

**HIST 233.402/AFRC 234.402/LALS 233.402**  
**Indians, Pirates, Runaways and Rebels:**  
**Unofficial Histories of the Colonial Caribbean**  
*Draft syllabus – Subject to change*

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Wed 2:00-5:00  
Van Pelt 302

This seminar considers the early history of the colonial Caribbean, not from the perspective of European colonizing powers but rather from “below.” Beginning with European-indigenous contact in the fifteenth century, and ending with the massive slave revolt that became the Haitian Revolution (1791-1804), we will focus on the different ways in which indigenous, African, European and creole men and women experienced European colonization in the Caribbean, as agents, victims and resisters of imperial projects. Each week or so, we will examine the experiences of a different social group and their treatment by historians, as well as anthropologists, archaeologists, sociologists, and novelists.

Along the way, we will pay special attention to the question of primary sources: how can we recover the perspectives of people who rarely left their own accounts? How can we use documents and material objects—many of which were produced by colonial officials and elites—to access the experiences of the indigenous, the enslaved, and the poor? We will have some help approaching these questions from the knowledgeable staff at the Penn Museum, the Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, and the Van Pelt Library.

**Course Requirements and Grade Distribution:**

- **Participation (20%):**  
Active, informed participation in every class is required. As a discussion-based seminar, the course can only be successful if students complete the assigned reading thoroughly and thoughtfully, arriving in class prepared to talk about it. Often, you will be given reading questions beforehand; you should be able to discuss those questions in class and cite examples from our texts to support your conclusions. During our class discussions, you are expected to engage your fellow students, responding to their perspectives and questions in addition to those of the instructor. Your participation grade will be determined by the quality of your comments more than their quantity. This portion of your final grade will also include your contributions to in-class exercises. Any absences will negatively affect your grade.
- **Response Papers (20%)**  
Students are required to submit five short (1-2 page) papers that respond to our weekly readings. Students may choose the weeks for which they write their papers, but two of the five papers must be handed in before the fall break. Response papers should be submitted through Canvas *no later than 2:00* on the day we discuss the readings addressed in the paper.

Response papers should address one of the prompts listed below, incorporating specific examples (cited, with page numbers) from the texts. Students may not respond to the same prompt more than twice.

1. How would you characterize the relationship between the population studied this week (Tainos, pirates, servants, slaves, etc.) and early modern colonialism? Did this group resist, facilitate, or accommodate the colonial project, or did they respond in more complex, varied, ways? How did they in turn influence European colonization?
  2. If more than one author was assigned: compare the authors' approaches to the week's topic. Are they responding to similar research questions, and if so, how do their conclusions differ? Do they use similar sources? Which reading is more compelling, and why?
  3. Identify one primary source referenced in the reading. What is it? Who wrote or created it, when, and *why*? Explain in some detail *how* the author of our secondary reading made use of the source. What argument did the author construct, using this source as evidence? Explain why you find this argument convincing, or not.
  4. On occasion, students may have the opportunity to respond to a prompt provided for a particular set of readings. Check the weekly announcements on Canvas for such opportunities.
- **Primary document research paper (25%) and presentation (10%):** Each student will locate one relevant primary source and write an 8-10 page paper that situates the source in its historical context. The source may be found in the Van Pelt stacks, in the Kislak Center, online, or even in the Penn Museum. Students must incorporate relevant books and articles from the course syllabus as well as outside secondary readings to support their analysis. A proposal will be due, through Canvas, on **Monday, October 3**. Final research papers are due on **Monday, November 21**. All students will also give a formal presentation of their research in class, on a date TBD. The presentation should be a polished, concise, 10-minute synopsis of the major research findings. More details on the proposal, paper, and presentation will be distributed in a separate assignment sheet.
  - **Final paper (25%):** A final paper will be due on **12/14**. The assignment sheet will be distributed on December 7.

**Books for purchase at the Penn Book Center (Corner of 34<sup>th</sup> and Sansom):**

Barbara Bush, *Slave Women in Caribbean Society: 1650-1838* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990)

Laurent Dubois, *Avengers of the New World: the Story of the Haitian Revolution* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2004)

Simon Newman, *A New World of Labor: the Development of Plantation Slavery in the British Atlantic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013)

Marcus Rediker, *Villains of All Nations: Atlantic Pirates in the Golden Age* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2004)

### **Coursepack**

Readings followed by “CP” can be found in the HIST 233.401 coursepack, available for purchase at the Campus Copy Center, 3907 Walnut St., for \$32.

### **Course Schedule**

#### **Week 1 (8/31): Introduction**

#### **Week 2 (9/7): Tainos and Caribs**

- From *The Caribbean: A History of the Region and its Peoples*, ed. Stephan Palmie et al. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011):
  - L. Antonio Curet, “The Earliest Settlers” (CP)
  - Lynne A. Guitar, “Negotiations of Conquest” (CP)
- Bartolomé de las Casas, *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies*, selections (CP)
- Philip Boucher, “Realpolitik Caribbean Style: Euro-Carib Relations during the European Invasion, 1623-1660,” in *Cannibal Encounters: Europeans and Island Caribs 1492-1692* (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), chapter two. (CP)

*3:15 - Meet in the Kress Entrance Lobby of the Penn Museum – We will see Taino and Carib artifacts and participate in an object-based learning exercise*

#### **Week 3 (9/14): Privateers and Buccaneers**

*2:00 – Meet on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of Van Pelt. Class will begin with an introduction to the Kislak Center for Rare Books, Manuscripts and Special Collections, where we will view and work with some colonial-era texts*

Kris E. Lane, *Pillaging the Empire: Piracy in the Americas 1500-1700* (London: M.E. Sharpe, 1998), 11-129. (CP)

Begin Marcus Rediker’s *Villains of All Nations*

#### **Week 4 (9/21): Pirates**

Marcus Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*

*In-class primary and secondary source scavenger hunt*

**9/26 (Mon):** Through Canvas, indicate a primary source (either from the Rare Books collection, the stacks, or the Museum) that you are considering for your research project. Give a full citation for the text/image/object, including the original date of creation and publication. Briefly explain what appeals to you about the source.

**Week 5 (9/28): Indentured laborers and the transition to slavery**

Simon Newman, *A New World of Labor: the Development of Plantation Slavery in the British Atlantic*, pg. 1-108.

Jenny Shaw, "To Live in Perpetual Noise and Hurry: Creating Communities on Caribbean Plantations," in *Everyday Life in the Early English Caribbean* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia, 2013), 71-100. (CP)

Richard Ligon, *A True and Exact History of the Island of Barbados*, ed. Karen Ordahl Kupperman (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2011), 93-99. (CP)

*Visit from Reference Librarian Nick Okrent, who will talk about electronic sources and help students search for primaries online.*

**10/3 (Mon): Research paper proposals due on Canvas**

**Week 6 (10/5): No class meeting**

Students will meet individually with to discuss the paper proposals and any other class-beforehand.

**\*\*\*NOTE: The last day to drop a class is 10/10**

**Week 7 (10/12): Plantation slaves and slave society**

Newman, *A New World of Labor*, pg. 189-257.

Dubois, *Avengers of the New World*, 1-59.

**Week 8 (10/19): Enslaved women, families and reproduction**

Barbara Bush, *Slave Women in Caribbean Society*, chapters 2, 4, 6 and 7

**Week 9 (10/26): Resisters and runaways**

Barbara Bush, *Slave Women in Caribbean Society*, chapter 5.

Richard Price, ed. *Maroon Societies: Rebel Slave Communities in the Americas*, part 5, pp. 227-292. (CP)

### **Week 10 (11/2): Free African-descended people**

Dubois, *Avengers of the New World*, chapter 3

John Garrigus, "Blue and Brown: Contraband Indigo and the Rise of a Free Colored Class in Saint Domingue," *The Americas* (October 1993), 233-263. (CP)

Susan Socolow, "The Economic Roles of Free Women of Color in Le Cap," in *More than Chattel: Black Women and Slavery in the Americas*, ed. Barry Gaspar and Darlene Clark Hine (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 279-297. (CP)

Julien Raimond, "Observations on the Origin and Progression of the White Colonists' Prejudice against Men of Color," 1791 (CP)

### **Week 11 (11/9): White women in slave plantation societies**

Trevor Burnard, "'Gay and Agreeable Ladies': White Women and Mid-Eighteenth-Century Kingston, Jamaica," *Wadabagei* vol. 9, no. 3: 27-49. (CP)

Natalie Zacek, "Between Lady and Slave: White Working Women in the Eighteenth-Century Leeward Islands," in *Women in Port: Gendering Communities, Economies, and Social Networks in Atlantic Port Cities, 1500-1800*, ed. Douglas Catterall and Jodi Campbell (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 127-150. (CP)

Jennifer Palmer, "Economies of Race and Gender," in *Intimate Bonds: Family and Slavery in the French Atlantic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016) - CANVAS

### **Week 12 (11/16): Rebels: the Haitian Revolution I**

Dubois, *Avengers of the New World*, chapters 4-7

Documents: TBD

**11/21 (Mon): RESEARCH PAPERS DUE BY 4:00PM in COLL 208C**

**11/23: No class meeting - University operates on a Friday schedule**

### **Week 13 (11/30): Revolutionaries and Founding Fathers, Creole and African: the Haitian Revolution II**

Dubois, *Avengers of the New World*, chapter 8-epilogue

### **Week 14 (12/7): Henri Christophe and Sans Souci, archives and fiction**

Michel-Rolphe Trouillot, "The Three Faces of Sans Souci," in *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (CP)

Alejo Carpentier, *The Kingdom of This World*, excerpts (CP)

**12/14 (Wed): FINAL PAPERS DUE BY 4PM in COLL 208C**