

EN 4990/6990: Special Topics
Postcolonial Literature and Theory
Dr. Andrea Spain
Wednesdays 5-7:50pm



How do we come to think of “homelands”? . . . of nations? . . . of the “foreign” and the “global”?
What does literature have to do with these social geographies?

This course provides crucial backgrounds to postcolonial studies. We’ll read literatures of formerly colonized people and their diasporas, analyzing relationships between former colonial centers, senses of place, and social imaginaries. We’ll ask questions like: What does colonization of the Caribbean have to do with *Mansfield Park*? Conversely, what does Jane Austen have to do with a child’s identity and sense of place in the Antilles? What do these questions have to do with gender or with nationalism? What do they have to do with contemporary writers from Kenya, Martinique, India, Bangladesh, Canada, and the United Kingdom?

Literary works will include: Derek Walcott’s *Omeros*, Jamaica Kincaid *A Small Place*, Shani Mootoo’s *Cereus Blooms at Night*, Aimé Césaire’s *Notebook of a Return to the Native Land*, Tsitsi Dangarembga *Nervous Conditions*, and Monica Ali’s *Brick Lane*.

Theorists we will read include Franz Fanon, Edward Said, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Homi Bhabha, Partha Chatterjee and Pheng Cheah.

Assessment: regular analytical response papers, a class presentation, a proposal and a final research paper (8 pages for undergraduates; 18+ for graduate students).