

Writing Women, Writing Diaspora in the Caribbean

COLT 499, Class #22072, Fall 2007, Mon & Wed, 12-1:50, Room TBA

Professor Edwin Hill



This course will follow in-depth the diasporic trajectory of three contemporary Caribbean writers: Jamaica Kincaid (Antigua), Edwidge Danticat (Haiti), and Maryse Condé (Guadeloupe). In both fiction and critical work, Kincaid, Danticat, and Condé create narratives of identity that pose foundational questions about the dynamics of race and gender as they intersect with the legacies of (neo)colonialism and imperialism. As their protagonists negotiate the shifting social and cultural terrains of the Caribbean, Europe, and the United States, the writers themselves trace the problematics of language, authenticity, and legitimacy through a range of narrative strategies, experimenting especially with ideas about autobiography and historiography. How do their transnational experiences differ with those of men and with each other, reflecting their similar yet distinct itineraries, cultural histories, and personal voices? How do they negotiate the language dynamics of colonialism and diaspora? This course explores what the work of these three women writers suggest about the possibilities of global black relations and transnational feminisms.