Hazel V. Carby, the Charles C. and Dorathea S. Dilley Professor of African American Studies and professor of American studies, has taught at Yale for more than twenty years. Although literature has remained her primary focus in African American studies, she says that much has changed in the way she teaches students to understand the art form.

“Instead of always measuring writers against writers,” Carby said, “you can provide a richer cultural context if you take into account the artists who were painting or sculpting and the musicians who were performing at the same time and place.” Encouraging her students to explore these other forms of expression enriches their understanding, and she credits Yale’s exceptional collections of visual art and music with making this kind of teaching possible. “I have had students who, in a very complimentary manner, say that in addition to taking a literature course they found they were taking a course in the history of art and photography.”

Carby teaches graduate and undergraduate classes, including Caribbean Literature, the Fiction of Imaginary or Imminent Futures, and Representation and the Black Female. She also directs the interdisciplinary Initiative on Race, Gender, and Globalization at Yale, and has authored numerous books, articles, and reviews. Currently, she is working on a new book, Child of Empire: Racializing Subjects in Post World War Two Britain, which weaves a historical narrative about race and gender in the U.K. with the story of her parents’ and grandparents’ generation.

A graduate of the University of Birmingham in the United Kingdom, Carby taught at Wesleyan University before coming to Yale in 1989. She is recognized as one of the world’s foremost scholars on issues of race, gender, cultural history, and the African Diaspora, and has been an influential figure in the development and growth of the African American Studies department at Yale.

Endowed professorships are an important resource at Yale, providing the essential tools to recruit and retain faculty members like Hazel Carby. To learn more about ways to support Yale’s faculty, please visit www.yale.edu/yaletomorrow or call 800.395.7646.