

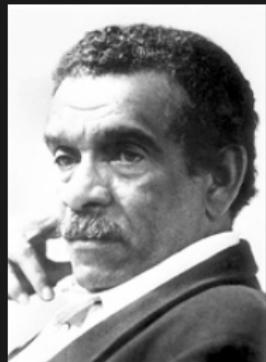
# Introduction to Twentieth-Century Literature

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(Murray 019, Mondays and Wednesdays 2:30–4:30)

April 26, 2017. Díaz, concluded; Morrison (I).

## Walcott moment



Where are your monuments, your battles, martyrs?  
Where is your tribal memory? Sirs,  
in that gray vault. The sea. The sea  
has locked them up. The sea is History. (95)

Derek Walcott (1930–2017). [nobelprize.org](https://nobelprize.org).

# review

- ▶ remember what the hegemonic nations forget
  - ▶ no national history takes place only within national borders
  - ▶ neither US language nor US literature are unitary
- ▶ “Yellow Woman”
  - ▶ the contemporaneity of tradition
  - ▶ the narrativity of the real
  - ▶ why do people tell stories? (Silva, Grandpa)
- ▶ “Drown”
  - ▶ confronting an audience
  - ▶ the well-mapped place: stasis
  - ▶ the far-off (figures for imagination and longing)

- ▶ What does the big revelation of “Drown” have to do with the other major themes of the story?

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He put his hand on my shoulder, my pulse a code under his palm. Let's go, he said. Unless of course you're not feeling good. (1248)

One teacher, whose family had two grammar schools named after it, compared us to the shuttles. A few of you are going to make it. Those are the orbiters. But the majority of you are just going to burn out. Going nowhere. He dropped his hand onto his desk. (1248)

## Morrison: inner life amidst social division

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## Morrison: inner life amidst social division

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I wouldn't forget a thing like that. Would I? (1183)

I didn't kick her...but I sure did want to. (1186)

“But, well, I wanted to.” (1187)

## Morrison: poetry of many voices

“I wonder what made me think you were different.”

“I wonder what made me think you were different.” (1184)

## Morrison: the power of reduction

- ▶ When does race enter the story? How do you know?
- ▶ But do you really know?

# Morrison: the historical imagination



A busing protest and a counter-protest in New York City, June 1959. Press images in Matt Delmont, *The Origins of Antibusing Politics in 1950s New York*.

next

- ▶ Morrison, continued
- ▶ twentieth-century literature, introduced