

Zoom Chat for 1st In All My Dreams Bookclub Meeting, October 10, 2019

From Michel DeGraff to Everyone: (12:03 PM)

Bonjou Kaima, Bonjou Laurent! Mèsi anpil pou bèl aktivite sa a. Will the session be recorded? I'm asking because I'll have to leave at 12:30pm to rush to a student's presentation in my department. But I'd love to follow up. Mèsi wi! Bon bagay! Mèsi

From alessandrabeneditcy to Everyone: (12:23 PM)

I love the comment about trauma and time, eroticism and time. I can't hear very well... and I am in a very loud place, so I can't contribute vocally.

From sandyalexandre to Everyone: (12:28 PM)

To Njelle & All: LOVE this notion of marvelous temporality's relationship to natural disaster. It would make sense about how this kind of crisis time or traumatic time TRANSPORTS. One's sense of their relationship to the immediate present is necessarily re-evaluated if/when your life can flash before your eyes and when you have to contextualize your national location with respect to the world (and its end).

From Marlene Daut to Everyone: (12:29 PM)

I left a comment about Haitianness on the website particularly, its role in the novel

From Cecile Accilien to Me: (Privately) (12:32 PM)

I think killing time can be a way to think about the larger issue of waiting in the Haitian context. I think many times Haiti is viewed or rather perceived in terms of "waiting"... Waiting for the "plan" to come, waiting for God, even in the Creole expressions such as "Demèn si Bondye vle"... As we know the notion of time is very cultural Correction "Waiting for the BLAN" [Not plan] to come

From marinamagloire to Everyone: (12:36 PM)

I have an unrelated point that we can address perhaps when we are done discussing the temporality question. Coming from a black feminist perspective, I will admit that I find the gender dynamics of the novel very challenging. I think the points that people have brought up about trauma and humor are crucial for me in contextualizing the various ways that Depestre is using and representing women's bodies. But I also want to take seriously what it might mean to put this novel in conversation with black women's voices—I'm thinking perhaps of what Suzanne Césaire or Marie Vieux-Chauvet might respond to the kind of masculinism of surrealism, marvelous realism, and the other generic traditions Depestre is part of. I don't mean to imply that these women writers are in tension with Depestre, but I do think it's important to put him in conversation with Francophone women writers when he is so invested in representing women's bodies.

From Michel DeGraff to Everyone: (12:37 PM)

Talking about time and temporality... Late for my next meeting — running on "Haitian time"...But this is MIT. So... fòk m ale. Gotta go... But I love the discussion so far (ochan pou nou tout!) and I look forward to the recording and next meetings. I wish we all could have more time for "grate santi" and the semantics and pragmatics of it in Depestre's writing and beyond. Have a great discussion. Kenbe wi. Until next time...

From Cecile Accilien to Me: (Privately) (12:38 PM)

Thank you Marina I have also been thinking about that as well

From Regine Joseph to Everyone: (12:39 PM)

I agree with Emma, Alessandra and Kaiama that Depestre seems to insist on anchoring his novel in specific historical moments. And my suspicion is that it must have been difficult to write as a Haitian writer after Duvalier. And I suspect that to write about zombies after Duvalier might have meant deliberately reminding reminders that we are in the “temps avant la dictature.”

From Cecile Accilien to Everyone: (12:44 PM)

In regard to Marina’s comment that I very much appreciate I think we have to remind students of an old school practice in teaching literature which is that the author is dead and focus on the text. This may be useful. I also think it’s crucial for us to highlight the historical context in which the writer in this case Depestre is writing.

From alessandrabeneditcy to Everyone: (12:55 PM)

Our conversation brings up the question of where and how pedagogy and healing come together, what and how we (as teachers) are equipped to handle ... but as the discussion on time and trauma, or the time of trauma, as eroticism... (my comment is a bit roundabout), but eroticism and experiences of trauma appear throughout texts Haitian and otherwise... what is fascinating to me about our current conversation is perhaps that Depestre is forcing us to think through the very notion of “killing time” as emerging from violence... that is we “kill” time... is not eroticism a means of suspending trauma for one person, while too often in the same gesture (re)committing violence... For me, Régine Michelle Jean-Charles’ work has been very helpful to working through this space as well as Kaiama’s work on Condé.

From mordecai to Everyone: (12:55 PM)

Just want to second what Njelle is saying here: I found it very productive in class to expand the students' attention beyond just the representation of women's bodies to the time spent on women's erotic pleasure and autonomy. There's balance here (for me). I don't need to speak, thanks... :)

From Njelle Hamilton to Everyone: (12:57 PM)

Excellent point Alessandra. See also Marcia Douglas re time, sex, leisure.

From Cecile Accilien to Me: (Privately) (12:58 PM)

Mèsi anpil Kaiama and Laurent for all your work!!! Ayibobo!

From Regine Joseph to Everyone: (12:59 PM)

Thank you!!!

From Liesl Picard to Everyone: (01:00 PM)

Mesi anpil anpil!

From sandyalexandre to Everyone: (01:00 PM)

Thank you, Kaiama and Laurent!

From Njelle Hamilton to Everyone: (01:00 PM)

This was great. Thanks all. Yes, please save the chat for us

From siobhananderson to Everyone: (01:00 PM)

Thanks so much!

From Sally Everson to Everyone: (01:00 PM)

thanks! lots of fun.

From alessandrabenedicty to Everyone: (01:00 PM)

Thank you!

From Apricot Irving to Everyone: (01:00 PM)

Such thoughtful questions and insights. Thank you!

From justinsalhani to Everyone: (01:02 PM)

thank you! Was very interesting. I was still at work throughout but wanted to drop in some thoughts about the relationship to powerlessness with the natural catastrophes and also found the parrot named general interesting and was wondering if that was a commentary Will follow along on the site later :) thanks again