

**AFRICANA STUDIES 105: *The African Diaspora and the Caribbean.***

Fall 2006



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Class hours: Mondays: 1:30 to 2:45

**Office Hours:**  
Tuesdays 2:45 to 4:45  
or by appointment.

**Course Description:** This course offers an overview of the pivotal role played by the forced migration of enslaved Africans on the development of the societies and cultures of the Caribbean region. We examine the economic, political, and social development of the region with a focus on the lasting legacy of slavery and the plantation. Among the topics covered are colonialism, race and class, ethnicity, post-colonialism, migration, trans-nationalism, popular culture, and religion.

**Class Dynamics:** Classes will be based on dialogue, open discussion and specific student questions. Lectures will be provided occasionally to guide and inform discussion of particular concepts or texts but will not substitute for student participation. Therefore students are responsible for coming to class prepared, having read and/or viewed assigned materials, and ready to comment on them.

Students are responsible for bringing to my attention any problems they may encounter during the semester. This includes issues of comprehension, individual assignments or other concerns that may affect student performance.

**Required Texts (available at College Bookstore):**

*Creole Religions of the Caribbean: An Introduction*, by Margarite Fernández Olmos and Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert

*Slave Revolution in the Caribbean. 1789-1804* by Laurent Dubois and John D. Garrigus

*History of Mary Prince: A West Indian Slave* by Mary Prince

*Oroonoko* by Aphra Behn

*The Oxford Book of Caribbean Short Stories*, edited by Stewart Brown and John Wickam

*The Craft of Research* by Wayne Booth

## **Required Work:**

There are three types of written work required for class.

1. **A series of brief responses** (150 words each) to selected readings assigned to be discussed in class. Look below for dates due. The responses are due by 5pm of the evening before class and should be posted on our Blackboard site. Although you should strive for clarity and accuracy in the language, they will be graded on their content only. You are welcome to respond to any postings and are responsible for reading all your classmates' postings by class time.
2. **Four** short papers (500-750 words) focused on topics discussed in class. The papers will be graded on both content and language. See below for dates due. The specific focus is your choice.
3. **A team research project** that will result in a class presentation. Topics will be announced.
4. **A final paper** (1500 words).

If, in the course of writing any of the required work you should make use of the ideas or wording of a consulted source, you must provide documentation to that effect following the guidelines established in the *MLA Handbook* or *Chicago Manual of Style*. If you are unclear as to what requires documentation, consult the *Manual*, the pamphlet on *Originality and Attribution: A Guide for Student Writers at Vassar College*, or myself. Failure to acknowledge sources constitutes a breach of academic integrity and will be referred to the College's Academic Panel. This applies equally to material taken from the worldwide web.

## **Attendance Policy**

Attendance to class meetings is **obligatory**. Absence from class will not constitute a valid excuse for lack of preparedness or late work. Students can keep abreast of course assignments through Blackboard or through contact with fellow students or the instructor. After the first unexcused absence from class, subsequent absences will result in a corresponding reduction of the final grade (see below).

## **Students with Disabilities**

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities who are registered with the Office of Disability and Support Services. Please schedule an appointment with the instructor early in the semester to discuss any accommodations for this course which have been approved by the Director of Disability and Support Services as indicated in your DSS accommodation letter.

**SHORT STORIES AND OTHER READING MATERIALS FOR CLASS DISCUSSION ARE AVAILABLE THROUGH BLACKBOARD.**

**Music cd's will be distributed at the beginning of semester. They are strictly for class use and must not be reproduced or shared.**

## Discussion Schedule:

### August

31 Introduction

### September

5 Historical Background

Read: Chapter One, "Historical Background" from *Creole Religions of the Caribbean*

Paulette Poujol-Oriol's "Red Flower"

7 Jalil Sued Badillo's "Christopher Columbus and the Enslavement of the Amerindians"

**Writing: Brief response to Sued Badillo's text. Please post on Blackboard by 5pm on September 4**

12 LIBRARY: Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko*

**Writing: Brief response to Behn's text. Please post on Blackboard by 5pm on September 11**

14 *Oroonoko*

Richard Frohock's "The Foundations of Government in Aphra Behn's New World Settings"

**SECOND PAPER DUE**

19 "Haitian Vodou," Chapter Four of *Creole Religions of the Caribbean*

21 *Slave Revolution in the Caribbean. 1789-1804* by Laurent Dubois and John D. Garrigus

26 Dubois and Garrigus

28 Dubois and Garrigus

### October

3 Derek Walcott's "The Muse of History"

**FIRST PAPER DUE**

5 *History of Mary Prince*

**Writing: Brief response to Prince's text. Please post on Blackboard by 5pm on October 4**

10 *History of Mary Prince*

Mario Cesareo's "When the Subaltern Travels: Slave Narrative and Testimonial Erasure in the Contact Zone"

12 *History of Mary Prince*

**THIRD PAPER DUE**

24 Film: *The Last Supper* (Cuba)

26 Alejo Carpentier's "Journey to the Seed" (Oxford)

31 C. L. R. James's "Triumph" (Oxford)

**November**

2 Edward Barthwaite's "Dream Haiti" (Oxford)

Kelehan and Paravisini, "The Children of the Sea"

7 LIBRARY

9 "Obeah, Myal, and Quimbois," Chapter Five of *Creole Religions*

Myriam Warner Vieyra's "Passport to Paradise"

14 Film: *La Rue Cases-Nègres* (Martinique)

**Writing: Brief response to the film. Please post on Blackboard by 5pm on September 11**

16 "Regla de Ocha," Chapter Two of *Creole Religions*

21 Film: *Guantanamera*

**FOURTH PAPER DUE**

28 Andrew Salkey's "A Proper Anno Domini Feeling" and Michael Anthony's "They Better Not Stop the Carnival" (Oxford)

30 Thea Doelwijt's "In Foreign Parts" (Oxford)

## **December**

- 5 Michelle Cliff's "Columba" and Phyllis Allfrey's "O Stay and Hear"
- 7 Olive Senior's "Bright Thursdays"

**FINAL PAPER IS DUE BY 5PM ON THE 2<sup>ND</sup> DAY OF FINAL EXAMS.**

## **Class Evaluation**

- 10% Class Attendance (Please note that after the first unexcused absence from the class you will forfeit 5 percentage points off your final grade for every subsequent absence).
- 10% Class participation
- 10% Oral report
- 20% Brief responses
- 20% Midterm paper
- 30% Final paper