call/chant/dance up the ancestors to talk through the concepts and the assignments with you. I ain’t got them kinda skills... well, not yet. Despite my technical limitations, I refuse to do the okey-doke and just put words on the page.

I hope that this zine inspires you to see that any boring academic requirement can be turned into something with some real flava and actual human interest rather than just another standardized form of language, writing, and presentation. Even old skool technologies like this one offer us many creative opportunities and so this syllabus tries to hack back as both: a) an “endarkened” response to the white neoliberalization of schooling from the moment you put words on a syllabus or curriculum, and; b) the call of #BlackGirlMagic (BGM) to allow a different way of living, being, and knowing to STAY FULL FRONT AND CENTER.

“Black Feminism is a political and intellectual tradition. It is not an identity status.”
~Barbara Ransby

ENGL 80723-035 (15056)
Tues/Thurs 11:00am-12:10pm
(Reed Hall 125)

Course Website
http://blackfeministpedagogies.com
As a zine, rather than a syllabus loaded with the usual, tired old pages of rules, rules, and more rules, this syllabus tries to capture the look, sound, feel, and politics of BGM in the 21st century. I take my time explaining how, why, and what we are studying. Keep this zine throughout the semester. It will tell you what you need to do and have ready when we meet. And most importantly, push your imaginations and critical awareness to the limit. It’s gon be a dope semester!

In solidarity,

Carmen

---

Syllabus Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overview</th>
<th>What the Course Be Like</th>
<th>page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme One</td>
<td>The Jump Off... &quot;We Gon Do This Just Like Big Poppa Was Here&quot; (August 27- Sep 5)</td>
<td>page 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme Two</td>
<td>&quot;How We Get Free&quot;: Theory Clapback w/ Black Feminisms (Sept 10- Sep 26)</td>
<td>page 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme Four</td>
<td>&quot;Highly Melanated, Black Girl Never Over-rated&quot;: Fictional Narratives in the Makings of #BlackGirlMagic (Oct 29- Nov 21)</td>
<td>page 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Weeks of Class (Dec 3- Dec 19)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Page 21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We open this semester by acknowledging that the land on which we are gathered is the territory of the Kitikiti’sh—the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes—who can be traced back to the Central and Southern Plains and include the Wichita Proper, Waco, Taovaya, Tawakoni and Kichai. We commit to undoing white settler colonialism in the ways in which we work, speak, and act together on Wichita Land as part of our acknowledgement that those of us who are non-Wichita were never invited here.

---

Informing my thinking:

First coined as “Black Girls are Magic” by Cashawn Thompson, the slogan #BlackGirlMagic proliferated a few months after Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi created #BlackLivesMatter. In this course, we will treat #BlackGirlMagic as a very specific temporal relationship to Black feminisms, public pedagogies related to digital Blackness, Black freedom movements, and 21st-century (re)iterations of white supremacist and imperialist narratives. We will challenge and move beyond the simplistic frames that have positioned (and thereby dismissed) #BlackGirlMagic (BGM) as merely a kind of beauty and representational politics that must ultimately fail for only imagining “magical interventions” against racialized/sexualized violence. Instead, we will closely examine contemporary political and aesthetic conversations in Black feminisms that have made BGM possible/legible. After an introductory framing, the course has three, major themes:

i. We begin with a theory clapback from Black feminist scholars like Tiffany King, Brittney Cooper, and Zakiyyah Jackson who argue against the de-racializing/anti-Black-femme impulses that reject intersectionality and Black feminisms for assemblage the ory and posthumanism. We will take up ongoing challenges to traditionalist notions of feminism via Black queer feminist activism, Black women’s critiques of the academy, and Hip Hop Feminisms in texts like Unapologetic, When We Got Free, and Eloquent Rage.

ii. We traverse the spectrum of Black Girlhood Studies as a new category of analysis for the meanings of reading, writing, and schooling. We will look at activism and policy campaigns that challenge Black girls’ criminalization via schooling and policing regimes in the work of Kimberlé Crenshaw’s #SayHerName and Monique Morris’s Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools. We will study research on Black girl literacies and Black feminist pedagogies from scholars like Ruth Nicole Brown and the Black Girls Literacies Collective, treating these as an archive of activist research in relation to race, gender, sexuality, and justice.

iii. We will tap the magic in Black Girl Magic by examining ongoing digital justice projects, comics, YA literature, and urban street fiction that center Black girls. We will look at Black feminist digital vernaculars—from projects like Kimberly Bryant’s “Black Girls Code,” Yaba Blay’s “Professional Black Girl” series, Pauline Alexis Gumbs’s “Eternal Summer,” to the plethora of AfroNaturalistas reimagining beauty standards—all of whom innovate on the most available technologies in order to push alternative sites of knowledge, cultural rhetorics, authoring, and textual production. We will also study new Black girl image-making in texts like Braveheart by Eve Ewing, Shuri by Nnedi Okorafor, and Bingo Love by Tee Franklin as well as YA and urban fiction authors like Skyy and Shonda.

We will treat our class as a kind of maker-space where we will strategically position what Alexander Weheliye calls “racializing assemblages” alongside Black feminism’s “disavowed” yet stand-alone sustained reinvigoration of African American cultural theory. Since the “sexualized ungendering of the Black subject” (Weheliye 108) has played a pivotal role in the making of modernity, we will reject any notion that our keen focus on Black women is unrelatable or irrelevant to any western geography and thereby ask new questions of whitestream classrooms, literacies, digital/cultural theories, and rhetorical histories.
This is not a class that explicitly teaches you how to teach. Although compositionist-rhetoricians tend to think critically about pedagogy and schooling, we do not fetishize teaching that way. We will be looking at school, literacies, and pedagogies as WHOLLY institutional and hit that with all of the critical theorization that we can. This includes a kind of deliberation about what we could do in classrooms.

While this is most certainly a comp-rhet class, you will notice very quickly that our intellectual and scholarly reach goes way beyond the whitestream traditionalisms of comp-rhet. If you are reading and writing about marginalized groups and have any hope of reaching a critical insight about them, you cannot limit yourself to the comp-rhet canon. If you do, you will not arrive at anything that could even be partially transformative to the very groups you claim to center. The disciplinary silos of the western academy also have not been structured to center marginalized groups, Black women and femmes especially, so you need to read across and past these disciplines and fields. This curriculum makes such an attempt.

We will have a reading and writing assignment each week of class and we will try NOT to always sit at the seminar table arm-chair philosophizing. This means that we will do something slightly different from the usual tasks of close-reading and analysis in English classes. Each week there will be some kind of writing homework rather than an end-of-the-term “paper.” As a writing teacher, asking you to write only once or twice in a semester seems strange; it’s like someone cooking only once or twice a year and calling themselves the world’s top chef. We’ll cook up stuff a little more in here. We’ll do short assignments each week and build out a digital space as the main, final work and end-product of the class. We will do a lot of writing, only it will be a different kind of writing where we are not merely privileging alphabetic text.

The syllabus zine explains each weekly response that you must submit. Please note that these weekly assignments are called Reading Responses, not essays. There is no expectation that you write in the traditional form of the western, linear essay. As model and inspiration, look at Celeste’s work at the left who was an undergraduate student in one of my classes about Black women’s rhetorics. Celeste’s reading response consisted of a graphic novel constantly in progress where each week TEAM ABLE (Angela Davis, Bessie Smith, Lucy Wilmot Smith, and Ella Baker) took on the topics and issues in the reading assignment. The only time Celeste wrote a traditional “paper” was when she did not
have the time or energy to do something else. Notice her brilliant polemic here: alphabetic/essay writing is NOT more difficult, exacting, or complex than other forms of design and expression. The hyper-elevation of alphabetic text at the expense of everything else is a white, masculinist, western teleology. Also notice the pedagogical politics here: Celeste was NEVER asked to write an essay alongside her graphics in order to explain or legitimate her work. The assumption that there could ever be an exact verbal explanation of a visual image is problematic and only further privileges western epistemologies. Every time you put words, images, sound—any kind of text—down, you are entering and sustaining very specific communities, histories, and politics. Be mindful of who and what you are replicating.

For more about the politics of teaching and writing in this course, please see the course website under the first theme, “The Jump Off.” You will see a section called “Put Some Stank On It”: Policies and Such). For now, here’s the basic gist. Writing critically with and from multiple, informed sources is perhaps the single, most common trademark for the kind of writing and thinking that is expected of you in the academy. However, this does NOT mean: that you write about things you don’t care about, that you write as if you sound like an encyclopedia/ wikipedia, that you omit your own voice and perspective, that you cannot be creative and energetic, that you must sound like the type of person who might wear wool/plaid jackets with suede patches on the elbows in order to be taken seriously, that you cannot be everything that makes up your multiple selves, that you cannot be Hip Hop/ Soul/ Bomba y Plena/ Soca/ Bachata/ Metal/ Reggae/ EDM/ or Rock-N-Roll, that you cannot have some fun with it. You do not give up who you are to be an academic writer. On the contrary, you take who you are even MORE SERIOUSLY. As Hip Hop teaches us, always stay flyyyyy!

Writing about texts is perhaps the single, most common trademark for the kind of writing and thinking that is expected of you in the academy. However, this does NOT mean: that you write about things you don’t care about, that you write as if you sound like an encyclopedia/ wikipedia, that you omit your own voice and perspective, that you cannot be creative and energetic, that you must sound like the type of person who might wear wool/plaid jackets with suede patches on the elbows in order to be taken seriously, that you cannot be everything that makes up your multiple selves, that you cannot be Hip Hop/ Soul/ Bomba y Plena/ Soca/ Bachata/ Metal/ Reggae/ EDM/ or Rock-N-Roll, that you cannot have some fun with it. You do not give up who you are to be an academic writer; on the contrary, you take who you are even MORE SERIOUSLY. As Hip Hop teaches us, always stay flyyyyy!

Please plan to submit a hard-copy at the end of EACH class of your reading response. This is an old skool requirement, yes, for the sole purpose of the materiality of the stack. When and where you can, please use the front and back of your paper or use recycled paper (this includes any—colored or plain---paper where there is a flyer, notes, etc already printed on the other side). Please also note that late responses will generally be frowned on. This is not meant as a harsh punishment, just an indication that I am unable to keep up with responding to incoming work and late work too. Please try to submit on time and let me know when you have a conflict. If you have a blog or some other online platform, you can do your reading responses there and I will read them.
We will begin many classes with a HYPE ASSIGNMENT. Yes, I am referencing a Hip Hop term here (though the phenomenon is wider than that): I am talking about the person who comes out on stage before an entertainer-artist and gets the crowd amped up and excited for the main event. For many classes, we are going to have someone to Hype Us Up! It is pretty customary in graduate classes for someone to start the class with an introduction or interpretation of the text for that week’s class discussion. You have 10-15 minutes with this. Plan something for us to see, do, think about---don’t just talk off the top of your head. You should assume---like with any graduate classroom—that the ideas that you present to your colleagues in this class are competing for their mind-space and attention with work, family, teaching, sleep, fatigue, hunger, the pile-up of bills during grad school, and the stress of 100s of pages of reading for other classes. Real talk: yes, everyone is a graduate student and hella invested in the work and ideas but it’s still haaaaaard out here. So give your colleagues something hype that will get them amped, ready, and eager to chop it up in the time we spend together each week!

Each theme will ask you to do multiple reading responses. At the end of each theme, there will be some kind of culminating project. We will return to the conversations we have had, the readings we have done, and the writings we have laid down … and then synthesize all of that in some way. Many people have joked that this is the arts & crafts part of the course and, in some ways, yes it is. No shame in this game! Again, you can’t just be a voyeur on other people’s creative processes and products where all you do is write essays within the terms of western logic and organization that interpret what other folks do. You will be asked to work across mediums here. Stay flexible!

The class ends with a digital project. The final product of the course requires that you create a series of webpages dedicated to the content of the course. We will talk about this more in class but for now, you should know that as a graduate student, especially intending to go on the academic marketplace in a few years, you need to build an academic, digital profile. The work that you do in this class will be a step in that direction. Since this is a public-facing digital project, this means that the authors who you discuss will more than likely read what you have to say about their work. This class thus holds you accountable for NOT merely talking about Black women and Black femmes in that typical kind of distant, privileged-academic way… but also talking to them!

If composing for/in a public, digital space causes you stress and anxiety, then you may need to consider a different course since this assignment will be non-negotiable. If you don’t feel
comfortable with digital design, do still stick with the course... the tech part of the work will be easy and you will be guided through it.

Assessment and grading are where the rubber always hits the road. You can call yourself all kinds a critical, radical, alternative, or transformative... but none of it holds true if you uphold the same social constructions of grading that dominant schooling uses. Young adults today have witnessed and been subjected to the most rubrics, norming standards, and high-stakes tests than any other group of K-12 students in the history of education in the United States. In this class, let’s not replicate the kinds of assessment strategies experienced in prototypical standardization regimes.

While I expect that everyone will do the work and do it well in a graduate seminar, I would like you to still experience a model of assessment that is most closely rooted to “contract grading” (“contracts” and other legal artifacts have never liberated Black communities so I do not use these terms). Instead the class is based on a point spread. This means you are not graded on the “skills” that you brought with you to the course, skills that are often more representative of socioeconomic status than knowledge or value added. You are graded on what you DO and CREATE as tangibly and transparently as possible. The point system does not remove us completely away from a neoliberal model, but attempts to strategically counter norms/social constructions of grades and grading. Each project and assignment in the course gets counted towards the overall 100 points. Here is what the point-system looks like:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1) Reading Responses/ RR (44 points total)</th>
<th>Throughout the semester, you will be asked to respond to readings in various genres of writing. There will be detailed guidelines for each response on the syllabus and course website. These are worth two points each (22 responses total).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2) The Hype Assignment (6 points)</td>
<td>This is a 10-15 minute presentation. You will present questions, issues, thoughts to the class in a way that enlivens the group and sets a critical tone for the class that evening.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Theme Projects (20 points total)</td>
<td>There are four theme projects (5 points each). Each has a specific goal and design that corresponds to the theme. You will be expected to synthesize what you have learned and be ready to play and create a little.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Final Digital Project (20 points)</td>
<td>These are the final requirements for your semester’s work. You will receive a detailed point-spread for this assignment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Attendance &amp; Presence (10 points)</td>
<td>Come to each class on time and ready to listen and think deeply.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Special learning needs will be accommodated in this class by both teacher and peers to the best of our abilities. Please see Carmen immediately whenever and if-ever your accommodations have not been met. As a community, we need to all think and challenge ourselves deeply to accommodate the multiple bodies and experiences in the room, especially those that have not been privileged and over-accommodated.

Racist, homophobic, transphobic or sexist language is generally inappropriate for any classroom but moreso here, given the content we are studying. Such issues will be addressed seriously so don’t go there.
This very first unit is an introduction of sorts. It asks you to read and look at the syllabus and corresponding website very closely. It also sets up the framework for the ways that we will politicize gender, sexuality, race, Black feminisms, anti-Blackness, literacies, and pedagogy. Since we are all working in higher education and meeting one another in this space, we start by interrogating the western academy and university in its specific relationship to Black women and Black femmes. We will hug up to Alexis Pauline Gumbs’s work most closely here: first, in her essay, “The Shape of My Impact” where we begin by situating the academy as a space that can be as hostile and predatory as any other. Second, we will read Gumbs’s essay, “17th Floor: A pedagogical oracle from/with Audre Lorde” as a Black-Queer-Feminist-guided meditation on teaching/being in the academy.

We will close this early, short unit with an in-class activity that looks to Black girls’ literacies and languages as a fugitive space. Welcome to the Jump Off! In the words of Lil Kim, circa 2003, “we gon do this like Big Poppa Was Here.”
Welcome to the first day of class. Your assignment today is to make sure that you know and remember everyone’s name/pronunciation and pronoun.

**Thursday August 29**

Read all of this syllabus. Then navigate to the course website: [blackfeministpedagogies.com](http://blackfeministpedagogies.com). Spend some time with both texts—the words, the images, and the sounds. What questions, issues, curiosities, or concerns do you have? What do you need to commit fully to the work and the content? Get it all out now. Write Carmen a letter (yes, call her Carmen)... not an essay... a letter. **This is Reading Response (RR) #1.**

**Tuesday September 3**

Navigate to the course website: [blackfeministpedagogies.com](http://blackfeministpedagogies.com). You will see that the very first tab at the left lists the course title, #BlackGirlMagic. All of the readings for the course are within this main left tab. We are in theme one: *The Jump Off... "We Gon Do This Just Like Big Poppa Was Here."*

For today, read everything on the subpage called: “Black-Queer-Feminist-Guided Meditation on Teaching/Being in the Academy with Alexis Pauline Gumbs.” When you get to that webpage, you will find weblinks. Click on the link for the essay, “The Shape of Impact.” This is a short essay on *The Feminist Wire* that packs a BIG punch. After this, click on the essay, “17th Floor: A Pedagogical Oracle from/with Audre Lorde.” Read these two essays online or print them out for yourself (this decision should be based on your own reading style and needs). Come to class with a piece of writing that addresses two things. First, respond to Gumbs’s “The Shape of Impact.” Find at least one place where you have a reaction. Talk/write it through. Second, take any one of the guided questions from “17th floor” which feels most pressing and relevant to you right now and write/mediate on it. Let this writing take you wherever it takes you. It might be one cohesive piece. It might not be. The goal is not to craft a final, schoolish essay, but to use writing to work through your mind/body/spirit reaction to what Gumbs is saying to us about Black women, the academy, and pedagogy. Let it flow. **This is Reading Response (RR) #2.**

**Thursday September 5**

As we close out each theme, we will have some sort of final project. Go back and ruminate on all that we have discussed, read, and written together and create a collage that somehow captures your own synthesis of what you have been thinking in the course so far. For inspiration, you might take a look at the collage work of Gumbs which is featured on the webpage where you found links to her essays. **This is Theme Project #1.**

**theme i ends . . .**

**read. write. resist.**
“Black feminism is a political and intellectual tradition. It is not an identity status. It is a set of beliefs, a political frame for analyzing the world and resisting oppression. Intersectional Black Feminism is grounded in the U.S./North American/Caribbean context and we make no apologies for that. Because at the same time, it does not preclude, and almost at every instance, insists upon a transnational feminist solidarity...

in order to name and map a Black Feminist Tradition, we have to be willing to think and talk differently about theory.”

~Barbara Ransby, 2017

Tuesday, September 10

40 Years Later... with “A Black Feminist Reading of the Movement for Black Lives”

The original impetus for this class was a course designed on education, literacy, and young Black women. By explicitly naming it #BlackGirlMagic (#BGM), we place ourselves in a very specific time and space in race consciousness, gender & sexuality politics, and meanings of Blackness. Whether we are talking about the ways Black women and girls are digitally organizing and crafting their lives under #BGM or the ways in which social science research and scholarship have made a definite turn into representing Black girls’ lives, the Movement for Black Lives today as well as longstanding Black Feminist activist-intellectual traditions have made our work and discussions possible.

We will start this class with a Sankofa-kind move: we look backwards and move forward at the same time. You have these readings:

1. First, go back and (re)read the 1977 Combahee River Collective Statement. Spend some time online and on your media networks to see how people contextualized the 40-year anniversary. Who remembers? How and why?

2. Second, listen to Barbara Ransby’s March 20, 2017 talk at the Barnard Center for Research on Women called “A Black Feminist Reading of the Movement for Black Lives: Resistance and the U.S. Left Reimagined” on youtube [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2QtwY_girE&t=62s]. The 40-year anniversary of the statement was the theme of the 2017 National Women’s Studies
Association Conference presided by Barbara Ransby. Notice how she makes the Movement for Black Lives a Black Feminist Tradition AND Agenda!

3. As we travel back with the Combahee River Collective, let’s take it all the way back with Audre Lorde. Read BOTH “The Uses of Anger” and “The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action.”

Navigate to the course website. Go to the theme section called: “How We Get Free”: Theory Clapback w/ Black Feminisms. Choose the subpage called “Sankofa.” You will find all of the readings and videos there.

Come to class with reading response #3. In RR#3, take on these questions: What do you think of Ransby’s argument that the Movement for Black Lives is specific to the time and place in which we live? That the Movement for Black Lives is part of a Black Feminist Tradition? What insights do the Combahee River Collective and Audre Lorde provide for us alongside Ransby’s arguments?

**NOTE:** When the questions on the syllabus do not make sense to you, get creative and do something critical anyway. Do not send 1000 emails asking for clarity—this is the western academy working on your self-esteem and self-actualization (ONLY women, femmes, trans, queer, POC students ever email with questions like this)! The Combahee River Collective didn’t need a teacher/school’s approval to say what needed to be said. NEITHER DO YOU!

---

Thursday, September 12 - Tuesday, September 17: The Public Pedagogies of Black Feminisms Today

Navigate to the course website. Go to the theme section called: “How We Get Free”: Theory Clapback w/ Black Feminisms. Choose the subpage called “The Public Pedagogies of Black Feminisms Today.”

On these two days of classes, we are going to read a set of books that are still somewhat hot off the presses. These are all texts written by Black feminist authors inserting Black feminist history and language into the public sphere. By doing this, they bring us back to the roots of gender and feminist studies and activism: challenging and changing the world rather than merely writing about it for elite academic audiences. These books will include but are not limited to: Pleasure Activism: The Politics of Feeling Good (Emergent Strategy) by Adrienne Maree Brown, Unapologetic: A Black, Queer, and Feminist Mandate for Radical Movements by Charlene Carruthers, Thick and Other Essays by Tressie McMillan Cottom, Eloquent Rage: A Black Feminist Discovers Her Superpower by Brittney Cooper, This Will Be My Undoing: Living at the Intersection of Black, Female, and Feminist in (White) America by Morgan Jenkins, Reclaiming Our Space: How Black Feminists Are Changing the World from the Tweets to the Streets by Feminista Jones, When They Call You a Terrorist: A Black Lives Matter Memoir by Patrisse Khan-Cullors and asha bandele, She Begat This: 20 Years of the Miseducation of Lauryn Hill by Joan Morgan, Making All Black Lives Matter: Reimagining Freedom in the 21st Century by Barbara Ransby, How We Get Free: Black Feminism and the Combahee River Collective by Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, The Body Is Not an Apology: The Power of Radical Self-Love by Sonya Renee Taylor, Beyoncé in Formation: Remixing Black Feminism by Omise’eke Natasha Tinsley.

Read half of your book for Thursday, September 12 and the other half for Tuesday, September 17. Feel free to borrow one of these titles (and return) from me. In writing, discuss two things (for both days of class): 1) your overall responses to the work--- Try NOT to be vague and general here. Offer, describe, and analyze specific moments in your thinking and life that trigger these responses for you; 2) A specific place in the text that you have a response to. Share your mind and heart in this assignment. **This is RR #4 and RR#5.**
Thursday, September 19: Intersectionality This!

In case you forgot, Taylor Swift got dissed by Black Twitter so swiftly for her appropriation of Beyoncé’s Lemonade that she ought to still be embarrassed to ever leave her house. If you thought popular culture was the only place where Black women get appropriated and whitened, think again. If you didn’t know better today, you would never guess that intersectionality has its roots in Critical Race Theory and Black Feminism! We will spend this week of class entering the heated debates around the appropriation of intersectionality theory and Black Feminist theory.

Navigate to the course website. Go to the theme section called: “How We Get Free”: Theory Clapback w/ Black Feminisms. Choose the subpage called “Intersectionality This!” You will find all of the readings there. On your own, if you need the refresher, you should read two essays by Kimberlé Crenshaw: "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics" AND "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color" (these are both at the website). Crenshaw is not the first feminist to theorize intersectionality and do that work. However, she is the person who popularized the expression today. There are many critiques today that we have simply borrowed Crenshaw’s coinage and treated it like a fad, erasing the history and politics that created the notion. If you don’t know those two pieces or forgot, go back and do at least a quick skim. For class, you have two reading assignments. Links to these readings are available at the course website:

1. Read “Intersectionality Undone: Saving Intersectionality from Feminist Intersectionality Studies” by Sirma Bilge. This article challenges the ways that academics have appropriated and domesticated the originary impulse of intersectionality studies in its connections to critical race theory and Black feminisms. We are especially interested here in the ways that Bilge takes up intersectionality as a foundational challenge to neoliberal logics of diversity. As scholars, activists, educators, writers, and community teachers, we must especially take notice of the ways we define and talk about the multiple issues facing the multiracial/multiethnic groups we work with since these are precisely the spaces that neoliberalism attempts to occupy and mute with politically-vacuous paradigms like multiculturalism, diversity, inclusion, et al.

2. Choose any one of the articles listed on the subpage called “Intersectionality This!” We will use a method called a Jigsaw for this second reading. This means that the article/text that you read will be different from your colleagues and so, in turn, you need to educate your colleagues about what you have studied. Whenever you do a jigsaw assignment, make sure that you choose the reading assignment that you like MOST. This is RR#6.

Think through / write / do

Come to class with RR#6. In RR#6, create your own statement of what intersectionality is and means. How/why is it relevant? How do you understand the critiques against it? Where are you in the debates around the intellectual and political role of intersectionality?

Source: https://therealmovement.wordpress.com  
Source: http://haenfler.sites.grinnell.edu/subcultural-theory-and-theorists/intersectionality/
Navigate to the course website. Go to the theme section called: “How We Get Free”: Theory Clapback w/ Black Feminisms. Choose the subpage called “Demonic Grounds.” We will spend this week working most closely with Sylvia Wynter’s essay, “Beyond Miranda’s Meanings: Un/silencing the ‘Demonic Ground’ of Caliban’s ‘Woman.’” We will connect that essay with Katherine McKittrick and Alex Weheliye who both take up the ideas of Wynter’s essay. We are rounding our theory clapback unit with these readings because these authors will challenge us most clearly to move/stay away from theoretical and political dispositions where Black women/ femmes/ girls are just another identity category in the smorgasbord of multicultural groups begging to be seen, heard, respected, or represented by the whitestream. The violence against Black women/ femmes/ girls sustains a certain kind of social order that calls us to reach toward more nuanced readings and understandings. Read all of the following (there will be more options on the website):

1. “Beyond Miranda’s Meanings: Un/silencing the ‘Demonic Ground’ of Caliban’s ‘Woman’” by Sylvia Wynter
2. Read the introduction and chapter 5 of Demonic Grounds: Black Women and the Cartographies of Struggle by Katherine McKittrick
3. Read the introduction and chapter 1 of Habeas Viscus: Racializing Assemblages, Biopolitics, and Black Feminist Theories of the Human by Alex Weheliye.

This is RR#7.

Come to class with RR#7. In this response, your task is misleadingly simple. Find a way into these readings. Find a point of connection. How do Wynter, McKittrick, and Weheliye (re)define the social lives and experiences of Black women and girls for us?

“I want to live the rest of my life, however long or short, with as much sweetness as I can decently manage, loving all the people I love, and doing as much as I can of the work I still have to do. I am going to write fire until it comes out of my ears, my eyes, my noseholes—everywhere. Until it’s every breath I breathe. I’m going to go out like a f**king meteor!”

~Audre Lorde
In these weeks of class during theme III, we are looking at the experiences of Black women/femmes/girls in institutions. In some ways, we are borrowing from thinkers here related to Afro-Pessimism who regard such institutions as remnants (or continuities) from plantation systems and logics in the ways that these institutions organize life opportunity and limits on humanity. The institutions we will look at most closely are schools and prisons, neither of which are defined for or directed to the freedom or well-being of Black people. We won’t use the euphemism of school-to-prison here because in many ways schools’ and prisons’ surveillance, punishment, and sorting mechanisms match up too nicely to be regarded as separate spaces.

We will begin by reading recent online articles alongside research about Black women/femmes/girls and the punishment industry in schools and prisons. By the time we get to this point in the semester, there may be more recent articles available. Check the website to see if there are new additions or substitutions. The website will always be the most updated source. We will move our way through institutions and then close with Black Girl Literacies as a bridge into the next theme.

**Tuesday, October 1: “Arrested Justice” --- HyperCriminalization & Adultification of Black Girls**

Navigate to the course website. Go to the theme section called: "Let Me Tell You This, Linda": Black Girl Literacies and Fugitivity. Choose the subpage called “Arrested Justice.” Read all of the following short, online essays:

1. “10 Times Schools Failed To Embrace Black Girl Students” by Essence Grant
2. “Black Girls Are Viewed As Less Innocent Than White Girls Starting At Age 5: Study” by Taryn Finley for Huffingtonpost.com

Read any ONE of the following:

Come to class with RR#8. In this response, you have two tasks. 1) Create something like an infomercial/infographic that presents the data that you have seen and read. 2) Relate your ideas here to something/someone from unit one (either in prose form or on the actual infographic).

**Thursday, October 3: No Class**

In the weeks between Mid-October and Thanksgiving, many national conferences are taking place all over the country. On these canceled days of class when I am travelling, use that time to catch up on reading and RRs. You must also begin looking into the conferences that you want to attend. Come to the next class able to name them and their submission processes. In general, you can expect emails and correspondences to go UNANSWERED when I am travelling/conferencing.

**Tuesday, October 8: “Schools, Plantations, and Counter-pedagogies”**

Navigate to the course website. Go to the theme section called: "Let Me Tell You This, Linda": Black Girl Literacies and Fugitivity. Choose the subpage called “Schools, Plantations, and Counter-pedagogies.” This week will feature many reading choices. You can choose ONE book or 2-3 articles (in academic publishing for tenure, a book is often regarded as 2-3 articles depending on how “reputable” the journals are). We will use that same “math” here. By the time we get to this point in the semester, there may be even more recent articles. Check the website to see if there are new additions or substitutions. The website will always be the most updated source (the website will also include Carmen’s articles, but you need not feel compelled to read one).

Choose 2-3 articles below:

1. #Say[ing]HerName as Critical Demand: English Education in the Age of Erasure“ by Tamara Butler
3. “Visionary Response: Listening ‘Face-to-Face’ and ‘Eye-to-Eye’: Seeing and Believing Black Girls and Women in Educational Practice and Research” by Marcelle Haddix

**15-year old Akilah Johnson Wins Google’s Doodle Contest (2016)**
4. “Mentors’ Reflections on Developing a Culturally Responsive Mentoring Initiative for Urban African American Girls” by LaShawnda Lindsay-Dennis, Lawanda Cummings and Susan Crim McClendon
5. “‘Bound to Them by a Common Sorrow’: African American Women, Higher Education, and Collective Advancement” by Linda M. Perkins
6. “Lessons in Love, Literacy, and Listening: Reflections on Learning with and from Black Female Youth” by Erica Womack
7. “Why We Can’t Wait: (Re)Examining the Opportunities and Challenges for Black Women and Girls in Education” by Lori D. Patton, Kimberlé W. Crenshaw, Chayla Haynes, and Terri N. Watson
9. Developing the “Oppositional Gaze”: Using Critical Media Pedagogy and Black Feminist Thought to Promote Black Girls’ Identity Development” by Charlotte E. Jacobs
12. “#BlackWomenMatter: Neo-Capital Punishment Ideology in the Wake of State Violence” by Ashley L. Smith
15. “I’m a Black Female Who Happens to be Muslim”: Multiple Marginalities of an Immigrant Black Muslim Woman on a Predominantly White Campus” by Keon M. McGuire, Saskias Casanova, and Charles H.F. Davis III
17. “The Strength from Within: A Phenomenological Study Examining the Academic Self-Efficacy of African American Women in Doctoral Studies” by Deniece Dortch
18. “Black Female Faculty, Resilient Grit, and Determined Grace, or ‘Just because everything is different doesn’t mean anything has changed’” by Rachel Alicia Griffin

OR, choose ONE BOOK below:

5. The Sisters are Alright: Changing the Broken Narrative of Black Women in America by Tamara Winfrey Harris (Berrett-Koehler, 2015)
6. Teaching Black Girls: Resiliency in Urban Classrooms by Venus Evans-Winters (Perter Lang)
8. Shoptalk: Lessons in Teaching from an African American Hair Salon by Yolanda Majors (Teachers College Press, 2015)
11. Come to class with RR#9. In this response, be as detailed as possible in describing how this book or set of articles helps to build a bigger picture of Black girls'/femmes'/women’s experiences in schools. What does this text or set of texts offer us in terms of challenges, research processes, paradigms, and/or insights?

“I’m not entangled in shaping my work according to other people’s views of how I should have done it.” -Toni Morrison

Thursday, October 10: Black Women/Femme Faculty as Lens into Schooling and the Academy

Navigate to the course website. Go to the theme section called: "Let Me Tell You This, Linda": Black Girl Literacies and Fugitivity. Choose the subpage called Black Women/Femme Faculty as Lens into Schooling and the Academy. In this part of the course, we are interrogating the academy and schools through Black women’s/Black femme’s experiences there. Too many times, we ignore the institutions that we produce research for and in. How does a researcher take up residence in an oppressive and violent academy and then move freely/radically in Black and Brown communities untethered by the institutions that inscribe our knowledge? Read any one essay in this collection and write out your reactions. How do you politically insert yourself into the reality of violence in the western academy? This counts as RR#10. Here are your choices:

3. "Fear of a Black femme: The existential conundrum of embodying a Black femme identity while being a professor of Black, Queer, and Feminist studies” by Kaila Adia Story (2017)
9. “'She Has a Real Connection with Them': Reimagining and Expanding Our Definitions of Black Masculinity and Mentoring in Education through Female Masculinity” by Bettina L. Love (2017)
10. “Sippingtea: Two Black Female Literacy Scholars Sharing Counter-Stories to Redefine Our Roles in the Academy” by ThedaMarie Gibbs Grey and Bonnie Williams-Farrier (2017)
Navigate to the course website. Go to the theme section called: "Let Me Tell You This, Linda": Black Girl Literacies and Fugitivity. Choose the subpage called Black Girls Literacies Matter. We are still talking about schools, classrooms, and pedagogies, but we are focusing on literacies now. These scholars will push the boundaries of classrooms and pedagogies and include community sites of learning also. They will challenge us to investigate why community sites do literacy teaching and learning better than official school sites.

Choose 1-2 articles for each day of class. By the time we get to this point in the semester, there may be even more recent articles. Check the website to see if there are new additions or substitutions. The website will always be the most updated source (the website will include more options).

2. “We Need More ‘US’ in Schools!!!: Centering Black Adolescent Girls’ Literacy and Language Practices in Online Spaces” by Delicia Tiera Greene
3. “At the Kitchen Table: Black Women English Educators Speaking Our Truths” by Marcelle Haddix, Sherell A. McArthur, Gholnecsr E. Muhammad, Detra Price-Dennis, and Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz
4. “Creating Spaces for Black Adolescent Girls to ‘Write It Out!’” by Gholnecsr E. Muhammad
5. “Centering Black Girls’ Literacies: A Review of Literature on the Multiple Ways of Knowing of Black Girls” by Gholnecsr E. Muhammad and Marcelle Haddix
7. ‘Phenomenal Women,’ Collaborative Literacies, and Community Texts in Alternative ‘Sista’ Spaces” by Beverly Moss
8. “Developing Curriculum to Support Black Girls’ Literacies in Digital Spaces” by Detra Price-Dennis
9. “To Protect and Serve: African American Female Literacies” by Elaine Richardson
10. ”She Was Workin Like Foreal: Critical Literacy and Discourse Practices of African American Females in the Age of Hip Hop” by Elaine Richardson
12. “Decoding Black Feminist Hashtags as Becoming” by Tara L. Conley
14. “Alter Egos and Infinite Literacies, Part III: How to Build a Real Gyr1 in 3 Easy Steps” by Jessica Marie Johnson and Kismet Nuñez
15. “A Future for Intersectional Black Feminist Technology Studies” by Safiya Noble
17. “‘New Genres of Being Human’: World Making through Viral Blackness” by Ashleigh Greene Wade

You can also choose from this list on Hip Hop feminisms/Hip Hop Literacies (we will read these two lists simultaneously rather than separating them):

3. Andreana Clay: "Like an Old Soul Record': Black Feminism, Queer Sexuality, and the Hip-Hop Generation Author(s)” (2008)
15. Elaine ("Dr. E") Richardson: "'She Was Workin Like Foreal': Critical Literacy and Discourse Practices of African American Females in the Age of Hip Hop" (2007)
16. T. Denean Sharpley-Whiting: "I See the Same Ho: Video Vixens, Beauty Culture, and Diasporic Sex Tourism" (in Pimps Up, Ho's Down: Hip Hop's Hold on Young Black Women from 2007)
17. L.H. Stallings: "Bitch: The Death of Wifeable Women and a Queer Intervention" (a section of "Represen' for the Bitches: Queen B(?) in Hip-Hop Culture" from 2007)

**Come to class with RR#11 & RR#12.** In these responses, be as detailed as possible in describing how this set of articles helps to build a bigger picture of Black girls’ and women’s literacies. Do these literacies match with school literacies? When and where? Or why not? What does this set of texts offer us in terms of challenges to who we understand as literate and what we understand as literacy?

**Thursday, October 24: Project #3 Due! Stay tuned for details on the website.**

Our last unit is devoted to fiction in its array of Black Girl Magical Realisms. The title of the unit is inspired by the lyrics of Janelle Monae in her 2018 BET performance of "Django Jane" as she sits upon her throne.

In particular, we are looking at fiction that is about Black girls, is directed towards Black girls, and is written by folk who proudly claim their Black girlhood. We will begin with school-sanctioned young adult literature and then move into urban fiction. After that, we will look at comics by Black women and about Black women, particularly Black girlhood. At the end of this unit, we will read some theoretical texts and bring these readings in dialogue with the novels we have explored. The project at the end of this unit will be the most traditional of the course in the sense that we will be using exam booklets.

In each week, we are asking ourselves a specific set of questions. How do Black women and femmes represent Black girlhood and adolescence--- in terms of sexuality, culture, social beauty codes, language, politics, community--- in fiction? Why? What do fiction (counter)narratives of Black girlhood build and create? What does this fiction signify for literacies--- in school and out? What does this fiction signify for pedagogies and publics?

We won’t be doing a similar unit on Black women writers and their depictions of grown Black women, partly due to time constraints, but also because that research and scholarship are more readily available, though clearly not as pursued as scholarship centered on white women. There are obviously parallel universes in fiction about Black women and fiction about Black girls, but Black girlhood in fiction remains more underexamined.

Please give yourself time to purchase or borrow these novels in the weeks prior to this part of the course if you see a title that is not provided for you.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, October 29 &amp; Thursday, October 31</td>
<td>Navigate to the course website. Go to the theme section called: &quot;Highly Melanated, Black Girl Never Over-rated&quot;: Fictional Narratives in the Makings of #BlackGirlMagic. Choose the subpage called School-Sanctioned YAL. This week kicks off this unit. We will start with YAL (young adult fiction). Read a YAL novel that is listed on the website. You can borrow any title from Carmen that she has in her library. For Tuesday, read the first half of your book. For Thursday, read the second half of your book. As you read, take notes of the important quotes/moments that signify important turns for characters and events in the book. Come to class ready to complete a literature journal in the first fifteen minutes of class. These <strong>in-class writings</strong> will count as RR#13 and RR#14.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, November 5 &amp; Thursday, November 7</td>
<td>Navigate to the course website. Go to the theme section called: &quot;Highly Melanated, Black Girl Never Over-rated&quot;: Fictional Narratives in the Makings of #BlackGirlMagic. Choose the subpage called Urban Fiction. This week features what is commonly referred to as “urban street fiction” (USF) or “urban fiction.” Read a UF novel that is listed on the website. You can borrow any title from Carmen that she has in her library. For Tuesday, read the first half of your book. For Thursday, read the second half of your book. As you read, take notes of the important quotes/moments that signify important turns for characters and events in the book. Come to class ready to complete a literature journal in the first fifteen minutes of class. These <strong>in-class writings</strong> will count as RR#15 and RR#16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, November 12 &amp; Thursday, November 14</td>
<td>Navigate to the course website. Go to the theme section called: &quot;Highly Melanated, Black Girl Never Over-rated&quot;: Fictional Narratives in the Makings of #BlackGirlMagic. Choose the subpage called Black Girl Futures. This week features comics. Read a comic that is listed on the website. You can borrow any title from Carmen that she has in her library. For Tuesday, read the first half of your book. For Thursday, read the second half of your book. As you read, take notes of the important quotes/moments that signify important turns for characters and events in the book. Come to class ready to complete a literature journal in the first fifteen minutes of class. These <strong>in-class writings</strong> will count as RR#17 and RR#18.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, November 19</td>
<td>Navigate to the course website. Go to the theme section called: &quot;Highly Melanated, Black Girl Never Over-rated&quot;: Fictional Narratives in the Makings of #BlackGirlMagic. Choose the subpage called Final Readings. The readings for this week are meant to offer an overview of the research literature that contextualizes YAL, UF, and comics as these genres intersect with Black women’s lives, Black girlhood, and African American literacies/Black Girl literacies. Choose any ONE essay and read it. Look at the bold-faced questions in the box above to the right. In writing, bring your author in dialogue with these questions. This is RR#19.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, November 21</td>
<td>Project #4 Due: The Blue Book (stay tuned for details)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Last Weeks of Class

We have now reached the end of our time together. We will build something together that looks back at all that we have done and thought through. We are going to end this course the way we started: focusing on a collective statement. We started with the Combahee River Collective Statement. We will end by building and designing our own statement.

On Tuesday, Nov. 26 (our last class before Thanksgiving), come to class with RR#20. In RR#20, you need to go back through your writings from the semester and pull out words or designs that you created that speak to your most valued beliefs. You should have the equivalent of 250-500 words.

Write each of your favorite sentences (from your own writings) on a separate page; or for each design, make a separate page. We will piece everyone’s work together in class and we will build a collective statement with the words/designs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, December 3</td>
<td>In class, we will review the final project and start drafting/drawing. We will be working towards the final digital project here. You will need to make decisions about whether you will do an extended digital essay or a series of short digital essays.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, December 5</td>
<td>Digital Design Draft Due in class. This is RR#21.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, December 10</td>
<td>Last Day of Class….. SHOW 'N TELL. This is RR#22.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, December 19</td>
<td>(Exam Day) LAUNCH YOUR WEBPAGES! This is the final project of the semester.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Intersections of Literacies, Public Pedagogies & Black Feminisms

by Carmen Kynard, Ph.D.