

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

**History/Afro-American Studies 347
THE CARIBBEAN AND ITS DIASPORAS
Spring 2016**

Francisco A. Scarano
4134 Humanities
263-3945/263-1800

Office hours:
W 12-1 p.m. (walk-in hour)
W 1-3 p.m. (by appt.)

Jeanne Essame (TA)

Course description:

This course provides a broad survey of Caribbean history. It explores major topics in the history of the region, with emphasis on how its societies became the multiracial and *diasporic* nations or colonies of today. Our main objective is to develop an understanding of the manner in which colonial rule, and the social institutions on which it was built--slavery and other forms of forced labor, in particular--shaped the region, beginning in the early days of European expansion and continuing into our times. A secondary emphasis will be on the communities created by Caribbean peoples in the United States, Canada, and Europe.

Background

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 began five centuries ago. Competition between Atlantic powers for its fertile soils, vital trade routes, and strategic location found there has been a constant factor in the archipelago's development. So, too, have the islands' pervasive orientation toward, and dependence on, overseas markets for sugar, coffee, tobacco, and other tropical staples.

These patterns have helped define the contemporary Caribbean in distinct 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 these forms of exploitation were (and, to a large extent, are still) predicated on racial and ethnocultural distinctions. In the end, impositions required for labor control and colonial rule have had an ambiguous result. They have aggravated social problems and undercut opportunities for resolving them. But, at the same time, they've led to the creation and entrenchment of resourceful multiracial cultures, built upon a resilient African substratum that serves as a common denominator of the region's cultural formations. Thus, although the societies in question are quite varied in ethnic, racial, political, and linguistic

terms, they are united by a common (though not geographically uniform) African-American heritage and by their status as the European world's oldest colonial sphere.

Since World War II, the Caribbean has emerged as one of the world 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, a fundamentally changed political economy of industrial labor spurred massive emigration to Europe, the United States, and Canada after 1945. Simultaneously, decolonization and globalization opened up new “Caribbeans”-coherent ethnic communities- 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.

Requirements:

A) *Midterm and Final:*

There will be a midterm exam on Wednesday, March 9 (in class) and an in-class final on Friday, May 13. Exams will consist of several I.D. items and two essay questions. I will give you a list of the *general topics* for the essays beforehand, but not for the ID items. Of the latter, you will be able to choose five from a list of about ten. Plan on devoting a paragraph to each, thoughtfully identifying the “what, when, where, and why” of the item as it concerns Caribbean history.

In your essays, I expect you 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 midterm is worth 20% of the final grade and the final exam 25%, for a total of 45%.

B) *Term paper:*

By 4 p.m. on Wednesday, April 27 you will upload to our Learn@UW site a 10-12 page research paper (double-spaced, 12-pt. Times New Roman font). The term paper is worth 20% of the final grade.

In this paper you will analyze and interpret a historical problem or question of importance to Caribbean history as we’ve outlined it in the course. It should be based on a sufficiently robust topic discussed in one of 40 essays (the Introduction and 39 chapters) of *The Caribbean: A History of the Region and its People*, our main sourcebook. However, you may also come up with an alternate topic, so long as it is approved by Jeanne or me.

We will provide more detailed information in class and in section on how to select the central research question, look for relevant primary and secondary information in the Library and online, analyze and organize the evidence, formulate and structure your argument, and write it cogently and persuasively. Once you’ve worked to define a research problem or question, Jeanne will give her final approval to the project.

As you advance through the various stages of crafting the research paper, you will be able to receive additional support from the History Lab, a resource center for undergraduate students studying, researching, and writing about the past. For more information on the History Lab, visit <https://history.wisc.edu/thehistorylab.htm>.

C) *“Thinking Like a Historian” exercise:*

During week 7, we will immerse ourselves in the Haitian Revolution. We’ll read both secondary sources and primary sources. There will be a short, 3-5 page paper in

which you will develop a historical argument based on your reading of these two sources in the Dubois and Garrigus *Slave Revolution* book (see below). I will provide information on this “Thinking Like a Historian” assignment several weeks in advance of the due date. The short paper will be worth 10 points toward the final grade.

D) Participation:

Discussion sections are where you analyze readings with classmates and the TA; discuss points brought up in lecture; talk about challenges and opportunities posed by the research paper; and gain knowledge of methods that historians use to carry out their research. You will employ some of these methods in own paper.

It is expected that you will attend sections regularly and will participate enthusiastically in them. The final grade for participation (25% of the semester grade) will reflect such enthusiasm and gauge your impact on the progress achieved by the discussion section.

Grading

The final grade will be computed as follows:

Midterm and final	45 points (20MT/25F)
"Thinking like a historian" exercise...	10 points
Term paper.....	20 points
Class participation.....	25 points
Total.....	100 points

Required books

The following books are available at Rainbow Bookstore Cooperative, 426 W. Gilman St.

Stephan Palmié and Francisco A. Scarano, *The Caribbean: A History of the Region and its Peoples* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011).

Laurent Dubois and John D. Garrigus, *Slave Revolution in the Caribbean: A Brief History with Documents, 1789-1804* (New York: Bedford/St. Martin’s Press, 2006).

When to read

You should finish all weekly readings before the Monday lecture.

Laptop policy

I encourage you to take notes on a laptop. However, reading email, going on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, or any other social media, or browsing the web *is not allowed*. Such misuse of a web-capable device is *rude and annoying*. It distracts other students and diminishes your own ability to take quality lecture notes. If I notice that you are violating

this rule, I will ask you to move to a corner of the lecture hall and sit there for the rest of the summer term.

Special needs

I wish to fully include persons with disabilities in this course. If you are in this category, it's 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 for 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 Wednesday, January 27. Special accommodations for individuals with obvious or documented disabilities require a one-week advance notice.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is:

- Using someone else's words or ideas without proper documentation.
- Copying some portion of your text from another source without proper acknowledgement of indebtedness.
- Borrowing another person's specific ideas without documenting their source.
- 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).
- 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>

WEEKLY TOPICS AND READINGS

Week 1: Course introduction (1/20)

Goals and objectives; requirements; topics; personal introductions

Week 2: Geographical, Ecological, and Aboriginal Contours (1/25-27)

Caribbean Counterpoints at the Onset of Modernity

Geographies of Opportunity and Restraint

Palmié and Scarano, *The Caribbean* (hereafter, *PSTC*), "Introduction" and chs. 1-3.

Week 3: European Invasion: Clash, Disaster, Negotiation (2/1-3)

The Native Caribbean

Conquest, Resistance, and Depopulation

***PSTC*: 5-8.**

Wilson, "Surviving European Conquest in the Caribbean," *Revista de Arqueología Americana*, 12 (1997):141-60.

Week 4: Competitive Imperialism (late 16th-17th. centuries) (2/8-10)

When Worlds Collide (film session)

Imperial Competition

***PSTC*: 10-11.**

Week 5: Sugar Revolution (2/15-17)

The Sugar Revolution: From Indentured Servants to Slaves

Jamaica and Saint Domingue: Apex of Caribbean Slave Societies

***PSTC*: 9, 12-15.**

Week 6: Slaves, Peasants, and Power (2/22-24)

Daily Lives and Struggles of Enslaved People

Peasant Societies of the Spanish Caribbean

***PSTC*: 16.**

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”).

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 7: The Haitian Revolution (2/29-3/2)

Revolution, Emancipation, and Citizenship

The Haitian Revolution in Documents.

PSTC: 18-19.

Laurent Dubois and John D. Garrigus, Slave Revolution in the Caribbean: A Brief History with Documents, 1789-1804 (New York: Bedford/St. Martin’s Press, 2006), selections TBA.

Week 8: Review and Midterm (3/7-9)

Review session

Midterm

Week 9: The “Second Slavery” vs. British and French Emancipation (3/14-16)

The Second Slavery: Cuba and Puerto Rico

British and French Emancipation

PSTC:20-23.

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

*******SPRING BREAK*******

Week 10: Unthinkable Nations (3/28-30)

Haitian Underdevelopment Deciphered

Sugar Cane Alley (film)

Sheller, Mimi. “The Army of Sufferers: Peasant Democracy in the Early Republic of Haiti.” *NWIG: New West Indian Guide / Nieuwe West-Indische Gids* 74, no. 1/2 (2000): 33–55.

Week 11: Emancipation, Race, and Nationhood (4/4-6)

The Problem of Nationhood in the Nineteenth-Century Caribbean

The Cuban War and the New Empire

PSTC: 24, 26-27.

Week 12: The Empire's Entrails (4/11-13)

The American Sugar Kingdom

Occupations and Colonization, 1898-1934

PSTC: 25, 28-30.

Week 13: Crisis and Response (4/18-20)

Nationalisms of the Right and Left

Decolonization by Any Name

PSTC:31-32.

Week 14: Revolution and Cold War (4/25-27)

Caribbean Dictators, Populists, and Revolutionaries

Castro's Cuba, Cuba's Fidel

PSTC:33-37.

Week 15: The Globalized Caribbean (5/2-4)

The Emigration Dialectic

Globalization's Winners and Losers

PSTC: 38-39.