

## English 7/8468 – WEB Literature of the Harlem Renaissance

Spring 2017  
Office: Patterson 417

Dr. V. Mitchell  
[vdmitchll@memphis.edu](mailto:vdmitchll@memphis.edu)

### Description:

In the decade following World War I, an artistic explosion occurred within the African American community that produced a wealth of music, literature, dance, visual art, and social discourse. Whether in a nightclub, at a speakeasy, in a literary salon, or on the corner of 135th & 7th Avenues, Harlem was, to paraphrase Langston Hughes, in vogue. Forging their own styles, Hughes and his artistic cohorts created a large body of work which gained recognition for the African American artist as a dynamic force in American culture. We will interrogate the writers' engagement with modernity and cosmopolitan forms of identity as well as their sense of Harlem as a cultural crossroads and Diasporic center. Along with exploring traditional readings, I will invite you to promote new readings and emerging contexts for the Harlem Renaissance—especially with reference to the American Left, queer theory, postcolonial studies, and contemporary feminist theory. You can expect to come away from the class having read major works of Harlem Renaissance fiction, poetry, drama, and autobiography, as well as a number of important essays. Final project: a publishable book review to be submitted to a literary journal.



### Possible Authors:

James Weldon Johnson  
W. E. B. Du Bois  
Marita Bonner  
Jean Toomer  
Georgia Douglas Johnson  
Angelina Welde Grimké  
Langston Hughes  
Wallace Thurman  
Anita Scott Coleman  
Richard Bruce Nugent  
Eulalie Spence  
Marian Minus  
Dorothy West

Zora Neale Hurston  
Nella Larsen  
Alice Dunbar-Nelson  
George Schuyler  
Helene Johnson  
Countee Cullen  
Claude McKay  
Gwendolyn Bennett  
Rudolph Fisher  
Alain Locke  
Waring Cuney  
Sterling Brown  
Mae Cowdery

### Primary Anthology:

V. Patton and M. Honey, Eds. *Double-Take: A Revisionist Harlem Renaissance Anthology*.  
New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2001. ISBN: 0-8135-2930-1