

# 19TH-CENTURY AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN WRITERS

GNDR\_ST 490 & AF\_AM\_ST 480 & ENGLISH 471

SPRING  
2022



This course will explore the autobiographical fictions, slave narratives, serialized tales, memoirs, novels, and poems produced by African American women from the antebellum period through the turn of the twentieth century, and ending with Zora Neale Hurston's 1927 reflection on the life of the last former slave brought to the United States from Africa in 1862. We will begin the course and introduce these literary

accounts with recordings and written transcripts of selected WPA interviews of former slaves by largely white interlocutors working for the Roosevelt Administration. By exploring the variety of writing, from travel and slave narrative and to fiction, this course will consider the forms and content produced by Black women during the nineteenth century and raise questions concerning at least: shifting political and social identities, authorship, proto-Black feminism, and the possibilities and limitations of the Black woman "archive" versus a "canon."

Nikki Spigner &  
Julia Stern

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W 2-4:50pm  
University Hall 418