Caribbean Worlds: Race, Space, and the Politics of Difference

Dr. Jennifer Greenburg
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Class meeting times: TBD
Class meeting location: TBD
Office hours: Please sign up for office hours here. Monday, 1-4pm in TBD (or via zoom, if you prefer). Additional availability by appointment. To accommodate a wide spectrum of learning and communication styles, I will also host live chat and walking office hours throughout the term and provide further instruction on how you can send me voice memos.

Image Credit: "The Ties that Bind: Haiti, the United States, and the Art of Ulrick Jean-Pierre in Comparative Perspective"

Seminar Description
This seminar examines the politics of Western capitalism, racism, and revolution from the perspective of the Caribbean region. Given the Caribbean's role in producing wealth and power for the West, we ask what Caribbean political thought can teach us about global politics, and how this perspective may differ from dominant Eurocentric approaches to studying Western politics and traditional IR. We begin by situating the Caribbean region in relation to the West from the 15th century onward. Spanning a 500-year timescale encapsulating conquest, colonization, slavery, and liberation, we will examine specific topics such as: creolization; racial slavery; religion; revolution; abolition; anticolonial politics; Black feminist perspectives; sexual politics; climate change; and movement, mobility, and migration (including histories of *marronage*). Weekly readings will cover historical ground such as the Haitian Revolution (1804) and contemporary questions such as how Haiti became a "republic of NGOs." Geographically, we place Haiti within the wider Caribbean Basin, with course readings traversing Cuba, Jamaica, Trinidad, Puerto Rico, Mexico, through African diasporic roots, and across the Black Atlantic. We will draw on established Caribbean traditions from political and historical anthropology, Black Marxism, political economy and political ecology, as well as non-traditional "texts" such as Caribbean painting, poetry, fiction, and music. Students will gain a broad understanding of Caribbean politics as well as a specific understanding of the political geography connecting Atlantic Worlds.

In this course, we have a unique opportunity to learn through feminist praxis of collaboration and collective knowledge production. My aim is to create a space in which all members of the class are actively teaching and learning together, and to which we each bring our own intersectional positionality—our particular social location within broader matrices of power—as a valuable lens to analyze the Caribbean world and broader political questions of race, space, and the politics of social difference.

OVERVIEW OF TOPICS

Week 1	What is the Caribbean World?
Week 2	Slavery and the Making of Caribbean Cultures and Creolization
Week 3	Sugar Politics
Week 4	Marronage, movement, migrations
Week 5	Revolution and the Politics of Racial Liberation
Week 6	Haiti: A Republic of NGOs?
Week 7	Climate Politics and Struggles over Nature
Week 8	Caribbean Feminist Consciousness
Week 9	Sexual Politics and Intimacy in the Atlantic World
Week 10	Religion: *Vodou* Politics
Week 11	Literary Politics of Possibility
Week 12	The Black Atlantic as Political Imaginary
Week 13	Writer's Workshop: Peer Review
Week 14	Thanksgiving Break
Week 15	The Caribbean World: Review and New Horizons

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Developing a comprehensive understanding of how Caribbean actors, institutions, and ideas shape global politics.

2. Equipping students with the ability to analyze and evaluate complex academic theories such as capitalism, racism, and globalization.

3. Provide opportunities to apply key theories and perspectives from the Caribbean to specific analytical categories in the study of politics, such as race, revolution, and capital.

4. Provide opportunities to combine and apply disciplinary knowledge from politics to other disciplines, including from the humanities.

5. Developing students' critical analysis skills, in addition to strong writing and oral presentation skills.

6. Developing students' cognitive, communicative and transferable skills, including the ability to evaluate key concepts and to present reasoned and effective arguments in written form.

COURSE READINGS

All required course reading is available electronically via Canvas. In order to prepare for our seminars, you should read all *required reading* in advance.
Alongside the core reading is a range of ***recommended reading***. These texts are intended to provide further insights into the area of study, and you are encouraged but not required to read additional sources from these lists as part of your seminar preparation. They are

especially useful to read more deeply for a case study you will focus on for the final assignment.

During certain weeks, readings are accompanied by audiovisual and multimedia materials such as film, podcasts, and artwork. I will indicate which digital resources are required versus recommended, and we will have the opportunity to screen several films together.

It is vital and expected that you **read before coming to seminar**. In seminar, we will place readings in discussion with one another and refine our ideas. We will go deeper through critical collective analysis. But you simply cannot do this if you have not read. Reading fully enables you to participate in our collaborative knowledge production and shows respect to your peers.

Each seminar is accompanied by **discussion questions**, which are there to guide your reading. You may also respond to them in your commentaries. These will inform seminar discussions but other questions will also be introduced, so try to read with key concepts from the reading in mind, as well as attending to connection between readings.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

You will earn your grade for this course based on the following. All assignments are due before midnight on their due date (so, an assignment due on Oct. 12 must be submitted by 11:59pm EST on Oct. 12).

Assignment	Points worth	Date due
Attendance and Engagement	**20 points**	Ongoing
Reading Commentaries Students are expected to post reading commentaries (350-500 words max) to Canvas a total of four (4) times during the course. Post commentaries to the 'Discussions' tab. Commentaries should not summarize the readings, but should offer reflections or questions about key ideas or linkages between readings or topics covered. These commentaries will frame our discussion in the seminar. In addition to posting on the course website, you are also expected to read other students' commentaries before we meet. Each commentary will comprise 5% of your total grade.	**20 points**	Ongoing
Lead Class Discussion Once during the term, you will lead the class discussion. Each student presenter is responsible for bringing 2-3 open-ended questions for discussion as part of their presentation. Please use slides or visual materials (handout, short film clip, etc.). You may present in a group of 2-3 or solo, depending on scheduling needs.	**10 points**	Date selections first seminar
Midterm Essay (2000 words) This essay elaborates concepts of Caribbean identity and creolization to ask what is distinctive about Caribbean politics and what these concepts can teach us about the politics of difference. Essay prompt with more instruction will be posted two weeks before deadline.	**20 points**	October 8

Final Essay (3000 words) You will have three choices for the final essay: (1) choose a recent political piece of art, music, or literature from the Caribbean and place in conversation with the concept of the Black Atlantic; (2) choose a country in the Caribbean region and a theme from the course (sugar, slavery, religion, etc.), then conduct independent research to write an essay about three key turning points in that country's history related to your theme; or (3) propose your own topic, with instructor approval. *All topic proposals will be developed and approved in consultation with instructor. More guidance will be supplied throughout the term on this assignment.*	**30 points total**	
Topic proposal with two scholarly sources (300 words)	5 points	September 19
Annotated bibliography of five sources	5 points	October 3
Peer Review (guided, more information to come)	2 points	November 20
Final research paper, 9-10 pgs (2000-2500 words)	18 points	December 9

CLASS POLICIES

Late Work: I expect you to make every effort to submit your work on time, according to the established deadlines. At the same time, I recognize that you are juggling multiple time commitments and care commitments, and that different learners work at different speeds, depending on the activity. To this end, I will use the **'time bank' policy:**[1] Each student has a two-day grace period for one assignment or two one-day extensions for two different assignments. It is up to you how, and when, you use the time in your time bank. However, you must let me know by email that you are using it prior to the deadline. If late work submissions become an issue, you and I will meet during office hours to discuss the causes and possible solutions.

Class Participation and Attendance: Active participation is expected in this course. There are, however, many ways to be active or present and to participate. Your participation will come from your preparedness (having read and made notes on readings), regular contributions to class discussion (verbal and/or written), active participation in group work, and thoughtful, generous engagement with your classmates. **You are permitted one 'free' absence with no questions asked** (but please let me know that you will be missing class). After that, you will need to discuss your absences with me, and, if necessary, provide documentation. If you are feeling unwell and/or have tested positive for COVID, please do not come to class. I will work with you to find other ways to involve you in the class and keep you up to date on course material. Such absences will not be deducted from your 'freebie.' Finally, if chronic illness/pain, disability, personal/family issues, or other factors may affect your attendance in class, please talk to me early in the semester—or as soon as these issues become apparent—so that we can come up with a solution that enables you to thrive in this class.

[1] Adapted from *Accessible Syllabus* (policies), https://www.accessiblesyllabus.com/policy/

Inclusive Learning and Accommodations: It is my responsibility to ensure that all students can equitably access the material in this class. We all learn differently and I will provide multiple ways you can communicate your access needs. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible. Together we'll develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. If you feel you may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability, you should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. You are under no obligation to tell me what your disability is, but you may be required to submit paperwork granting you accommodations to support your learning, so, please contact Academic Resources and Services if you have not already. They are responsible for determining reasonable and appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities on a case-by-case basis, and more generally, for ensuring that members of the community with disabilities have access to the College's programs and services. These services are available free of charge to all students.

Technology Policy: Technology can play an important role in facilitating collective and individual learning. Additionally, many of us rely upon technology to enable, or enhance, our experience in, and of, the world. At the same time, individual use of communication technologies can sometimes detract from the collective community space we are building together. We will determine our classroom technology policy together during the first week of class. If certain forms or uses of technology (ex: texting, internet surfing, use of social media) become intrusive to our shared community, we will revisit the policy as needed.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy:
The use of AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT, Dall-e, etc.) is permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Brainstorming and refining your ideas
- Fine-tuning your research questions
- Finding information on your topic*
- Checking grammar and style, finding synonyms

*AI tools are not a substitute for research tools (e.g. library databases) for defining, researching, and refining your research topic(s) or for developing a structure for your research papers. You will be introduced to these research tools during our library research tutorial.

The use of AI tools is not permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Impersonating you in classroom contexts, such as by using the tool to compose discussion board prompts assigned to you or to generate discussion questions
- Completing group work that your group has assigned to you
- Writing the draft of any writing assignment
- Writing entire sentences, paragraphs, or complete class assignments

You are responsible for the information you submitted based on an AI query (for instance, that it does not violate intellectual property laws or contain misinformation or unethical content). Your use of AI tools must be properly documented and cited in order to stay within college policies on academic honesty. For examples, see these resources for APA guidance. Any assignment that is found to have used generative AI tools in unauthorized ways will receive a zero for the assignment and may be referred to the Student Conduct Board. When in doubt about permitted usage, please reach out to me and ask for clarification.

Finally, while AI tools are increasingly good at some tasks, they are not as capable at others, especially those involving creativity, higher-level analysis, and drawing complex connections between topics and themes, all skills foundational to successful performance in this course. ***As***

such, you will likely find that an AI-generated assignment—even if undetected by me—produces work at the C-level or below.

Integrity and Academic Dishonesty Statement
Plagiarism will not be tolerated. The consequences of committing an act of plagiarism are serious and can jeopardize your future. If you are unsure of what constitutes plagiarism, and the consequences of violating codes and principles of academic integrity, please consult the Academic and Student Conduct Codes. Your essay will be checked for plagiarism upon electronic submission.

Respect
Everyone has the right to be addressed by the name and personal pronouns that correspond to their gender identity, including non-binary pronouns, for example: they/them/theirs, ze/zir/zirs, etc. I will provide opportunities in class for you to introduce yourself using your preferred name and pronoun *if* you wish. Students can update their pronouns in their Google profile user settings. If you have not yet updated your pronouns, you can do so at the beginning of the term so that I can make sure to refer to you using the correct pronouns. If your pronoun set is not available, please let me know. I recognize that preferred names and pronouns may change, if at any point during the quarter you would like to be addressed differently, please let me know.

As part of our commitment to inclusion in this course, it is important that all students in this class respect the preferred names and pronouns of their peers. Mistakes in addressing one another may happen. If you make a mistake or are corrected, please briefly apologize, correct yourself, and move on. To learn more about personal pronouns and why they are important please visit mypronouns.org.

Our seminar will be an inclusive learning environment in which diversity and differences are understood, respected, and appreciated. I believe that all students benefit from training and experiences that will help them to learn, lead, and serve in an increasingly diverse society. All members of our campus community must accept the responsibility to demonstrate civility and respect for the dignity of others. Expressions or actions that disparage a person's or group's race, ethnicity, nationality, culture, gender, gender identity / expression, religion, sexual orientation, age, veteran status, or disability are contrary to the mission of the college. I expect that students, faculty, and staff will promote an atmosphere of respect for all members of our community. We will keep one another accountable for these ideals by developing discussion guidelines in our first meeting.

Weekly Plan

Week 1: What is the Caribbean World?

This week we will focus on what it means to consider global politics from the perspective of the Caribbean. What is the Caribbean region? Even the geographical boundaries of what constitutes "the Caribbean" are contested! We begin by embracing this contestation to consider what is distinctive about the Caribbean as a region, culture, identity and of course…politics!

Discussion questions:

- In 1995 Stuart Hall wrote, "most of us have lived through, and are still living through an exercise in the definition and defense of a particular kind of British cultural identity" (Hall 1995). Here in the United States, do you think we are living through a similar or different defense of cultural identity today?
- What are the various definitions of the Caribbean at work in this week's readings?
- Based on some of these definitions, what is distinctive about examining world politics from the perspective of the Caribbean?

Core Readings:

Knight, Franklin W., and Colin A. Palmer. 1989. "The Caribbean: A Regional Overview." In *The Modern Caribbean*, edited by Franklin W. Knight, and Colin A. Palmer. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. 1992. "The Caribbean Region: An Open Frontier in Anthropological Theory." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 21: 19-42.

Hall, Stuart. 1995. Negotiating Caribbean Identities. *New Left Review* 209.

Recommended Readings:

Barrow, Christine, and Rhoda Reddock. 2001. C*aribbean Sociology: Introductory Readings*. Kingston: Ian Randle.

Knight, Franklin W., and Colin A. Palmer. 1989. *The Modern Caribbean*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Mintz, Sidney W. and Sally Price, (eds.) 1989. *Caribbean Contours*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Palmié, Stephan and Francisco Scarano, (eds.) 2011. *The Caribbean: a History of the Region and Its People*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Week 2: Slavery and the Making of Caribbean Cultures and Creolization

This week we will learn about the relationship between the transatlantic slave trade and the making of the modern Caribbean. Beginning with the indigenous history of the Caribbean islands, we will discuss the violence of conquest and the genocide of indigenous populations beginning in the sixteenth century. Kidnapped then enslaved Black African people replaced indigenous forced labour. A "triangular trade" transported guns, textiles, and alcohol from Europe to Africa, where enslaved people were taken to the Americas, and sugar, tobacco, animal

pelts and other products were taken back to Europe. This week's material links these regions historically and geographically, and attends to how Caribbean culture and society was made through these global linkages.

Discussion Questions:

- How does Beckford argue Caribbean society was shaped by a plantation society? How were racial categories and social stratification produced through slavery's living history?
- How do you understand the concept of "creolization," drawing on Braithwaite as well as any other authors from this week?
- Historian Marcus Rediker invented the term "history from below." How is his article, "Slave Revolt at Sea" such a history from below and how might this differ from the way you have learned about history before?

Core readings:

Rediker, Marcus. 2017. Slave Revolt at Sea: The Rebels of the Amistad, 1839. In *Currents in Transatlantic History*. Chapter 1.

Brathwaite, E. Kamau. "Creolization." In Barrow and Reddock, *Caribbean Sociology* (2001): 108-117.

Smith, M.G. "Pluralism and Social Stratification." In Barrow and Reddock, *Caribbean Sociology* (2001): 118-138.

Beckford, George L. "Plantation Society: Toward a General Theory of Caribbean Society." In Barrow and Reddock, *Caribbean Sociology* (2001): 139-150.

Recommended Readings:

Chin, Timothy 2006 Transnationalism, Diaspora, Politics and the Postcolonial Caribbean. *Small Axe* 19 (February): 189-197.

Franklin, Sarah. 2012. *Women and Slavery in Nineteenth-Century Colonial Cuba*. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press.

Lo, Mbaye and Carl W. Ernst. 2023. *I Cannot Write my Life: Islam, Arabic, and Slavery in Omar Ibn Said's America*. Chapel Hill: UNC Press. (See also the opera about Omar, you can watch a preview and synopsis here: https://youtu.be/lZ0L8qbhea0

Moore, Dennis, et al. 2010. "Colloqoy with Marcus Rediker on The Slave Ship: A Human History." *Atlantic Studies* 7(1): 5-45.

O'Malley, Gregory. 2016. *Final Passages: The Intercolonial Slave Trade of British America, 1619-1807*. Chapel Hill: UNC Press.

Rediker, Marcus. 2007. *The Slave Ship: A Human History*. New York: Viking.

Rediker, Marcus. 2012. *The Amistad Rebellion: An Atlantic Odyssey of Slavery and Freedom*. New York: Viking.

Scott, David. 2005 *Conscripts of Modernity*. Durham, NC: Duke UP.

Smith, Raymond T. "Social Stratification, Cultural Pluralism and Integration in West Indian Societies." In Barrow and Reddock, *Caribbean Sociology* (2001): 87-107

1619 Project (extensive resources at https://1619education.org/curricular-resources

Week 3: Sugar Politics

[Writers Workshop: Citation and bibliography (library visit)]

We cannot understand the scale, brutality, and wealth generated by the transatlantic slave trade without understanding sugar. Sugar was the key commodity around which slavery was organized in the Caribbean (although coffee, rum, mined precious metals were also very important, and of course cotton and tobacco in what became the United States). This week we examine the process of cutting cane and how the particularity of this commodity has also shaped Caribbean culture and society. Drawing on Sidney Mintz's stunning book about sugar, we will look at how we can understand the history of the Caribbean through the history of sugar—how it was produced and how it was transformed from an exclusive luxury for the aristocracy into a necessity for a new industrial proletariat.

Discussion Questions:

- How did sugar go from a luxury product for the European aristocracy to fuel for the industrial masses?
- Consider Mintz's argument that we can understand the Caribbean World, and really the history of the West, through the commodity of sugar. What is about the way sugar was harvested, processed, and traded that makes this statement convincing (or if it is not convincing to you, why not)?
- How do you think about sugar differently after this week's readings?

Core reading:
Mintz, Sidney. 1985. *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History*. New York: Viking.

Film Screening Arranged for Class: Palcy, Euzhan. 2013. *Sugar Cane Alley*. https://play.google.com/store/movies/details/Sugar_Cane_Alley?id=dA8xFdsc0Es&hl=en_US&gl=US (some clips available on youtube)

Recommended Readings:
CUNY Digital Resource on The Caribbean Since Columbus. "Sugar." https://pressbooks.cuny.edu/thecaribbeansincecolumbushist277/chapter/sugar/ (see youtube links herein)

Greenfield, Sidney M. 1977. "Madeira and the Beginnings of New World Sugar Cane Cultivation and Plantation Slavery: A Study in Institution Building." *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 292(1): 536-52.

Dunn, Richard. 1966. *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planters Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713*. Chapel Hill: UNC Press.

Moitt, Bernard, ed. *Sugar, Slavery, and Society: Perspectives on the Caribbean, India, the Mascarnes, and the United States*. University of Florida Press.

Scarano, Francisco. 1984. *Sugar and Slavery in Puerto Rico: The Plantation Economy of Ponce, 1800-1850.* Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Sheridan, Richard. 1994. *Sugar and Slavery: An Economic History of the British West Indies, 1623-1775.* Canoe Press.

Week 4: Marronage, movement, migrations

*****Topic Proposals Due Friday*****

Historically, marronage refers to the ways in which enslaved people freed themselves, fled, and established their own settlements to survive throughout the Caribbean. It has also come to refer to cultural and epistemological practices. Some of the most famous and studied maroon settlements still have traces in Jamaica, Haiti, Cuba, and Puerto Rico, although the process occurred differently throughout the Caribbean. Marronage is linked to the larger theme of movement and migration we still study this week. We will draw on specific historical research on maroon settlements in Jamaica, as well as how they were linked to survival strategies throughout the British Caribbean.

Discussion Questions:

- This weeks' readings define marronage as much more than running away. What is an adequate definition of "marronage" with respect to this weeks' readings?
- How can marronage help us to think about continued patterns of migration and movement today?
- What were you most surprised by in this weeks' readings?

Core Readings:
Chopra, Ruma. 2018. *Almost Home: Maroons between Slavery and Freedom in Jamaica, Nova Scotia, and Sierra Leone.* Hartford: Yale UP. Introduction and Jamaica (pages 1-77).

Price, Sally and Richard Price. 1999. *Maroon Arts: Cultural Vitality in the African Diaspora.* Boston: Beacon Press. Chapter 1: Souvenirs (available via google books).

Recommended Readings:
Whitten, Norman, JI. and Arlene Torres, eds. 1998. *Blackness in Latin America and the Caribbean.* Bloomington: Indiana UP.

Lorde, Audre. 1982. *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name. A Biomythography.* London: Penguin.

Kincaid, Jamaica. 1996. *An Autobiography of My Mother.* New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.

Brathwaite, Kamau. 1994. *Trench Town Rock.* New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.

Week 5: Revolution and the Politics of Racial Liberation

Haiti is often seen as exceptional within Caribbean history and politics. Haiti is either the hero who defeated every major European army at the end of the 18th century and declared its people free from racial slavery, or the basketcase whose last name has become "the poorest country in the Western hemisphere." Our goal this week is to break those binaries—to honor the incredible

feat of independence in 1804 and to understand the roots of this poverty (the questions are in part one in the same)—but also to add nuance and depth to this bipolar narrative. We will focus on the event of the Haitian revolution and its historiography---how, in Trouillot's words, the revolution became "unthinkable." Drawing on scholars like Ada Ferrer, we will examine the consequences for the Caribbean region at large.

Discussion Questions:

- How and why, according to Trouillot, did the Haitian Revolution become unthinkable? What have been the consequences of this historiography over the past 200 years?
- CLR James wrote one of the most famous chronicles of the Haitian Revolution. What are some of the metaphors and explanations of the revolution that come through his narrative in particular?
- Is this week's history new to you? Reflect on whether and how you have learned this history and how what we read this week is different.

Core Readings:

James, CLR. 1963. *The Black Jacobins.* New York: Vintage Books. Selections.

Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. 1995. "An Unthinkable History." In *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History.* Boston: Beacon. Pages 71-107.

Digital Resource:
See Haitian painter Ulrick Jean-Pierre's website for imagery of the Haitian revolution:
https://ulrickjeanpierre.com/

Film Screening Arranged for Class: Raoul Peck. *Exterminate all the Brutes.* Documentary. HBO: 2021.

Recommended Readings:

Alexander, Leslie. 2022. *Fear of a Black Republic: Haiti and the Birth of Black Internationalism in the United States.* Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press.

Dubois, Laurent. 2004. *Avengers of the New World.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Geggus, David Patrick. 2014. *The Haitian Revolution: A Documentary History.* Hackett.

Hartman, Saidiya. 2008. "Venus in Two Acts." *Small Axe* 12(2).

Lightfoot, Natasha. 2015. *Troubling Freedom: Antigua and the Aftermath of British Emancipation.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Dubois, Laurent. 2009. "Avenging America: The Politics of Violence in the Haitian Revolution." In *The World of the Haitian Revolution*, pp. 111-124. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Ferrer, Ada. "Haiti, Free Soil, and Antislavery in the Revolutionary Atlantic" *American Historical Review* 117 (2012): 40-66.

Ferrer, Ada. 2014. *Freedom's Mirror: Cuba and Haiti in the age of Revolutions.* Cambridge: Cambridge UP.

Fergus, Claudius. 2013. *Revolutionary Emancipation: Slavery and Abolitionism in the British West Indies*. Louisiana State University Press.

Week 6: Haiti: A Republic of NGOs?

[Writer's Workshop: What is a thesis statement?]

Annotated Bibliographies Due Friday

Haiti often appears in journalism and policy discussions as an example of an "aid state," or a state totally dependent on and structured by foreign aid. Rather than accepting another "last name" for Haiti of a "republic of NGOs," or home to more NGOs per capita than any country on Earth, this week we will use a historical and politico-geographical lens to critically investigate the neoliberalization of public services, disaster capitalism, and how the state is "made" through its interaction with non-profit, non-governmental, and inter-governmental organizations. Reading ethnographic and Haiti-based perspectives, we will center the experiences of Haitians living in Haiti under an aid state. Using analytical tools we have honed thus far, we will think about Haiti through its interconnections to other parts of the world, including charities operating in Europe and North America.

Discussion Questions

- What does Schuller mean by "killing with kindness"? What are some of the pitfalls he points to in service provision when it is controlled by non-profits and NGOs?
- In Baptiste's account of the 2010 Haiti earthquake response, she discusses how 80 percent of public services are provided by NGOs. What are some of the outcomes of having such privatized basic services? You can draw on Baptiste, Schuller, and the additional resources.
- Do this week's readings make you any more or less interested in working for an NGO? Why? If you were considering this line of work before, how do the readings point to ways you might still do this work with attention to some of its pitfalls?

Core Readings:

Nathalie Baptiste, "Are Foreign NGOs Rebuilding Haiti or Cashing in?" *Foreign Policy In Focus,* July 10, 2015, https://fpif.org/are-foreign-ngos-rebuilding-haiti-or-just-cashing-in/

Schuller, Mark. *Killing with Kindness: Haiti, International Aid, and NGOs.* New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2012. Introduction and Chapter 2, "That's Not Participation!": Relationships from "Below".

Johnston, Jake. 2024. *Aid State: Elite Panic, Disaster Capitalism, and the Battle to Control Haiti,* St. Amherstberg: St. Martins Press. Chapter 4.

Recommended Readings:

Digital Resource: Fatal Assistance (film), dir. by Raoul Peck (2013)

Haiti: Republic of NGOS? *Al Jazeera, English,* January 13, 2012. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qiZ3aH3H1_A

Schuller, Mark, *Humanity's Last Stand: Confronting Global Catastrophe.* New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers

University Press, 2021.

Nidhi Srinivas. 2009. Against NGOs?: A Critical Perspective on Nongovernmental Action. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 38(4), 614-626.

Feyzi Ismail and Sangita Kamat. 2018. NGOs, Social Movements and the Neoliberal State: Incorporation, Reinvention, Critique. *Critical Sociology* 44(4-5), 569-577.

AbouAssi, Kaldoun. "Hands in the Pockets of Mercurial Donors: NGO Response to Shifting Funding Priorities. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 42(3).

Justin Elliot and Eisinger. "The Red Cross' Secret Disaster." *ProPublica,* October 29, 2014, https://www.propublica.org/article/the-red-cross-secret-disaster

Mitchell, George E., Hans Peter Schmitz, and Tosca Bruno-van Vijfeijken. *Between Power and Irrelevance : The Future of Transnational NGOs*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2020.

INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence. *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded : Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex*. Cambridge, Mass: South End Press, 2007.

Week 7: Climate Politics and Struggles over Nature

*****Midterm Essay Due this Friday*****

This week we focus on how climate change and climate policies affect Caribbean politics and society. Examining development and climate finance interventions in particular, we will connect economic and ecological crises and consider how dispossession and marginalization is reproduced through struggles over nature

Discussion Questions:

- How does the history of resource extraction in the Caribbean inform present struggles over the environment?
- What are some of the particularities of climate change in the Caribbean region? What is similar to other regions you have studied?
- What does Perry mean by a post-plantation ecology" for the Caribbean?

Core Readings:

Perry, Keston. "From the Plantation to the Deep Blue Sea: Naturalizing Debt, Ordinary Disasters and Postplantation Ecologies in the Caribbean," *The Geographic Journal* 189: pp.562-574.

Bond, David. "Oil in the Caribbean: Refineries, Mangroves, and the Negative Ecologies of Crude Oil," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 59(3): p.600-628.

Recommended Readings:

Keston Perry and Leon Sealye-Huggins, "Racial capitalism and climate justice: white redemptive power and the uneven geographies of eco-imperial crisis," *Geoforum* 145.

Boykoff, M. T., Goodman, M. K. and Curtis, I. 2009. "The cultural politics of climate change: interactions in the spaces of the everyday." In: Boykoff, M. (ed.) *The Politics of Climate Chang*e. Routledge, London, pp. 136-154.

Liboiron, Max. "There's No Such Thing as 'We.'" *Discard Studies*. 2020.

Week 8. Caribbean Feminist Consciousness

Caribbean feminist M. Jacqui Alexander writes that "oppositional consciousness is a process rather than a given before the fact of the political practice" (Alexander 2005, 6). Here she reminds us that feminist consciousness and meanings of gender are produced through the social processes we have examined in weeks before. This week we will look at the production of those gender meanings and an "oppositional consciousness" that is variegated and hinged to particular national histories across the Caribbean. Our key task is assemble how gender, sexuality, and feminist politics were produced through the themes of race, nation, and creolization that are so central to Caribbean culture, history and politics in our exploration so far.

Discussion Questions

- What are some of the historical and geographical differences you note between and among the feminist politics across the Caribbean captured in these readings?
- One of Alexander's key claims in this essay, now almost 20 years old, is that North American and European feminism must adequately take up the question of colonialism. Do you think this claim is still relevant today. How and why?
- What is most surprising to you as you learn about gender in the Caribbean this week?

Core Readings:

Alexander, M. Jacqui. 2005. *Pedagogies of Crossing: Meditations on Feminism, Sexual Crossings, Memory and the Sacred*. Durham, NC: Duke UP. Introduction.

Carby, Hazel. 1987. Slave and Mistress. In *Reconstructing Womanhood*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 20-40.

Allen, Jafari. 2012. "Chapter 2, Discursive Sleight of Hand: Race, Sex, Gender." In *¡Venceremos! The Erotics of Black Self Making in Cuba*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Film Screening: Dupain, Etant. 2021. Madan Sara. Documentary.

Recommended Readings:

McKittrick, Katherine. 2014. "Yours in the Intellectual Struggle: Sylvia Wynter and the Realization of the Living." In *Sylvia Wynter: On Being Human as Praxis*. Durham: Duke UP.

Bell, Beverly. 2001. *Walking on Fire: Haitian Women's Stories of Survival and Resistance*. Ithaca: Cornell UP. Introduction: The Women of Millet Mountain, 1-22.

Besson, Jean. 1993. "Reputation and Respectability Reconsidered: A New Perspective on Afro-Caribbean Peasant Women." In *Women and Change in the Caribbean: A Pan-Caribbean Perspective*, edited by Janet Momsen. Kingston, Jamaica and Bloomington: Ian Randle and Indiana University Press. 15-37.

Ulysse, Gina Athena. *Downtown Ladies: Informal Commercial Importers, a Haitian Anthropologist, and Self-Making in Jamaica*. Women in Culture and Society. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

Sanders Johnson, Grace. *White Gloves, Black Nation: Women, Citizenship, and Political Wayfaring in Haiti*. Gender and American Culture. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2023.

Hill Collins, Patricia. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2014.

Jean-Charles, Régine Michelle. *Looking for Other Worlds: Black Feminism and Haitian Fiction*. New World Studies. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2022.

Week 9: Sexual Politics and Intimacy in the Atlantic World

[Writer's Workshop: argument-evidence-analytics]

Continuing our analysis of gender politics, this week we focus in on sexuality and what author Erin Durban calls "postcolonial homophobia." Authors this week help us consider how sex and desire are political and carry particular valence in the Caribbean given the histories we have studied. Treating Durban as our key text, we will delve into contemporary LGBTQI+ activism and violence in Haiti, connecting this to the Week 6 readings on NGOs and international intervention as well as last week's readings on Caribbean feminism.

Discussion Questions:

- How has this week's reading changed how you think about same-sex desiring and gender-creative identity as productive of politics?
- What are the main discourses dominating LGBTQI+ activism in Haiti? How have they been shaped by international interventions and what Durban defines as imperialism?
- What is the difference between gender politics and sexual politics? How are they linked?

Core reading:
Durban, Erin. *The Sexual Politics of Empire: Postcolonial Homophobia in Haiti.* University of Illinois Press, 2023.

Recommended Readings:
Johnson, Jessica Marie. *Wicked Flesh: Black Women, Intimacy, and Freedom in the Atlantic World.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2020.

Tinsley, Omise'eke Natasha. *Ezili's Mirrors: Black Atlantic Genders and the Work of the Imagination*. Duke University Press, 2018.

Sheller, Mimi. *Citizenship from Below: Erotic Agency and Caribbean Freedom*. Next Wave. Durham: Duke University Press, 2012.

Week 10: Religion: *Vodou* Politics
After the 2010 Haiti earthquake, evangelical Christian radio host Pat Roberton explained the destruction as the result of the "pact with the devil" Haitians made when they freed themselves from French slavery. During the same period, *Wall Street Journal* contributor Lawrence Harrison blamed Haitian poverty on "voodoo" (*Vodou*) as a religion "without ethical content." From Zombie films to conservative radio talkshows, Caribbean religions, especially Haitian *Vodou* (mistakenly called "voodoo") has been misunderstood and maligned. This week we will remedy

these popular misconceptions through a long tradition of rigorous, historically-informed scholarly literature on Caribbean religion. With a focus on Haitian *Vodou*, we will discuss how religion embodied the histories of race, freedom, and nation we have discussed so far.

Discussion Questions:

- What is *Vodou*? How is it different than what you see in popular media such as news or references in TV or films?
- How did *Vodou* become *Vodou*, according to Ramsay? What is the relationship between religion, history, and liberation in Haiti?
- How do you think about *Vodou* differently this week after delving into these readings? What questions do you still have?

Core Readings:

Ramsay, Kate. 2011. *The Spirit and the Law: Vodou and Power in Haiti.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 1.

Desmangles, Leslie. 1990. "Maroon Republics and Religious Diversity in Colonial Haiti." *Anthropos:* 475-82.

Michel, Claudine. Vodou in Haiti: Way of Life and Mode of Survival. In *Invisible Powers: Vodou in Haitian Life and Culture.* New York: Palgrave, 27-37.

Daniels, Kyrah. 2023. "An Assembly of Twenty-One Spirit Nations: The Pan-African Pantheon of Haitian Vodou's African Lwa." In *Africa and its Historical and Contemporary Diasporas.* Chapter 4.

Recommended Readings:

Digital Resource: Podcast, Vodou 101" by Dr. Kyrah Malika Daniels: https://negmawonpodcast.com/dr-kyrah-malika-daniels/

Digital Resource: Divine Horsemen: The Living Gods of Haiti. 2005. Film. Directed by Maya Deren, Cherel Ito, and Teiji Ito. (Original release, 1984)

Desmangles, Leslie. 1992. *The Faces of the Gods: Vodou Religion and Roman Catholicism in Haiti.* Chapel Hill: UNC Press.

Richman, Karen E. 2008. "Peasants, Migrants, and the Discovery of African Traditions: Ritual and Social Change in Lowland Haiti." In *Africas of the Americas: Beyond the Search for Origins in the Study of Afro-Atlantic Religions*, edited by Stefan Palmié. Leiden: Brill.

Deren, Maya. 1953. *Divine Horsemen: The Living Gods of Haiti.* New York: Vanguard.

Brown, Karen McCarthy. 1991. *Mama Lola: A Vodou Priestess in Brooklyn.* Oakland: UC Press.

Métraux, Alfred. 1959. *Voodoo in Haiti.* Oxford: OUP.

Dunham, Katherine. 1969. *Island Possessed.* Chicago: U Chicago Press.

Ulysse, Gina Athena. 2015. *Why Haiti Needs New Narratives: A Post-Quake Chronicle.* Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press.

Wilken, Lois and Frisner Augustin. 1992. *The Drums of Vodou.* Tempe: White Cliffs Media Co.

Week 11: Literary Politics of Possibility

From Aime Césaire to Derek Walcott, the Caribbean boasts its own genre of fiction and poetry shaped through Antillean routes of slavery, liberation, cultivation, and creation. This week, we run seminar differently by choosing one novel or short story *and one poem* from the below list (you may also choose an outside reading with instructor approval). In lieu of discussion questions, we will present your choice of reading in small groups. In your presentation, consider:

Discussion Questions:

- What are the key themes that emerge and how do they relate to the topics we have covered so far?
- Caribbean literature is often noted for a politics of the possible. What sort of politics comes out of these readings, individually and collectively?
- How is such a literary or poetic politics different than your formal training in politics in your studies so far?

Readings (choose one from each category):

Novels:

Chancy, Myriam. 2021 *What Storm, What Thunder.* Portland: Tin House

Danticat, Edwidge. 2007. *Brother, I'm Dying.* New York: Knopf.

Mars, Kettly. 2022. *I am Alive.* London: UVA Press.

Alexis, Jacques Stephan. 1983. *In the Flicker of an Eyelid.* London: UVA Press.

Price Mars, Jean. 1997 [1928]. *So Spoke the Uncle,* translated by Cynthia Freeman. Passeggiata Press.

Roumain, Jacques. 1971 [1947]. *Masters of the Dew.* London: Heinemann.

Vieux-Chauvet, Marie. *Dance on the Volcano.*

Poetry:

Derek Walcott, "Omeros"
Kendel Hippolyte, "Archipelego"
Kamau Braithwaite, "Bermudas"
Suzanne Césaire, *The Great Camouflage Writings of Dissent*

Also see: https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/derek-walcott (can search by Poet name)

Week 12: The Black Atlantic as Political Imaginary

Reaching back to and extending Mintz's emphasis on oceanic movement and interconnection when we read about sugar earlier in the term, this week we focus on the concept and politics of what Paul Gilroy calls the Black Atlantic. We will consider diaspora, exchange, and Atlantic crossings as productive of a particular political identity.

Discussion Questions:

- What is the "Black Atlantic"? How does it change the way you think about Atlantic or "Western" politics?
- What does the ship (as a heuristic) show in this writing?
- Does this concept present an alternative to nationalism for you? Or complicate ways of thinking about the nation?

Core Readings:
Gilroy, Paul. 2007. "The Black Atlantic as a counterculture of modernity." In *Transatlantic Literary Studies*. https://doi.org/10.1515/9781474470674-025

Hall, Stuart. 2005. "Black Diaspora Artists in Britain: Three 'Moments' in Post-war History." *History Workshop Journal* 61: 1-21.

McDowell, Linda. 2013. "Coming Home: The Heart of Empire," in *Working Lives: Gender, Migration and Employment in Britain, 1945-2007*. Oxford: Oxford UP.

Recommended Readings:
Johnson, Les. "The Windrush Generation: How a Resilient Caribbean Community Made a Lasting Contribution to British Society." *The Conversation*. June 2, 2023. Can allso peruse the Windrush 75 collection at: https://theconversation.com/us/topics/windrush-75-139220?utm_source=TCUK&utm_medium=linkback&utm_campaign=Windrush75&utm_content=InArticleTop

BBC Archives on Windrush:
https://www.bl.uk/windrush/articles/www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/modern/arrival_01.shtml

British Library's Windrush Stories: https://www.bl.uk/windrush/articles/how-caribbean-migrants-rebuilt-britain

Gilroy, Paul 1991 [1987] *'There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack.' The Cultural Politics on Race and Nation*. Chicago: U of Chicago Press.

Gilroy, Paul. 1995. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double-Consciousness*. Cambridge: Harvard Universit Press.

Brown, Jacqueline Nassy. 2005. *Dropping Anchor, Setting Sail: Geographies of Race in Black Liverpool*. Princeton: Princeton UP.

Fryer, Peter. 1984. *Staying Power: The History of Black People in Britain*. London: Pluto Press.

Week 13: Writer's Workshop: Peer Review

This week you are to bring a full draft of your final essay to class. We will do an in-class guided peer review using a worksheet that will help you refine your thesis statement, better anchor argument to evidence, and consider how you might spend the next few weeks refining your argument to write the strongest possible final essay. More information will be distributed via Canvas in advance of our workshop. There is no additional reading for this week, but you are encouraged to use the time to bring as full a draft as possible to seminar today. The more you bring, the better feedback you will receive.

Week 14: Thanksgiving Break

Week 15: The Caribbean World: Review and New Horizons

This week we will consolidate our knowledge of the Caribbean region and consider key themes from this course. We will attend in particular to "creolization," reflecting back on the definitions we began with and introducing new definitions through Caribbean authors who can carry us into future studies of global history and political economy. We will end by considering how we can use the Caribbean as a prism to understand global social change.

Discussion Questions:

- How do Chancé and Glissant define "creolization"? How do you see creolization differently now in week 15 than when we introduced this term in week one?
- What was your favorite reading in this course and why?
- What are some ways in which you can understand Western and global politics and economics in a more rigorous way through the lens of the Caribbean?

Core Readings:

Edwidge Danticat, "The Haiti That Still Dreams," *New Yorker,* April 23, 2024, https://www.newyorker.com/culture/essay/the-haiti-that-still-dreams

Hannerz, Ulf. 1987. "The World in Creolisation." *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 57 (4): 546-59.

Schwieger, Hiepko."Europe and the Antilles: An Interview with Edouard Glissant."

Chancé, Dominique. "Creolization: Definition and Critique." From Françoise Lionnet and Shu-mei Shih. 2011. *The Creolization of Theory*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2011.

Recommended Reading:

Walcott, Derek. 2007. *Selected Poems* by Derek Walcott. Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Crichlow, Michaeline, and Patricia Northover. 2009. *Globalization and the Post-creole Imagination: Notes on Fleeing the Plantation*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Glissant, Édouard, and Betsy Wing. 1997. *Poetics of Relation*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Junot Diaz. 1996. *Drown*. New York: Riverhead.

Kincaid, Jamaica. 1988. *A Small Place*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux.