**Discussion Questions for Jean Rhys' "Wide Sargasso Sea"**
**February 25, 2023**


1.    What is the Sargasso Sea and what does it represent in the novel?  How does it relate to the continued imagery of water, reflections, and entrapment?

2.  Why do you think the author chose to redevelop Bronte's Mr. Rochester?  Does Jane Eyre ever appear in the Rhys novel?

3.  Which of the three narrators are more reliable in this story?  Christophine also has a long speech to Rochester.  Is it an accurate account?  Whose opinion of her seems closest to the truth?  Is her obeah effective?

4.  Antoinette suspects England is not an actual place.  Rochester describes Dominica as a dream.  How do these perceptions affect their understanding/mistrust of each other?

5.  How do Rochester and Antoinette differ in their relationships with the newly emancipated slaves?  What was your impression of Antoinette's relationship with Sandi?  Why did she refuse his offers?

6.  Why does Rochester accept Daniel's denunciation of Antoinette?   Why does he then start calling her Bertha and Marionette?  What does this reveal about him?

7.  What are the parallels in the novel's two housefires?  How does Antoinette recover from the trauma of her mother's psychotic break after the Coulibri riot?   Why are they both imprisoned?

8.  What are the deaths that Rochester and Antoinette talk about early in their honeymoon?  How does the roofie incident escalate their estrangement?  How do they try to destroy each other?

9.   What are the recurring dreams that influence Antoinette and Rochester?

10. How is Mr. Mason's dislike of Aunt Cora an example of his arrogance, and what is the effect?

11.  How is Antoinette affected by Tia's betrayal and assault?  What is ironic about Aunt Cora's remark that "It won't spoil you on your wedding day"?

12.  Why does Rochester promise Antoinette peace, happiness, and safety (but not love) when she tries to back out of the wedding?  On their honeymoon, what is the symbolism of insects flying into the fire? Why does Antoinette say she loves Granbois "more than a person"?