

**University of Wisconsin-Madison
Department of History**

**History 243
COLONY, NATION, AND MINORITY:
THE PUERTO RICANS' WORLD
Semester II, 2011-12**

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Office hours:

W 12:30-1:30 (walk-ins)

W 1:30-3:30 (sign-up)

Orientation

This course will introduce the Puerto Rican "world" of the island homeland and the immigrant communities in the U.S. Colonial subjects of Spain for nearly four centuries, the people of the Caribbean island of Puerto Rico were forcibly incorporated into the U.S. orbit during the Spanish-Cuban-Filipino-American War in 1898. Since then, proximity to the U.S. in spatial, economic, and political terms has profoundly touched people's lives, in some ways eroding, but in others reinforcing, their inherited sense of community and nationhood. After World War II, massive emigration to the United States opened a new chapter in the colonial story. While the locus of power would seem to have changed after the emigration of so many, the basic features of the original colonial equation have actually remained the same, and in some respects they have only become more acute.

A fruitful angle of approach on the history of a people who have experienced diaspora is to begin at the endpoint—that is, at the point of migration, dispersal, and accommodation to new social and cultural contexts. Hence, we begin our journey introducing the diverse Latino population in the United States, of which the Puerto Ricans form the second-largest sub-grouping, smaller only to the significantly more numerous and faster-growing Mexican-American contingent. Assisted by critical perspectives from various disciplines, we will try to understand the forces that shaped the present-day population of U.S. Latinos, a population that already numbers well over 40 million people. For the first few weeks, then, the course's focus will be a wide-angle one. Only after the fourth week will we narrow it to Caribbean immigrants and Puerto Ricans more specifically, paying close attention to the forces that have shaped the life of a people who arguably comprise a nation, a colony, and a minority—all at once. At that point we will not only take a closer look at Puerto Rican (island) history, but also at the "external communities" that have been spawned in places like the Northeast, Chicago, and Florida by successive migratory waves that began early in the 20th century. We end near the endpoint from which we began: contemporary situations and struggles now circumscribed to the Puerto Rican context.

The course will employ perspectives and materials from several disciplines—History, primarily, but also the Social Sciences, Literature, Music, and Art—to explore the ways in which

colonialism, race, gender, modernization, resistance, and cultural identity and nationalism are interwoven in the contexts of the island home and of diasporic communities in the U.S.

Format

Lectures, discussions, and films.

Exams

A mid-term (**Thursday, March 15**) and a final (**Wednesday, May 16, 7:25-9:45 a.m.**). Examinations will consist of multiple-choice items and essay questions. Students will receive a list of several themes about which the essay questions will be crafted.

Papers

1. The **first paper**, 3 pages or 600 words in length, will address a question of the student's own formulation about how the categories of "race" and "labor" help us understand the formation of Latino communities in the U.S. In a separate handout I will give you specific instructions about the writing of this paper. **Due date: Thursday, February 23.**
2. The **second paper**, 7 pages or 1400 words in length, will address a clear, coherent, and significant question about contemporary Puerto Rico or the Puerto Rican communities in the U.S. mainland. The purpose of this paper is for you to learn how to come up with your own research question, find the information necessary for a thorough exploration, and cogently develop an argument based on the information garnered. **Due date: Thursday, May 3rd. (but see below for a partial assignment due April 12).**

A list of suggested topics for the second paper follows. You are strongly urged to define a research question within one of these. Please remember, however, that you will research and write about a narrower *problem* or *question* than what is listed here. In other words, you should consider the research problem or question a *sub-topic* of one of the broader topics listed below.

- Women and colonialism in Puerto Rico or in diasporic communities in the U.S.;
- Dependent industrialization and the problem of structural unemployment;
- Culture and identity among Puerto Ricans, whether *mainland*-resident, *trans-territorial*, or island-resident folks;
- The legal/constitutional or international dimensions of the Puerto Rican status issue;
- Race and the Puerto Rican experience on the mainland or the island;
- The politics of status in a bipartisan political system;

- Cultural nationalism and the rejection of political nationalism; or,
- You may choose a topic not on this list, but you must first consult with the instructor or your TA before launching the research phase.

For each of these topics, the instructor will identify a few primary and secondary sources, which you are expected to use extensively in your analysis. These are meant to be suggestive, not exhaustive; it will be up to you to obtain additional sources.

For this second paper, you will submit **at the beginning of class on Thursday, April 12**, a one-page *statement of the problem* on which you are researching and writing. In this assignment you will identify the *central question or problem* and will present a *provisional hypothesis* about its resolution. **Please highlight both the statement of the problem and the hypothesis.** You will also briefly identify, in the form of an annotated bibliography, the sources you will be using and referencing in the paper. The bibliography should consist of a minimum of two pages (in addition to the statement of the problem).

Final Evaluation

The final grade will be calculated according to the following distribution:

Mid-term examination (15%)

Final examination (25%)

Paper 1 (10%)

Paper 2 (30%, divided as follows: 5% for statement of problem and bibliography; 25% for final paper)

Class contributions, including weekly reaction paragraphs (20%)

Total: 100%

Textbooks and Other Readings

We will use the following books rather extensively throughout the course. They are available for purchase at Rainbow Bookstore Cooperative, 426 W. Gilman St. (257-6050) and other outlets. Most other readings will be available via electronic reserves via Learn@UW. These readings are identified below with two stars (**). The balance will eventually be on course reserves at Helen C. White Library.

Juan González, *Harvest of Empire: A History of Latinos in America*, 2nd. Ed. (New York: Penguin, 2011).

Eileen Findlay, *Imposing Decency: The Politics of Sexuality and Race in Puerto Rico* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000).

Piri Thomas, *Down These Mean Streets* (New York: Vintage, 1997).

In addition, for students who read Spanish and are willing to supplement the required readings with a general overview or synthesis, copies of the following general survey are available in the Library:

Francisco A. Scarano, *Puerto Rico: cinco siglos de historia* (Bogotá: McGraw-Hill Interamericana, 1993; 3rd. ed., Mexico City, 2008).

Laptop policy

I encourage you to take notes on a laptop. However, reading email, going on Facebook or Twitter, or browsing the web *is disrespectful and rude*. Obviously, it is also *discouraged*. Such misuse of web-capable devices distracts other students and undermines your own ability to take quality lecture notes. If you anticipate visiting extraneous sites during lecture, I ask that you sit in the rearmost row of the room and refrain from making expressions or sounds that reveal you are not just taking lecture notes—that your mind is somewhere else in cyberspace.

Special Needs

I wish to fully include persons with disabilities in this course. It is in your best interest if you inform me as soon as possible regarding any special accommodations in the curriculum, instruction, or assessments of this course that may be necessary to enable you to fully participate in this course. Please be prepared to provide me with documentation from the McBurney Center (a copy of your VISA) by **February 5, 2011**. Special accommodations for individuals with obvious or documented disabilities require 2 weeks advance notice.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is:

- a) Using someone else's words or ideas without proper documentation.
- b) Copying some portion of your text from another source without proper acknowledgement of indebtedness.
- c) Borrowing another person's specific ideas without documenting their source.
- d) Having someone else correct or revise your work (not as in getting feedback from a writing group or individual, where you make the changes suggested by others).
- e) Turning in a paper written by someone else, an essay "service," or from a World Wide Web site (including reproductions of such essays or papers).

Plagiarism is a very serious offense, both in college and in the "real world." When you consult sources for a paper, you must document ideas or words deriving from them both by listing the sources in a bibliography at the end of the paper and by citing sources in the text itself. To cite a source is to make clear to the reader 1) who originated the idea or quotation that you

have used and 2) where it can be found. This then allows the reader to do further research or check your evidence. It also prevents you from taking credit—deliberately or inadvertently—for someone else’s work or ideas.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison has established a range of penalties for students guilty of plagiarism or academic dishonesty. Appropriate penalties include suspension or expulsion from the university, a failing grade for a course, a failing grade for the assignment, or a reduced grade on a redone assignment.

If, after reading this, you are still not sure as to what constitutes academic misconduct, the following University websites and documents contain useful information and advice:

<http://students.wisc.edu/saja/misconduct/misconduct.html>

<http://students.wisc.edu/saja/pdf/UWS14.pdf>

Ethnic Studies Courses

Excerpted from Faculty Document 1736: Undergraduate Ethnic Studies General Education Requirement:

"The University of Wisconsin-Madison is committed to fostering an understanding and appreciation of diversity, in the belief that doing so will:

- ➔ Better prepare students for life and careers in an increasingly multicultural U.S. environment,
- ➔ Add breadth and depth to the University curriculum, and
- ➔ Improve the campus climate.

“One of the University's overarching goals is to infuse the curriculum in all disciplines with diversity, including those where traditionally it has been absent. The Ethnic Studies Requirement (ESR) is one of several key elements in reaching this goal. This is a requirement that all students take a 3-credit course that considers ethnic/racial minorities that have been marginalized or discriminated against in the U.S. Because issues of ethnic diversity and religion are often intertwined and cannot easily be separated, courses that focus only on religion may, where appropriate, fulfill the ESR.”

WEEKLY TOPICS AND READINGS

PART ONE

I. LATINOS AND EMPIRE—AN INTRODUCTION (Jan. 24-26)

González, *Harvest*, Part I (Roots).

II. AN EMPIRE THAT INCORPORATES AND EXCLUDES (Jan. 31-Feb. 2)

González, *Harvest*, Part II (Branches).

III. LEGACIES AND CONTEMPORARY ISSUES (Feb. 7-9)

González, *Harvest*, Part III (The Harvest)

PART TWO

IV. PUERTO RICO BETWEEN EMPIRES: ESTABLISHING U.S. HEGEMONY (Feb. 14-16)

Findlay, *Imposing Decency*, Introduction and chs. 1-4.

V. GENDER, CLASS, AND COLOR IN A COLONIAL SETTING (Feb. 21-Feb. 23)

Findlay, *Imposing Decency*, chs. 5 through Conclusion.

VI. STRUCTURAL FOUNDATIONS OF COLONIAL DESPAIR (Feb. 28-Mar. 1)

**Luis Muñoz Marín, “The Sad Case of Porto Rico,” *The American Century* XVI, no. 62 (1929).

**Kelvin Santiago-Valles, “‘Our Race Today is the Only Hope for the World’: An African Spaniard as Chieftain of the Struggle against ‘Sugar Slavery’ in Puerto Rico, 1926-1934,” *Caribbean Studies* 35, 1 (Jan.-June 2007):107-140.

VII. NATIONALIST AND POPULIST TEMPTATIONS (Mar. 6-8)

**Juan M. Carrión, “Two Variants of Caribbean Nationalism: Marcus Garvey and Pedro Albizu Campos,” *Centro Journal* 17 (2005):26–45.

**Emilio Pantojas-García, “Puerto Rican Populism Revisited: The PPD During the 1940s,” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 21, 3 (Oct. 1989):521-557.

VIII. MIDTERM REVIEW AND EXAM (Mar. 13-15)

No assigned readings.

PART THREE

IX. INDUSTRIALIZATION AND MIGRATION (Mar. 20-22)

**Jorge Duany, “A Transnational Colonial Migration: Puerto Rico’s Farm Labor Program,” *New West Indian Guide* 84, 3–4 (2010):225–51.

**Helen I. Safa, “Economic Restructuring and Gender Subordination,” *Latin American Perspectives* 22, 2 (Spring 1995):32-50.

X. LIVING THE OUTER COMMUNITY (I) (Mar. 27-29)

Film: *Los Sures*, followed by an in-class discussion.

***SPRING BREAK**

XI. LIVING THE OUTER COMMUNITY (II) (Apr. 10-12)

**P. Bourgois, “From Jíbaro to Crack Dealer: Confronting the Restructuring of Capitalism in El Barrio,” in *Articulating Hidden Histories: Exploring the Influence of Eric R. Wolf*, ed. J. Schneider and R. Rapp (Berkeley: University of California Press, 125–41).

Thomas, *Down these Mean Streets*, chs. 1-16.

XII. LIVING THE OUTER COMMUNITY (III) (Apr. 17-19)

**Diana Ariza, “Puerto Rican Youth in Central Florida: Adaptation and Identity,” *Centro Journal*, XXII, 1 (Spring 2010):129-53.

Thomas, *Down these Mean Streets*, chs. 17-end.

PART FOUR

XIII. STASIS AND STATUS (Apr. 25-27)

**Filiberto Ojeda Ríos and Alicia del Campos, “The Boricua-Macheteros Popular Army: Origins, Program, and Struggle,” *Latin American Perspectives*, 29, 6 (2002):104-116.

**“Report by the President’s Task Force on Puerto Rico’s Status, December, 2005.”

XIV. CULTURE AND NATION AT THE DAWN OF THE 21st. CENTURY (May 2-4)

**Mariano Negrón-Portillo, “Puerto Rico: Surviving colonialism and nationalism,” in *Puerto Rican Jam: Essays on Culture and Politics*, ed. R. Grosfoguel and F. Negrón-Muntaner (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 39–56.

**Frances Negrón-Muntaner, “English Only Jamás but Spanish Only Cuidado: Language and Nationalism in Contemporary Puerto Rico,” in *Ibid.*, 257–85.