

Caribbean History  
Carr Building, Room 215  
Monday, Wednesday, Friday 1:00 – 1:50pm

Professor Ashley Rose Young  
Carr Building, Room 110  
ashley.r.young@duke.edu  
Office hours by appointment

**Class Description:** This course seeks to highlight the dynamic history of the Caribbean – a region paramount to our understanding not only of United States history, but also of the history of the many countries that border the Atlantic Ocean. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the first Europeans made their way to the Caribbean, marking the beginning of a colonial process that would bind the Caribbean islands to the development of vast European overseas empires and a capitalist global economy. By the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, the region played an essential role in the trans-Atlantic slave economy, producing key commodities whose distribution networks reached across the vast expanses of the Atlantic Ocean. These trade networks also served as the pathways along which ideas, beliefs, and other cultural expressions moved across space and time. Even within the vastness of this Atlantic World, individuals, entrepreneurs, and governments were connected through their investments in the production, distribution, and consumption of commodity goods.

As numerous imperial powers – the French, Spanish, British, Dutch, and Americans – vied for control of the Caribbean, a diverse array of Caribbean cultures were born out of processes of colonization, emancipation, and revolution. The Caribbean was the site of the Haitian Revolution and the Cuban Revolution – complex historical events that impacted the sustainability of slave systems in the Atlantic World and notions of nationalism in the midst of the Cold War, respectively. The Caribbean region, therefore, has a history that is inextricably entwined with its peoples’ reactions to oppressive conditions: slavery, denial of full citizenship, and the exploitation of Caribbean cultures. We will observe the ways in which locals worked within and around these oppressive situations in hopes of making better lives for themselves: fair labor conditions, full citizenship, and freedom to express their culture and beliefs. Throughout the course of the semester, we will focus primarily on Jamaica, Haiti, Puerto Rico, and Cuba to highlight the dynamic historical forces shaping the Caribbean and the broader Atlantic World.

By the end of the semester, each one of us will step away from this course with a different and more complex image of the Caribbean. You will come to see that the region is not merely a popular vacation destination and the palm tree-swaying birthplace of Bob Marley, but also an extremely important region whose people and cultures have profoundly shaped the Atlantic World, and the development of American culture and society, for the past 500 years.

**Class Goals:**

- Acquire skills to read and analyze historical documents
- Learn to draw important information from first hand accounts, which offer and “on the ground” sense of what American life felt like, and which form the building blocks of historical inquiry

- Gain a foundational understanding of the people, places, and events that shaped modern Caribbean and American history. Students will think historically about why all these names and dates matter, having them at hand to weave into broader, interpretative arguments about the past.
- Engage in respectful discussion and construct thoughtful, evidence-based arguments based on course readings and lectures.
- Conduct primary research with visual materials found in the Perkins Library Special Collections and write a well organized, analytical essay

### Reading:

The books for this course are available for purchase at the Regulator Bookstore on 9<sup>th</sup> Street. The books are also on reserve at Perkins library. Because there is simply not enough time for me to cover everything in lecture, *The Caribbean: A History of the Region and Its People* [TCH] will serve as our general textbook. *TCH* will help you to organize the material, fill in gaps, and make connections. In the process, it will also help you do better on the exams.

- Jamaica Kincaid, *A Small Place*. (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1988)
- Scarano and Palmié, eds., *The Caribbean: A History of the Region and Its People* (Chicago, 2011) [*TCH*]
- Laurent Dubois and John D. Garrigus, *Slave Revolution in the Caribbean, 1789-1804: A Brief History with Documents* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004).
- Rebecca Scott and Jean M. Hébrard, *Freedom Papers: An Atlantic Odyssey in the Age of Emancipation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012).
- Margarite Fernández Olmos & Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert, *Creole Religions of the Caribbean: An Introduction from Vodou and Santería to Obeah and Espiritismo*, Second Edition. (New York: New York University Press, 2011)

All other readings are available on Sakai and can be accessed under Course Documents (organized by lecture). The readings are to be completed before lecture meets.

### Grading Distribution

Attendance and Class Participation	25%
Visual Culture Paper ( <i>due class 6.3</i> )	15%
Midterm ( <i>taken during class 8.2</i> )	25%
Media Moment	5%
Final Exam	30%

#### 1) Attendance and Class Participation (25%)

If a student expects to miss class, he or she must notify me via email.

Students are expected and encouraged to participate in class discussion. These discussions will draw upon evidence from weekly readings and larger themes, issues, and trends discussed in lecture.

I grade class participation on the following point system:

- 5 points** (excellent, regular participation, always prepared, made perceptive points)
- 4 points** (very good, regular participation, nearly always prepared, made good points)
- 3 points** (regular participation—once weekly—nearly always prepared)
- 2 points** (very little, but some, contribution to class discussions)
- 1 point** (good class attendance but no—or almost no—participation in class discussions)

## **2) Visual Culture Paper (15%)**

Often historians rely on written sources, but visual sources such as paintings, photographs, newspaper advertisements and broadsheets can provide historical insights that written materials cannot.

I will give you a prompt for the writing assignment two to three weeks prior to the assignment's due date (**class 9.2**) The paper will be roughly 3-5 pages in length. I expect you to use your most concise prose and conduct sophisticated analysis of the visual materials pulled from the Perkins Library Special Collections.

Format: Double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, 1-inch margins.

Submission: Turn in your papers via dropbox on Sakai.

Citation: All work must be cited properly using Chicago Style citation footnotes and bibliography.

For citation information please refer to either of the following:

- *The Chicago Manual of Style*
- Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*

For guidance on writing style please refer to:

- William Zinsser, *On Writing Well*
- Strunk and White, *The Elements of Style*

Academic Integrity is of the utmost importance in this class. **Plagiarism is not tolerated.**

Please see the university's plagiarism policy here: <http://library.duke.edu/research/plagiarism/>

## **3) Midterm (25%)**

Drawing from lectures, readings, and discussion sections, the midterm will include several short identifications *as well as a longer essay that requires you to identify and analyze themes from the first half of the course.*

The midterm will cover class lectures and readings from class 1.1-7.1

The midterm is an in-class exam (40 minutes in length) given during class period 7.2

## **3) Media Moment (5%)**

Starting with class 7.3, a student pair will begin each class with a “media moment.” Student presenters will be responsible for finding a radio news broadcast or news video clip published in the past year that pertains to the major topic and or theme of the assigned class period. Students are expected to contextualize the media clip, providing a short (1 to 2-minute) introduction to the news story. Student presenters will then pose one or two thought-provoking questions for their

fellow students to keep in mind as they listen to/watch the media clip. Student presenters will then lead a 5-10 minute discussion on the news clip, relating the clip back to major themes we have studied in the course. Students will meet with Dr. Young one week prior to their assigned class to discuss their media clip presentation.

**4) Final (30%)**

The final will draw from lectures, sections, and readings in both halves of the semester. It will include a series of short identifications as well as a longer essay that requires you to identify and analyze themes from the full span of the course.

The final is 3 hours in length.

**Accommodations:**

If you have physical, psychological or learning disabilities and require accommodations, please let me know early in the semester so that your course needs may be met. You may also wish to consult the Coordinator of Services to Students with Disabilities, for suggestions and help with your particular needs at this University. All communication with me is confidential.

**One Final Note:** I strongly encourage students to visit me in my office for informal discussion of the class readings, clarification of course themes, and general interests in American history. Please feel free to email me to set up a time to meet.

Course Schedule

**Week 1**

1.1 What is History and What do Historians Do?

Class Reading:

- Class syllabus

**UNIT 1: Discovery, Conquest, and the Columbian Exchange**

1.2 Coloring Outside the Lines: (Re-)Defining Caribbean Geography

Class Reading:

- Secondary Sources:
  - Jan Rogozinski, *A Brief History of the Caribbean*, Chapter 1: The Enduring Environment and the First Islanders (pg. 3-21)
  - L. Antonio Curet, “The Earliest Settlers” in *TCH* (pg. 53-68)

1.3 Paradise Lost: Conquest and Genocide in the Caribbean

Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
  - Las Casas, *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies* (excerpts)
  - Letter of Columbus and Letter of Dr. Chanca in Peter Hulme, *Wild Majesty: Encounters with Caribs from Columbus to the Present Day*
- Secondary Sources:
  - L. Antonio Curet, “The Columbian Moment: Politics, Ideology, and Biohistory” and “Negotiations of Conquest” in *TCH* (pg. 83-96, 115-130)

**Week 2**

2.1 Through the Looking Glass: Cultural Representations of the Caribbean in Europe

Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
  - Ramon Pane, “Account of the Indies”
- Secondary Sources:
  - Roger Schlesinger, *In the Wake of Columbus: The Impact of the New World on Europe, 1492-1650*, Second Edition, Chapter 3: European Conceptions of Native Americans (pg. 61-91)

**UNIT 2: Labor, Commodities and Consumption**

2.2 Beyond the Sublime: Legacies of Imperialism

Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
  - Jamaica Kincaid, *A Small Place* (all)

2.3 Saltwater Slavery

Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:

- Mary Prince, “The Life of Mary Prince, a West Indian Slave”
- Secondary Sources:
  - Alison Games, “The Atlantic Framework of 17<sup>th</sup> Century Colonization” in *TCH* (pg. 191-204)
  - “Why Were the Africans Enslaved?” in *The Atlantic Slave Trade*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2002), pp. 1-29

### Week 3

#### 3.1 Blood in the Cane Fields: Plantation Economy and Atlantic Commodities

##### Class Reading:

- Secondary Sources:
  - Carrington and Noel, “Slaves and Tropical Commodities: The Caribbean in the South Atlantic System” in *THC* (pg. 231-242)
  - Sidney Mintz, *Sweetness and Power*, Chapter 3 (pg. 74-150)

#### 3.2 The Marvels of the Municipal Market

##### Class Reading:

- Secondary Sources:
  - Laurent Dubois, *Avengers of the New World*, Chapter 1: Specters of Saint-Domingue (pg. 8-35)

### **UNIT 3: Resistance Under and Beyond the Shadow of the Great House**

#### 3.3 Skull and Crossbones: Pirates on the High Seas

##### Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
  - “Rules of the Pirate Brethren”
- Secondary Sources:
  - Isaac Curtis, “Masterless People: Maroons, Pirates and Commoners” in *TCH* (pg. 149-162)
  - The following sections in Gabriel Kuhn’s *Life Under the Jolly Roger* (2009)
    - 3.2- “Villains of all Nations?; Piracy and (Trans)Nationality” (pg. 57-60)
    - 3.5- “Anne Bonny, Mary Read and Co-opted Myth: Piracy and Gender” (pg. 71-74)
    - 4.9- “Safe Havens, On sore settlements, Pirate Utopias: Pirates and the Land” (pg. 136-146)

### Week 4

#### 4.1 Maroons

##### Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
  - Esteban Montejo, “The Autobiography of a Runaway Slave,” in Verene Shepherd and Hilary McD. Beckles, eds., *Caribbean Slavery in the Atlantic World* (pg. 829-842)
- Secondary Sources:

- Josep Fradera, “The Caribbean between Empires: Colonists, Pirates and Slaves” in *TCH* (pg. 165-176)

#### 4.2 A New Perspective on the American Revolution

##### Class Reading:

- Secondary Sources:
  - Douglas Hamilton, “Rivalry, War and Imperial Reform in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century” in *TCH* (pg. 261-272)

#### 4.3 The Last Supper (Part 1)

##### Class Reading:

- Secondary Sources:
  - Philip Morgan, “Slave Cultures: Systems of Domination and Forms of Resistance” in *TCH* (pg. 245-260)

### Week 5

#### 5.1 The Last Supper (Part 2)

##### Class Reading:

- Secondary Sources:
  - Rebecca Scott and Jean M. Hébrard, *Freedom Papers: An Atlantic Odyssey in the Age of Emancipation*, Prologue: The Cigar Maker Writes to the General, Chapter 1: “Rosalie, Black Woman of the Poulard Nation” (pg. 1-19)

### **UNIT 4: Revolution, Emancipation, and Unfreedom**

#### 5.2 Avengers of the New World: The Haitian Revolution Part 1

##### Class Reading:

- Secondary Sources:
  - Rebecca Scott and Jean M. Hébrard, *Freedom Papers: An Atlantic Odyssey in the Age of Emancipation*, Chapter 2: “Rosalie...My Slave” (pg. 20-48)
  - Laurent Dubois and John D. Garrigus, *Slave Revolution in the Caribbean*, introduction and select documents.

#### 5.3 The Black Jacobins: The Haitian Revolution Part 2

##### Class Readings:

- Secondary Sources:
  - Laurent Dubois and John D. Garrigus, *Slave Revolution in the Caribbean*, select documents.

### Week 6

#### 6.1 Cuba in the Aftermath of the Haitian Revolution (1804-1812)

##### Class Reading:

- Secondary Sources:
  - Rebecca Scott and Jean M. Hébrard, *Freedom Papers: An Atlantic Odyssey in the Age of Emancipation*, Chapter 3: Citizen Rosalie, Chapter 4: Crossing the Gulf (pg. 49-82)

- Matt D. Childs, “A Black French General Arrived to Conquer the Island: Images of the Haitian Revolution in Cuba’s 1812 Aponte Rebellion,” in *The Impact of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World*. Ed. Geggus, David Patrick. Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 2001. (pg. 135-156)

## 6.2 New Orleans: A Caribbean Port in the United States

### Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
  - *Les Cenelles* (excerpts)
- Secondary Sources:
  - Rebecca Scott and Jean M. Hébrard, *Freedom Papers: An Atlantic Odyssey in the Age of Emancipation*, Chapter 5: The Land of the Rights of Man, Chapter 6: Joseph and His Brothers (pg. 83-120)

## 6.3 The Mysteries of New Orleans

### Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
  - Ludwig von Reizenstein, *The Mysteries of New Orleans*, trans. and ed. Steven Rowan (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002) (excerpts)
  - George Washington Cable, *The Grandissimes: A Story of Creole Life* (excerpts)

## Week 7

### 7.1 Review Session for the Midterm

#### Class Reading:

- None

## 7.2 Midterm

### 7.3 Abolition in the British West Indies

#### Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
  - W.G. Sewell, *The Ordeal of Free Labour in the British West Indies* (Harper & Brothers, 1861), Chapter 25: Free and Slave Labor and Chapter 26: Want of Labor (pg. 260-291)

## Week 8

## **UNIT 5: The Spirit of Freedom**

### 8.1 Emancipation in the Shadow of the Great House

#### Class Reading:

- Secondary Sources:
  - Hilary M. Beckles, “Caribbean Anti-Slavery: The Self-Liberation Ethos of Enslaved Blacks”

### 8.2 Coolies and Cane in the Caribbean

#### Class Reading:



- Primary Sources:
  - *Remarks upon the emigration of hill coolies* (London: 18--?) Slavery and Anti-Slavery. Gale. Duke University Library. (16 pages total)
  - [Emigration of Indian labourers to the West Indies, &c. Copy](#) or extract of any communication from the Governor-General of India, in reply to Lord Stanley's despatch relative to the projected emigration of hill coolies to the West Indies, &c. (1844)

### 8.3 Coolies and Cane in Post-Emancipation Louisiana

#### Class Reading:

- None

## Week 9

### 9.1 Sugar Cane Alley (Part 1)

#### Class Reading:

- None

### 9.2 Sugar Cane Alley (Part 2)

#### Class Reading:

- None

Assignments: **Visual Culture Paper Due by 5:00 pm via Sakai**

### 9.3 The Spirit of Freedom: Slave Resistance and Emancipation in Cuba

#### Class Reading:

- Secondary Sources:
  - Rebecca Scott, "Reclaiming Gregoria's Mule: The Meanings of Freedom in the Armao and Caunao Valleys, Cienfuegos, Cuba, 1880-1899" *Past & Present*, Vol. 170, Issue 1, pg. 181-216.

## Week 10

### 10.1 Crucible of Empire: The Spanish American War

#### Class Reading:

- None

### 10.2 A Caribbean Perspective: Cuba and the Spanish American War

#### Class Reading:

- Secondary Sources:
  - Robert Whitney, "War and Nation Building: Cuban and Dominican Experiences" in *TCH* (pg. 361-372)
  - O. Nigel Bolland, "Labor Protests, Rebellion and the Rise of Nationalism during Depression and War" in *TCH* (pg. 459-474)

### 10.3 "Civilizing" the Caribbean

#### Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:

- Rudyard Kipling, “The White Man’s Burden,” 1899.
- Secondary Sources:
  - Eileen J. Findlay, “Love in the Tropics,” in Gilbert M. Joseph, Catherine C. LeGrand, and Ricardo D. Salvatore, eds. *Close Encounters of Empire* (pg. 139-172)
  - David Sheinin, “The Caribbean and the Cold War: Between Reform and Revolution” in *TCH* (pg. 491-506)

## Week 11

### 11.1 The Cuban Revolution

#### Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
  - Louis A. Pérez, *Cuba* (pg. 337-381)
- Secondary Sources:
  - Michael Zeuske, “The Long Cuban Revolution” in *TCH* (pg. 507-522)

## **UNIT 6: Creole Religions**

### 11.2 The Orisha Tradition in Cuba

#### Class Reading:

- Margarite Fernández Olmos & Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert, *Creole Religions of the Caribbean: An Introduction from Vodou and Santería to Obeah and Espiritismo* (Second Edition). Introduction and Chapter 2: The Orisha Tradition in Cuba: Santería/Regla de Ocha (pg. 1-19, 33-87)

### 11.3 Obeah, Myal, and Quimbois

#### Class Reading:

- Secondary Sources:
  - Margarite Fernández Olmos & Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert, *Creole Religions of the Caribbean: An Introduction from Vodou and Santería to Obeah and Espiritismo* (Second Edition). Chapter 5: Obeah, Myal and Quimbois (pg. 155-182)

## Week 12

### 12.1 Beyond Bob Marley: Rastafarianism in Historical Context

#### Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
  - Marcus Garvey, *The Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey, or, Africa for the Africans*, compiled by Amy Jacques Garvey (Dover: The Majority Press, 1986, first published 1923 & 1925): Vol. 1 (pg. 1-14; 48-51)
- Secondary Sources:
  - Margarite Fernández Olmos & Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert, *Creole Religions of the Caribbean: An Introduction from Vodou and Santería to Obeah and Espiritismo* (Second Edition). Chapter 6: Rastafarianism (pg. 183-202)
  - Martin, Tony, “Marcus Garvey, the Caribbean and the Struggle for Black Jamaican Nationhood,” in *Caribbean Freedom: Economy and Society from*

*Emancipation to the Present*, eds. By Hillary Beckles and Verene Shepherd  
(Markus Weiner Publishers, 1996), (pg. 359-369)

## **UNIT 7: Caribbean Diaspora in the Age of Pan-Africanism**

### 12.2 Caribbean Harlem: Race and Ethnicity in NYC

#### Class Reading:

- Secondary Sources:
  - Christine Du Bois, “Caribbean Migrations and Diasporas” in *TCH* (pg. 583-596)
  - Anne Macpherson, “Toward Decolonization: Impulses, Processes and Consequences since the 1930s” in *TCH* (pg. 475-490)

### 12.3 Jets and Sharks: Puerto Ricans in Mid-Century New York

#### Class Reading:

- Secondary Sources:
  - Monique Milia-Marie-Luce, “Puerto Ricans in the US and French West Indian Immigrants in France” – online
  - Misha Berson, *Something’s Coming, Something Good: West Side Story and the American Imagination* (Milwaukee: Applause Theatre & Cinema Books, 2001) Chapter 15: Suns and Moons All Over the Place: *West Side Story* in Popular Culture (pg. 237-247)

## **Week 13**

### 13.1 Caribbean Dream to Latin Beat: Dominicans in the Big Apple

#### Class Reading:

- Primary Sources:
  - Charles Isherwood, “[Caribbean Dream to Latin Beat](#),” *New York Times* (March 10, 2008)
  - Kate Taylor, “[Composer’s Unknown Political Oeuvre](#),” *New York Times* (August 27, 2012)
- Secondary Sources:
  - David Howard, *Dominican Republic in Focus* (New York: Interlink Books, 1999) Chapter 4: Society and Migration: Between Two Worlds (pg. 48-62)

### 13.2 Mama Lola: Beyond Trances and Zombies

#### Class Reading:

- Secondary Sources:
  - Karen McCarthy Brown, *Mama Lola: A Vodou Priestess in Brooklyn*, Prefaces, Introduction and Chapter 2
  - Samuel G. Freedman, “[Myths Obscure Voodoo, Source of Comfort in Haiti](#),” *New York Times* (February 19, 2010)

### 13.3 The Intricacies of Vodou Worship

#### Class Reading:

- Secondary Sources :

- Karen McCarthy Brown, *Mama Lola: A Vodou Priestess in Brooklyn*, Chapter 4, 8, and 12.

#### Week 14

##### 14.1 Bon Voyage: The Tourist Complex

Class Reading:

- Secondary Sources:
  - Robert Goddard, “Tourism, Drugs, Offshore Finance and the Perils of Neoliberal Development” in *TCH* (pg. 571-582)
  - Bryan Burrough, “Pirate of the Caribbean,” *Vanity Fair* (July 2009)

##### 14.2 Life and Debt

Class Reading:

- None

##### 14.3 Reflection and Review

Class Reading:

- None

**Final Exam (date TBD)**