

## **Studies in American Literature: The Body in Multicultural American Writing, Fall 2009**

Professor Kirsten Wasson  
328 Muller  
[kwasson@ithaca.edu](mailto:kwasson@ithaca.edu)  
Office Hours: T, R, 1-3

Figuratively as well as literally, the body is the site of hybridization, assimilation, duality. How do notions of a foreign/alien self shape the ways that illness, hunger, sexuality, pain, and pleasure become embodied in a text? In this course we'll read fiction, memoir, and poetry by American writers of "hyphenated identity"—Asian American, African American, Native American, and Hispanic backgrounds and address the way in which constructs of multiculturalism intersect with representations of physical experience.

### TEXTS

*Bread Givers*, Anzia Yezierska  
*Invisible Man*, Ralph Ellison  
*Tonto and the Lone Ranger Fistfight in Heaven*, Sherman Alexie  
*Lucy*, Jamaica Kincaid  
*Where The Body Meets Memory*, David Mura  
*The Gangster We Are All Looking For*, le thi diem thuy  
*Dreaming In Cuban*, Christina Garcia

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- 1) Careful reading of assigned texts by the due date.
- 2) Response papers. One-page assignments will often be due at the beginning of class on a topic presented during the previous class. They will be graded with a check, check plus, or minus, and will contribute to your participation grade.
- 3) Two papers (5-7pp.), a mid-term, and a final exam that will address all material I've presented, and the content of our discussions.
- 4) Attendance is required. More than two missed classes and your grade will descend by  $\frac{1}{2}$  a grade. More than six and you'll fail the course.
- 5) Zero tolerance for plagiarism—none; not one sentence goes un-credited.

GRADES: Each essay and final exam 25%, participation 10%, Mid-term 15%.

## **SCHEDULE of Weeks**

August 24:	Introduction to course/ <i>Bread Givers</i>
August 31:	<i>Bread Givers</i>
September 7:	<i>Invisible Man</i>
September 14:	<i>Invisible Man</i>
September 21:	<i>Tonto and The Lone Ranger Fistfight in Heaven</i>
September 28:	<i>Tonto and The Lone Ranger Fistfight in Heaven</i>
October 5:	<b>1<sup>st</sup> essay due</b> /no class on Thursday
October 12:	<b>Mid term</b> /Fall break on Thursday
October 19:	<i>Lucy</i>
October 26:	<i>Lucy /Where The Body Meets Memory</i>
November 2:	<i>Where The Body Meets Memory</i>
November 9:	<i>Where The Body/The Gangster We Are All Looking For</i>
November 16:	<i>The Gangster</i> / <b>2<sup>nd</sup> essay due</b>
November 23:	Thanksgiving Break
November 30:	<i>Dreaming in Cuban</i>
December 7:	<i>Dreaming in Cuban</i>