

**University of Wisconsin–Madison  
Department of History  
Department of Afro-American Studies**

**History/Afro-American Studies 347  
THE CARIBBEAN AND ITS DIASPORAS  
Semester I, 2010-2011**

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**Office hours:  
Mondays 1:00-2:00  
Mondays 2:00-4:00  
(sign-up only)**

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**Course description:**

As a gateway to the Americas, the Caribbean region has been at the center of power rivalries and long-distance mercantile exchanges since the European invasions five centuries ago. Competition between Atlantic powers for its fertile soils, vital trade routes, and strategic location has been a constant factor in the archipelago's development. So, too, has the islands' pervasive orientation toward, and dependence on, overseas markets for sugar, coffee, tobacco, and other tropical staples.

These patterns have defined the contemporary Caribbean in precise ways. They have led to, among other things, an entrenched colonial and neocolonial dependence on outside powers; to a plantation economy--and, more recently, an industrial and tourism economy--geared for the satisfaction of external demands, and to the widespread use of slavery and other forms of unfree labor. All of these systems of exploitation were (and are) predicated, to one degree or another, on racial and cultural distinctions. In the end, the social and cultural patterns spawned by outside dependence and required for labor control have had an ambiguous result. For one, they have aggravated social problems and have diminished the opportunities for resolving them. But at the same time, they have led to the establishment of resourceful, multiracial cultures, built upon a resilient African substratum which serves as a common denominator of the region's cultural formations. Hence, although the societies in question are quite varied in ethnic, racial, political, and linguistic terms, they are united by a common African-American heritage and by their identity as the European world's oldest colonial sphere.

Since World War II, the Caribbean has emerged as one of the world's regions most affected by the emigration of its people to countries in the North. While there are precedents for these out-migrations going back to the 1800s, after the War a fundamentally changed political economy of industrial labor spurred massive emigration to Europe, the United States, and Canada. Simultaneously, decolonization and globalization opened up

new “Caribbeans” in the former or current metropolises. The intimate connections existing between “inner” and “outer” communities are of great import if one is to fully understand the dynamics of Caribbean life today.

This course will explore major topics in the history of Caribbean societies, with emphasis on the processes by which they became the multiracial and diasporic nations of today. Our prime objective is to develop an understanding of the manner in which colonial rule, and the social institutions on which it was built--in particular, slavery and other forms of forced labor--shaped regional societies, beginning in the early days of European expansion and continuing into our times. A secondary emphasis will be on the diaspora communities created by Caribbean peoples in the United States and Europe.

### **Requirements:**

#### **A) *Mid-term and Final Exams:***

The mid-term (Thursday, October 21, in class) and final examination (Friday, December 17, place TBA) will consist of several identification items and two essay questions each. I will select these questions from a review list handed out several days before the exam date. Students are expected to be creative and original while integrating ideas and information gleaned from the pertinent core readings, as well as from lectures and class discussions. The exams are each worth 30% of the final grade.

#### **B) *Papers:***

Two 5-7 pp. essays, due Friday, October 8, and Friday, December 3 at 4 p.m. in your TA's mailbox. For each, students will select one topic from those listed at the bottom of this section and will write a 5 to 7-page essay which cogently and concisely develops a thesis or argument about a specific, well-defined problem relating to the chosen topic. Further details, including specific instructions on writing the papers, will be provided in class. Each paper is 10% of the grade.

#### *Paper topics:*

For paper # 1 you will select from the following list of general topics:

- 1) Consequences (social, economic, ecological, cultural, etc.) of the European conquest of the Caribbean;
- 2) Caribbean slavery as an economic and demographic system;
- 3) Slave women, the family, and culture-building in the Caribbean;
- 4) Capitalism, slavery, and anti-slavery (the so-called Williams Debate);
- 5) Resistance, rebellion, and the forging of autonomous and/or independent spaces and states;
- 6) Marronage and maroon societies.

For paper # 2 you will select from the following list of general topics:

- 1) The establishment of U.S. hegemony in the Caribbean;
- 2) Race and nation-building in the twentieth century;
- 3) Workers' organizations and their problematic support of nationalist projects;
- 4) Gender as a factor in colonial domination;
- 5) Populist movements;
- 6) Comparative decolonization processes;
- 7) Tourism as economic development--prospects and limitations;
- 8) Relationship of diasporic communities with sending societies;
- 9) Ethnic politics among Caribbean emigrants in the United States and Europe.

***C) Reaction paragraphs:***

Several times during the semester, on an unannounced basis, students will be asked to write short (one-page maximum) reaction essays to the week's readings. These will be graded on a pass/fail basis and will count toward 10% of the final grade. A separate syllabus for your work in discussion sections will give details on these assignments.

***D) Class participation:***

It is essential that students participate actively in section. At the end of the term, we will assign a grade to each person's participation based on the TAs tally of the frequency and value of the student's in-class commentaries. The section syllabi contain specific details on this policy.

**Grading**

The final grade will be based, therefore, on 100 points, divided as follows:

- Midterm and final exams.....40 points
- Papers.....30 points
- Reaction paragraphs.....10 points
- Class participation.....20 points

**Books and other materials**

You will read the following book in its entirety. It is available for purchase at Rainbow Bookstore Cooperative, 426 W. Gilman St. (tel. 257-6050).

Ada Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999).

**Other required readings**

Most other required readings will be available for electronic download from Learn@UW or another electronic source. For those items not available in this fashion, I will announce their availability in class before the week they are due.

**Plagiarism**

In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else's language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source.

If you are unsure what this means in practical terms, I suggest you read and print the Bates College Statement on Plagiarism, available at the following URL:

<http://abacus.bates.edu/pubs/Plagiarism/plagiarism.html#0>

## WEEKLY TOPICS AND READINGS

(PD = primary documents)

### Weeks 1-2: Introduction; Caribbean Geography and Ecology (9/2-9/9)

Thursday: Course Introduction

Tuesday: Caribbean History and its Counterpoints

Thursday: The Geographic Background to Caribbean History

Bonham C. Richardson, "A Colonized Environment," ch. 2 in *The Caribbean and the Wider World, 1492-1992: A Regional Geography*, pp. 13-37.

PD # 1: Map of the Caribbean Region (digital version).

### Week 3: The Aboriginal Past and the Spanish Invasion (9/14-16)

Tuesday: Taínos and their Predecessors

Thursday: Arrival of the Bearded Ones

Samuel M. Wilson "Cultural Pluralism and the Emergence of Complex Society in the Greater Antilles" online at [http://uts.cc.utexas.edu/~swilson/wilson\\_iaca99.html](http://uts.cc.utexas.edu/~swilson/wilson_iaca99.html)

Stephen Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions* (Chicago: U. of Chicago Pr., 1991), 52-60.

John Kicza, "Patterns in Early Spanish Overseas Expansion," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd. ser. 49, 2 (1992):229-253

PD # 2: Ramón Pané, *An Account of the Antiquities of the Indians* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1999), selections.

### Week 4: Clashes and Negotiations of Conquest (9/21-23)

Tuesday: Economy and Society of the Conquest Caribbean

Thursday: Aboriginal Resistance and the Challenges of Depopulation

PD #3: Bartolomé de las Casas, *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies* (London: Penguin Books, 1992), intro. by Anthony Pagden. Introduction and chpts. on Hispaniola, XIII-?? and 14-30.

Samuel M. Wilson, "Columbus, My Enemy," *Natural History*, 99, 12 (December 1990), 44 ff.

Lynne Guitar, "No More Negotiation: Slavery and the Destabilization of Colonial Hispaniola's *Encomienda* System," *Revista/Review Interamericana* XXIX, no. 1-4 (January-December 1999).

### **Week 5: The Competitive Empires (late 16th-17th. centuries) (9/28-30)**

Tuesday: Becoming Backwaters of Empire

Thursday: Imperial Competition

Lennox Honychurch, "Crossroads in the Caribbean: A Site of Encounter and Exchange on Dominica," *World Archaeology* 28, 3 (1997):291-304.

PD #4: *Letter of a Seville Merchant to his Consignee, 1553.*

### **Week 6: The Sugar Revolution: From Barbados to Saint Domingue (10/5-7)**

Tuesday: The Sugar Revolution, from Indentured Servants to Slaves

Thursday: Slave Societies Compared: Jamaica and Saint Domingue

Hilary Beckles, "Plantation Production and White Protoslavery: White Indentured Servants and the Colonization of the English West Indies," *Americas: A Review of Inter-American Cultural History* 41, 3 (1985): 21-45.

Richard Dunn, "'Dreadful Idlers' in the Cane Fields: The Slave Labor Pattern on a Jamaican Sugar Estate, 1762-1831," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 17, 4 (Spring 1987): 795-822.

Michel-Rolph Trouillot, "Motion in the System: Coffee, Color, and Slavery in Eighteenth-Century Saint-Domingue," *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* 5,3 (1982): 331-388.

PD #5: Bob Marley, "Redemption Song"

PD #6: Olaudah Equiano, "The Middle Passage," and "The Case Against the Slave Trade."

### **Week 7: The Caribbean between Corsairs and Reformers (10/12-14)**

Tuesday: Peasant Societies in the Spanish Caribbean

Thursday: Daily Lives and Struggles of Enslaved People

J.R. McNeill, "Yellow Jack and Geopolitics: Environment, Epidemics, and the Struggles for Empires in the American Tropics, 1650–1825." *OAH Journal of History* 18, no. 3 (April 2004): 9–13.

Michael Craton, *Searching for the Invisible Man: Slaves and Plantation Life in Jamaica* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978), selections ("Introduction," "Bunga-Men: Six Africans," "Conformists: Ten Ordinary Slaves," "Resisters: Five Slave Nonconformists").

Trevor Burnard, “‘A Matron in Rank, A Prostitute in Manners,’: The Manning Divorce of 1741, and Class, Gender, Race, and the Law in Eighteenth-century Jamaica,” in Verene Shepherd, ed., *Working Slavery, Pricing Freedom: Perspectives from the Caribbean, Africa, and the African Diaspora* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 133-152.

PD #7: George D. Flinter, “The Xivaros,” in *The Puerto Ricans: A Documentary History*, eds. Kal Wagenheim and Olga Jiménez de Wagenheim (1994), pp. 38-44.

### **Week 8: Midterm week (10/19-21)**

Tuesday: Review

Thursday: Midterm

### **Week 9: The Haitian Revolution (10/26-28)**

Tuesday: Revolution, Emancipation, and Citizenship

Thursday: The Consequences of Revolution

Franklin W. Knight, “The Haitian Revolution,” *The American Historical Review* 105, no. 1 (2000): 103–15.

David Brion Davis, “Impact of the French and Haitian Revolutions,” in David Patrick Geggus, ed. *The Impact of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2001.

PD # 8: Documents on the Haitian Revolution.

### **Week 10: The “Second Slavery” trumps British and French Emancipation (11/2-4)**

Tuesday: The Second Slavery: Cuba and Puerto Rico

Thursday: British and French Emancipation

Franklin W. Knight, “Origins of Wealth and the Sugar Revolution in Cuba, 1750-1850,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 57, 2 (May 1977):231-253.

W.C.V. Norman, “The Process of Cultural Change among Cuban Bozales during the Nineteenth Century,” *Americas* 62, 2 (October 2005):177-207.

Michel-Rolph Trouillot, “The Inconvenience of Freedom: Free People of Color and the Political Aftermath of Emancipation in Dominica and Saint-Domingue/Haiti,” in Seymour Drescher and Frank McGlynn, eds., *The Meaning of Freedom: Economics, Politics, and Culture after Slavery* (Pittsburgh: Univ. of Pittsburgh Press, 1992), 147-182.

PD #9: Richard Henry Dana, *To Cuba and Back* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1966), selections.

### **Week 11: Emancipation, Race, and Nationhood (11/9-11)**

Tuesday: The Problem of Nationhood in the Nineteenth-Century Caribbean

Thursday: The Cuban War and the Making of a Third Empire

Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba* (entire book).

### **Week 12: The Rise of the American Empire (11/16-18)**

Tuesday: The American Sugar Kingdom

Thursday: The Early Emigrant Communities in the U.S.

Barry Carr, "Identity, Class, and Nation: Black Immigrant Workers, Cuban Communism, and the Sugar Insurgency, 1925-1934," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 78, 1 (February 1998):83-116.

Winston James, "Race Consciousness, Class Consciousness and Afro-Puerto Rican Radicalism in America: Reflections on the Political Trajectories of Arturo Schomburg and Jesús Colón," *Centro: Journal of El Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños*, [Special Double Issue on "Race and Identity"], vol. VIII, nos. 1 & 2 (Spring 1996):92-127.

PD #10: Excerpts from the West Indian Royal Commission (Moyné Commission) report (1940-45)

### **Week 13: Crisis and Response (11/23)**

Tuesday: Nationalisms of Right and Left

Thursday: Decolonization by Any Name

Robert Whitney, "The Architect of the Cuban State: Fulgencio Batista and Populism in Cuba, 1937-1940," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 32 (2000):435-459.

Aimé Césaire, "Culture and Colonization," *Social Text* 28 (2010):127-144.

Lauren Derby, "The Dictator's Seduction: Gender and State Spectacle During the Trujillo Regime," *Callaloo* 23, 3 (Summer 2000): 1112-46.

PD #11: Luis Muñoz Marín, "The Sad Case of Porto Rico," in Wagenheim and Wagenheim, eds., *The Puerto Ricans: A Documentary History*, 153-161.

### **Week 14: Revolution (11/30-12/2)**

Tuesday: Caribbean Dictators, Populists, and Revolutionaries

Thursday: Castro's Cuba, Cuba's Fidel



Robin Blackburn, "Prologue to the Cuban Revolution," *New Left Review* 21 (October 1963):52-91.

PD #12: Ernesto Che Guevara, "Notes for the Study of the Ideology of the Cuban Revolution," originally published in *Verde Olivo*, Oct. 8, 1960.

### **Week 15: The Caribbean and the Cold War (12/9-11)**

Tuesday: Revolutionary Cuba and the End of the Cold War

Thursday: The Emigration Dialectic

Louis A. Pérez, Jr., "Fear and Loathing of Fidel Castro: Sources of U.S. Policy towards Cuba," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 34 (2002): 227-254.

Alejandro Portes and Ramón Grosfoguel, "Caribbean Diasporas: Migration and Ethnic Communities," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 533 (May 1994):48-69.

PD #13: Maurice Bishop, "In Nobody's Backyard," speech given on April 13, 1979.

PD #14: "Why Grenadians loved Bishop," *Manchester Weekly Guardian*, November 13, 1983, and "The Corrosive Effect of the Cuban Obsession," Dec. 4, 1983.

### **Week 16: The Caribbean in the Age of Globalization (12/14)**

Tuesday: The Caribbean of Last Resorts

Dennis Merrill, "Negotiating Cold War Paradise: U.S. Tourism, Economic Planning, and Cultural Modernity in Puerto Rico." *Diplomatic History* 25, no. 2 (Spring 2001): 179-214.

Anne McClintock, "Paranoid Empire: Specters from Guantánamo and Abu Ghraib," *Small Axe* 28 (March 2009):50-74.