

FW 2025-26

AP/EN 4402 3.0A (F)	Hauntings: Late 20th-Century Black Poetics in the US and Canada
Course Director:	Name: Professor Tiana Reid e-mail: tareid@yorku.ca Office hours begin in September. They are every Tuesday and Thursday from 1pm to 2pm. Please email for office location or check the syllabus. I also offer virtual office hours, by appointment only.
Time:	Tuesdays, 2:30 – 5:20pm
Delivery Format:	✓ SEMINAR
Description:	<p>This seminar uses the “long 1980s” as a provocation to explore the entanglements between history, politics, and poetry. We will privilege black poetic production as a vantage point to speculate on how we, in the present, continue to live with the ghosts of the late 20th century. The Eighties tend to be remembered by an onslaught of social, political, economic, global, and technological changes—for example, the spectacularization and Hollywoodization of U.S. politics, state abandonment projects, urban ruin, HIV/AIDS, nuclear brinkmanship, mass incarceration, post-Fordist globalization, neoliberalism, the feminist sex wars, the culture wars, the dismantling of the welfare state, and MTV—rather than as a place for generative literary analysis. What is the relationship between this historical conception of the 1980s and the poetic sensibility fostered in and against those social and political conditions?</p> <p>In other words, this course offers an expansive consideration of what some critics call “political poetry.” By focusing on reading poetry books published in and around the 1980s in Canada and the United States, we will think through language, eco-, improvisational, confessional, avant-garde, feminist, visual, and performance poetry. We will pay close attention to the formal and conceptual elements of poetry such as imagery, sound, rhythm, tone, figures, and metaphors. What are the historical and political stakes of form, imagery, and rhyme? How do poets approach these seemingly mundane aspects of poetic writing in</p>

	<p>order to imagine their experience of living and writing in, for example, the Reagan era? What does it mean to be in, but not of a political regime?</p> <p>This course will introduce you to black poets living and writing in Canada and the United States in the late 20th century. We will focus on developing close reading skills to better understand what poetry is and how we experience the poetic, as well as critical debates within American studies around race, gender, class, and sexuality. No poetry experience necessary!</p>
Category:	B
Historical Requirement:	N/A
Requirements:	<p>Reading responses: 15%</p> <p>Participation: 15%</p> <p>Literary criticism essay: 20 %</p> <p>Final paper: 30 %</p> <p>Seminar Presentation: 20 %</p>
Reading List:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - M. NourbeSe Philip, <i>She Tries Her Tongue, Her Silence Softly Breaks</i> - Audre Lorde, <i>The Black Unicorn</i> - Dionne Brand, <i>No Language is Neutral</i> - Chantal Gibson, <i>How She Read</i> - Claire Harris, <i>She</i> - Toni Morrison, <i>Beloved</i> <p>We will be reading a number of other excerpts, articles, poems, criticism, theory, and shorter texts by Essex Hemphill, Stuart Hall, Pat Parker, June Jordan, Afua Cooper, Amiri Baraka, Gil-Scott Heron, and others. Additional readings and audio/visual materials will be posted online.</p>
Open To:	YR 3, 4