

University of Wisconsin--Madison
Department of History

History 436
RACE, CLASS, AND COLONIALISM IN THE CARIBBEAN

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Semester I, 1993-94
Office hours:
TH 8:30-10:00a. (Sign-up only)
TH 10:30-12 noon (Walk-in hours)

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 Columbian contact five centuries ago. Competition between European and North American 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 export, and to the widespread use of slavery and other forms of unfree labor. All of these systems of labor were (and are) predicated, to one degree or another, on racial and cultural distinctions. In the end, the socioeconomic and political structures 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 regional societies and 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.

This course will explore major topics in the history of Caribbean societies, with an emphasis on the processes by which they became the multiracial entities 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.

Requirements:

A) Mid-term and Final Exams:

The mid-term and final examinations will consist of three essay questions each, to be selected by the instructor 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. papers, *due Thursday, Oct. 14* and *Thursday, Dec. 9*, in review essay style. For each, will select one topical category from the four listed at the bottom of this section—a total of two for the semester—and will write a 5 to 7-page review essay that gauges the contribution, and assesses the quality of, at least 5 bibliographic items (books or articles, or a combination), of which no more than three

can be from the required reading list. Further details will be provided in class. Each paper is 15% of the grade.

Categories: 1) the economics and demographics of Caribbean slavery; 2) slave women, the family, and culture-building in the Caribbean; 3) capitalism, slavery, and anti-slavery; and 4) resistance, rebellion, and the forging of autonomous and/or independent spaces and states.

C) Class attendance and participation:

Students are expected to attend all sessions and to actively participate in debates, exercises and other in-class activities. These will be assessed at 10% of the grade.

Readings:

The following texts, available at University Bookstore, are recommended for purchase.

Hilary Beckles and Verene Shepherd, eds., *Caribbean Slave Society and Economy: A Student Reader* (Jamaica and London, 1991).

Hilary Beckles, *Natural Rebels: A Social History of Enslaved Black Women in Barbados* (New Brunswick, 1989).

Sidney W. Mintz and Richard Price, *The Birth of African-American Culture* (Boston, 1992).

Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Haiti: State against Nation* (New York, 1990).

The following title is recommended as a supplementary text. It is also available at University Bookstore.

Franklin W. Knight, *The Caribbean: The Genesis of a Fragmented Nationalism*, 2nd. ed. (New York, 1991).

In addition, you may purchase a packet containing other required readings from the L&S Copy Center, located on the first floor of the Humanities building.

TOPICS AND READINGS
 (**in xerox packet)

I. ORIENTATION (9/2)

Course issues and themes, format and requirements, grading, expectations, logistics. Self-presentations.

II. THE CARIBBEAN REGION: AN OVERVIEW (9/7-9)

Principal readings:

** Sidney W. Mintz, "The Caribbean as a Socio-Cultural Area," in M. Horowitz, ed., *Peoples and Cultures of the Caribbean* (1971), 17-46.

** Jamaica Kincaid, "Alien Soil: Why Some People Like to Remake Nature in their Own Image, Others Prefer to Live and Let Live," *The New Yorker*, June 21, 1993, 47-51.

Supplementary:

F. W. Knight and C. Palmer, "The Caribbean: A Regional Overview", in Knight and Palmer, eds., *The Modern Caribbean* (Chapel Hill, 1989), 1-19.

Gordon K. Lewis, "The Contemporary Caribbean: A Regional Overview," in Sidney W. Mintz and Sally Price, ed., *Caribbean Contours* (Baltimore, 1985), 219-250.

Jean Benoist, "La organización social de las Antillas," in M. Moreno Fragnals, ed., *Africa en América Latina* (1978), 77-102.

David Lowenthal, "The Caribbean Region," in Marvin W. Miskesell, ed., *Geographers Abroad* (1973), 47-69.

Anthony P. Maingot, "The Caribbean: The Structure of Modern-Conservative Societies," in *Latin America: Its Problems and its Promise, A Multidisciplinary Introduction*, ed. by Jan Knippers Black (Boulder, Colo., 1984), 362-378.

III. A DYING WORLD: THE NATIVE CARIBBEAN AND THE EUROPEAN INTRUSION (9/14-16)

Principal readings:

** Antonio Stevens-Arroyo, "The Natural World of the Taínos," and "The Religious Cosmos of the Taínos," in *Cave of the Jagua: the Mythological World of the Tainos* (Albuquerque, 1988), 37-69.

J. Paul Thomas, "The Caribs of St. Vincent: A Study in Imperial Maladministration," in Beckles and Shepherd, eds., *Caribbean Slave Society and Economy*, 28-35.

Supplementary:

Irving Rouse, *The Tainos: Rise and Decline of the People who Greeted Columbus* (New Haven, 1992).

Samuel M. Wilson, *Hispaniola: Caribbean chiefdoms in the age of Columbus* (Tuscaloosa, Ala., 1990).

Henige, "On the Contact Population of Hispaniola: History as Higher Mathematics," in Beckles and Shepherd, eds., *Caribbean Slave Society and Economy*, 2–12.

IV. PLANTATION SLAVERY: SUGAR-ISLAND ECONOMICS (I) (9/21–23)

Principal readings:

Batie, "Why Sugar? Economic Cycles and the Changing of Staples on the English and French Antilles, 1624–54," in Beckles and Shepherd, eds., *Caribbean Slave Society and Economy*, 37–55.

Scarano, "The Origins of Plantation Growth in Puerto Rico," in Beckles and Shepherd, eds., *Caribbean Slave Society and Economy*, 56–68.

Knight, "The Transformation of Cuban Agriculture, 1763–1868," in Beckles and Shepherd, eds., *Caribbean Slave Society and Economy*, 69–79.

Supplementary:

Franklin W. Knight, *The Caribbean: The Genesis of a Fragmented Nationalism* (New York, 1978), chs. 4–5, pp. 67–120.

Hilary McD. Beckles and Andrew Downes, "The Economics of Transition to the Black Labor System in Barbados," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 18:2 (Autumn 1987), 225–247.

Richard S. Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624–1713* (Chapel Hill, 1966).

Manuel Moreno Fraginals, *The Sugarmill* (New York, 1978).

Sidney W. Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York, 1985).

V. PLANTATION SLAVERY: SUGAR-ISLAND ECONOMICS (II) (9/28–30)

Principal readings:

Ward, "The profitability of Sugar Planting in the British West Indies," in Beckles and Shepherd, eds., *Caribbean Slave Society and Economy*, 81–93.

Stein, "The French West Indian Sugar Business," in Beckles and Shepherd, eds., *Caribbean Slave Society and Economy*, 94–101.

Davies, "The Origins of the Commission System in the West India Trade," in Beckles and Shepherd, eds., *Caribbean Slave Society and Economy*, 102–110.

Supplementary:

Laird W. Bergad, *Cuban Rural Society in the Nineteenth Century: the Social and Economic History of Sugar Monoculture in Matanzas* (Princeton, 1990).

Francisco A. Scarano, *Sugar and Slavery in Puerto Rico: The Plantation Economy of Ponce, 1800–1850* (Madison, 1984).

Richard Sheridan, *Sugar and Slavery: An Economic History of the British West Indies, 1623–1775* (Baltimore, 1973).

VI. CAPITALISM AND SLAVERY (10/5–7)

Principal readings:

Williams, "Capitalism and Slavery," in Beckles and Shepherd, eds., *Caribbean Slave Society and Economy*, 120–129.

James, "French Capitalism and Caribbean Slavery," in Beckles and Shepherd, eds., *Caribbean Slave Society and Economy*, 130–135.

Drescher, "The Decline Thesis of British Slavery since *Econocide*," in Beckles and Shepherd, eds., *Caribbean Slave Society and Economy*, 136–149.

Supplementary:

William Darrity, Jr., "British industry and the West Indies plantations," *Social Science History* 14:1 (Spring 1990):117–149.

Barbara L. Solow and Stanley L. Engerman, eds., *British capitalism and Caribbean slavery: the legacy of Eric Williams* (New York, 1987).

Thomas Bender, ed., *The Antislavery Debate: Capitalism and Abolitionism as a Problem in Historical Interpretation* (Berkeley, 1992).

VII. SLAVE DEMOGRAPHY: TREATMENT AND DISEASE ISSUES (10/12–14)

Principal readings:

Kiple and Kiple, "Deficiency Diseases in the Caribbean," in Beckles and Shepherd, eds., *Caribbean Slave Society and Economy*, 173–182.

Craton, "Death, Disease, and Medicine on the Jamaica Slave Plantations; the Example of Worthy Park, 1767–1838," in Beckles and Shepherd, eds., *Caribbean Slave Society and Economy*, 183–196.

Sheridan, "Mortality and the Medical Treatment of Slaves in the British West Indies," in Beckles and Shepherd, eds., *Caribbean Slave Society and Economy*, 197–208.

Higman, "The Slave Populations of the British Caribbean: Some Nineteenth-Century Variations," in Beckles and Shepherd, eds., *Caribbean Slave Society and Economy*, 221–228.

Supplementary:

Barry W. Higman, *Slave Population and Economy in Jamaica, 1807–1834* (Cambridge, 1976).

Barry W. Higman, *Slave Populations of the British Caribbean, 1807–1834* (Baltimore, 1984).

VIII. DEMOGRAPHY AND FAMILY LIFE (10/19–21)

Principal readings:

Craton, "Changing Patterns of Slave Families in the British West Indies," in Beckles and Shepherd, eds., *Caribbean Slave Society and Economy*, 228–249.

Morrissey, "Women's Work, Family Formation, and Reproduction among Caribbean Women," in Beckles and Shepherd, eds., *Caribbean Slave Society and Economy*, 274–286.

Supplementary:

Herbert S. Klein, *African Slavery in Latin America and the Caribbean* (New York, 1986).

David L. Chandler, "Family bonds and the bondsman: the slave family in colonial Colombia," *Latin American Research Review* 16:2 (1981):107–131.

Barry W. Higman, "African and creole slave family patterns in Trinidad," *Journal of Family History* 3:3 (1978):163–180.

Alida C. Metcalf, "Searching for the Slave Family in Colonial Brazil: A Reconstruction from Sao Paulo," *Journal of Family History* 16:3 (1991):283–298.

IX. GENDER, RACE, AND LABOR IN THE SLAVE PLANTATION (I) (10/26–28)

Principal readings:

Beckles, *Natural Rebels*, pp. 1–89.

Supplementary:

Richard S. Dunn, "'Dreadful Idlers' in the Cane Fields: The Slave Labor Pattern on a Jamaican Sugar Estate, 1762–1831," in Barbara H. Solow and Stanley L. Engerman, eds., *British Capitalism and Caribbean Slavery: The Legacy of Eric Williams* (New York, 1987), 163–190.

Robert L. Paquette, *Sugar is Made with Blood: The Conspiracy of La Escalera and the Conflict between Empires over Slavery in Cuba* (Middletown, Conn., 1988), chs. 2–3, pp. 51–103.

Michael Craton, *Searching for the Invisible Man: Slaves and Plantation Life in Jamaica* (Cambridge, Mass., 1978).

X. GENDER, RACE, AND LABOR IN THE SLAVE PLANTATION (II) (11/2–4)

Principal readings:

Beckles, *Natural Rebels*, rest of the book.

Supplementary:

Barbara Bush, *Slave Women in Caribbean Society, 1650–1838* (Bloomington, 1990).

Davis, Angela Y. *Women, Race & Class*. New York: Vintage, 1983 <1981>.

Higman, Barry W. "African and Creole Slave Family Patterns in Trinidad," *Journal of Family History* 3, no. 2 (1978): 163–80.

Mintz, Sidney W. "Economic Role and Cultural Tradition." In *The Black Woman Cross-culturally*, edited by Filomina Chioma Steady, 515–34. Rochester, VT, 1985 <1981>.

Mullin, Michael. "Women and the Comparative Study of American Negro Slavery," *Slavery and Abolition* 6 (May 1985): 25–58.

Terborg-Penn, Rosalyn. "Black Women in Resistance: A Cross-cultural Perspective," in *In Resistance: Studies in African, Caribbean, and Afro-American History*, edited by Gary Okihiro. Amherst, Mass., 1986.

XI. BETWEEN WHITE AND BLACK: THE FREE PEOPLE OF COLOR (11/9–11)

Principal readings:

Sidney W. Mintz and Richard Price, *The Birth of African-American Culture* (Boston, 1992).

Sio, "Marginality and Free Coloured Identity in Caribbean Slave Society," in Beckles and Shepherd, eds., *Caribbean Slave Society and Economy*, 150–159.

Supplementary:

Edward L. Cox, *Free Coloreds in the Slave Societies of St. Kitts and Grenada, 1763–1833* (Knoxville, 1984).

Gad J. Heuman, *Between Black and White: Race, Politics, and the Free Coloreds in Jamaica, 1792–1865* (Westport, Conn., 1981).

Jerome S. Handler and Arnold A. Sio, "Barbados," in *Neither Slave nor Free: The Freedmen of African Descent in the Slave Societies of the New World*, ed. with an intro. by David W. Cohen and Jack P. Greene (Baltimore, 1972), 214–257.

Harry Hoetink, *Slavery and Race Relations in the Americas: Comparative Notes on their Nature and Nexus* (New York, 1973), pp. 3–45.

XII. FORMS OF RESISTANCE (I): REBELLION AND MARRONAGE (11/16–18)

Principal readings:

Goveia, "The West Indian Slave Laws of the Eighteenth Century," in Beckles and Shepherd, eds., *Caribbean Slave Society and Economy*, 346–362.

Beckles, "Caribbean Anti-Slavery: The Self-Liberation Ethos of Enslaved Blacks," in Beckles and Shepherd, eds., *Caribbean Slave Society and Economy*, 363–372.

Schuler, "Akan Slave Rebellions in the British Caribbean," in Beckles and Shepherd, eds., *Caribbean Slave Society and Economy*, 373–386.

Hall, "Maritime Maroons: *Grand Marronage* from the Danish West Indies," in Beckles and Shepherd, eds., *Caribbean Slave Society and Economy*, 387–400.

Supplementary:

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

Richard Price, ed., *Maroon Societies: Rebel Slave Communities in the Americas* (Garden City, N.Y., 1973).

Michael Craton, *Testing the Chains: Resistance to Slavery in the British West Indies* (Ithaca, 1982).

Jalil Sued Badillo and Angel López Cantos, *Puerto Rico negro* (Río Piedras, 1986).

Esteban Montejo, *The Autobiography of a Runaway Slave* (Cleveland, 1969).

David Barry Gaspar, *Bondmen and Rebels: A Study of Master-Slave Relations in Antigua, with implications for Colonial British America* (Baltimore, 1985).

XIII. FORMS OF RESISTANCE (II): REVOLUTION AND EMANCIPATION (11/23)**Principal readings:**

Thomas C. Holt, *The Problem of Freedom: Race, Labor, and Politics in Jamaica and Britain, 1832–1938* (Baltimore, 1992), first part of book.

Scott, "Explaining Abolition: Contradiction, Adaptation, and Challenge in Cuban Slave Society, 1860–86," in Beckles and Shepherd, eds., *Caribbean Slave Society and Economy*, 454–471.

Supplementary:

Robin Blackburn, *The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery, 1776–1848* (London, 1988).

Francisco A. Scarano, "Labor and Society in the Nineteenth Century," in Knight and Palmer, *The Modern Caribbean*, 51–84.

XIV. THE ORDEAL OF FREE LABOR (6/10)**Principal readings:**

Thomas C. Holt, *The Problem of Freedom: Race, Labor, and Politics in Jamaica and Britain, 1832–1938* (Baltimore, 1992), finish the book.

Supplementary:

Walter Rodney, *A History of the Guyanese Working People, 1881–1905* (Baltimore, 1981).

Richard Frucht, "From Slavery to Unfreedom in the Plantation Society of St. Kitts, W.I.," *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 292 (1977), 379–88.

Herbert S. Klein and Stanley L. Engerman, "The Transition from Slave to Free Labor: Notes on a Comparative Economic Model," in *Between Slavery and Free Labor: The Spanish Speaking Caribbean in the Nineteenth Century*, Manuel Moreno Fraginals, Frank Moya Pons and Stanley L. Engerman, eds. (Baltimore, 1985).

David Vincent Trotman, *Crime in Trinidad: Conflict and Control in a Plantation Society, 1838–1900* (Knoxville, Tenn., 1986), esp. ch. on "The Struggle for Cultural Hegemony," pp. 213–270.

Brian L. Moore, *Race, Power and Social Segmentation in Colonial Society: Guyana after Slavery, 1838–1891* (New York, 1987), ch. 8 on "The Subjugation of the Indian and Chinese Immigrants," pp. 161–188.

Rebecca Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba: The Transition to Free Labor, 1860–1899*, entire book.

Louis Pérez, Jr., *Cuba between Empires, 1878–1902* (Pittsburgh, 1983).

Manuel Moreno Fraginals, Frank Moya Pons, and Stanley L. Engerman, eds., *Between Slavery and Free Labor: The Spanish-Speaking Caribbean in the Nineteenth Century* (Baltimore, 1985), especially chs. by Moreno-Fraginals, Iglesias, and Ramos-Mattei.

Harry Hoetink, "The Dominican Republic in the Nineteenth Century: Some Notes on Stratification, Immigration, and Race," in *Race and Class in Latin America*, ed. Magnus Mörner (New York, 1970), pp. 96–121.

XV. THE HAITIAN CRUCIBLE (6/11)

Principal readings:

Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Haiti: State against Nation* (New York, 1990), all.

Supplementary:

Alex Dupuy, *Haiti in the World Economy* (Boulder, 1989).

David Nicholls, *From Dessalines to Duvalier: Race, Colour, and National Independence in Haiti* (Cambridge, 1979).