ENGL 481-901 / AFST 489 - 901
Senior Seminar
Inventing the Caribbean, Reinventing the World

Course Information
Term                      Meeting Time    Location
Spring 2017               TR 11:10-12:25  LAAH 301

Instructor Information
Instructor           Email            Office Hours
Dr. Shona N Jackson  sour sop@tamu.edu  TR 3:45-4:45  https://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/ffjwt

General Information
Description
In 1996, the late Cuban critic, novelist and short story writer Antonio Benítez-Rojo wrote, “let’s be realistic: the Atlantic is the Atlantic (with all its ports and cities) because it was once engendered by the copulation of Europe—that insatiable solar bull—with the Caribbean Archipelago.” This violent, copulatory metaphor is Benítez-Rojo’s elaboration of the economic, cultural and psychological relationship that has existed between the Caribbean and Europe since the late 15th century and in which the Caribbean is formative for understanding the economic and historical development of a great swath of the modern world. Benítez-Rojo’s assertion will serve as a framework for our exploration of how and why the Caribbean has come to serve as a space of wealth and play for Europe and the Americas while being culturally marginalized, chronically underdeveloped, and consistently reduced to any number of consumable signs (Malibu rum, bananas, coconuts, beaches, dreads, steel drums, etc.). Our object of study will collectively be the Anglophone, Francophone and Hispanophone Caribbean configured through course readings at key moments in the region’s cultural, historical, and economic development. In addition to literary works by Aimé Césaire and Jamaica Kincaid, calypso and reggae music, as well as film, we will read from such texts as Columbus’ letters to Spain, the writings of the Spanish priest Bartolomé de Las Casas (credited with helping to make New World slavery an institution), and the work of a former Prime Minister of Trinidad & Tobago, Eric Williams. Through these and other texts, we approach the Caribbean not as an insular region or as an extension of the Americas. Instead, we will investigate precisely how it functions as a “bridge” between the Americas, how it has shaped the Atlantic region, and how it has shaped the modern world. By the end of the course, students will have a greater knowledge of the following: the social and political history of the region; the relationship between race and capital; the relationship between regional culture and world political and economic systems; and a deeper knowledge of empire and post/neo/colonialism.

Designation, Model, and Pre-Requisite
This is a W (Writing Intensive Course) organized according to Model 2 (see below). The course is restricted to Majors with a U3 or U4 classification who have passed ENGL 303 (or its equivalent) with a D or above.
Learning Outcomes

- Identify, recall, and explain key terms and historical facts about the Caribbean.
- Write thoughtfully and cohesively about the emergence the Caribbean as a space of difference to Europe and about its social and political development from the late 15th century to the present.
- Integrate the above-mentioned terms and conceptual lens into cohesive arguments about Caribbean literature as an expression, negotiation, and re-imagining of the region’s societies, cultures, and identities.
- Demonstrate a working understanding of broad concepts such as race, capitalism, imperialism, colonialism, and postcolonialism.

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT DIVERSITY STATEMENT FOR COURSE SYLLABI: It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, culture, perspective, and other background characteristics. I encourage suggestions about how to improve the value of diversity in this course. This course meets the following standards for diversity content and instruction in the following way(s):

1. Course content that includes readings and other materials that address various categories of social difference (gender, nationality, ethnicity, age, sexuality, political affiliation, socio-economic status, ability, linguistic background, etc.) on the course topic.
2. Tying current events and local histories centered on the production of social difference into classroom activities.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) POLICY STATEMENT: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact Disability Services, currently located in the Disability Services building at the Student Services at White Creek complex on west campus or call 979-845-1637. For additional information, visit http://disability.tamu.edu.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: The Aggie Code of Honor states that – Aggies do not lie, cheat, or steal, nor do they tolerate those who do. Please familiarize yourself with the booklet entitled Student Rules, Part I, Section 20, “Scholastic Dishonesty,” which offers a clear, concise explanation of what constitutes plagiarism (it also discusses other violations of academic integrity). Possession of this syllabus means that you understand that you are required to comply with Texas A&M University’s policies on this manner. For more information, please see: http://www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor/. For more specific rules and guidelines about what constitutes plagiarism, see me as well.
Course Materials

Required Texts
The Sea of Lentils/El Mar de las Lentejas, Antonio Benitez-Rojo [Bookstore]
Capitalism and Slavery, Eric Williams [Bookstore] (also available on Kindle for $2.71)
A Small Place, Jamaica Kincaid [Bookstore]
Discourse on Colonialism, Aimé Césaire (Online PDF)
Handouts & Articles, Instructor [e-campus]

Grading

- Quizzes - 20%
- Paper I - 20%
- Prospectus & Bibliography - 15%
- Paper II - 30%
- Responses - 15%

Course Requirements

Readings & Discussion
All readings are to be completed for discussion on the day in which they are listed on the syllabus. You are also required to bring the texts to class. Literary pieces should be read at least twice. You should look up any terms that you do not understand and keep notes of your readings. How closely you read will be a key factor in class discussion. Students will be called upon at any time to share their thoughts about the readings and are expected to actively engage in discussion. Discussion, as a form of “collaborative learning,” is a core teaching method for this class. Discussion will be generated in a number of ways including; student query, discussion questions, and instructor guidance.

Responses
Each student will be assigned a text/topic for which they will provide a one-page* response in class and submit online. The response can be a comment on the work/topic or it can be interrogative. Students will be evaluated on the cohesiveness, thoughtfulness, insightfulness, and depth of the response.

Quizzes
There will be several short, unannounced quizzes to test your reading comprehension during the term.
Papers, Prospectus & Bibliography

All written assignments are to be submitted online through e-campus by the scheduled day and hour in the system. There will be a full grade reduction for each class period that your paper is late after the due date. Papers will not be accepted via email. For all writing assignments, you will be evaluated on the following. For a fuller list, please consult the paper rubric in e-campus. Due Dates: February 21, April 13, and MAY 4.

- Originality of Argument
- How well you introduce the topic and state the specific problem/claim/question that the paper will address
- Evidence: you will be evaluated on the inclusion of evidence both for and against your argument, its appropriateness, adequate discussion
- Development or consistency of Argument
- Organization
- Coherence
- Evidence of reading comprehension and critical depth
- Spelling, grammar, syntax,
- Citations, bibliography

Writing Module

All 481s are conducted according to a writing module. The module selected for this course is below.

Model 2

1. Percentage of final grade based on writing quality: 65%
2. Course content appropriate to the major
3. Total number of words: 4750
4. Instructor to student ratio for one section: 1:25

Extra Credit

If you attend the Ben-zvi Talk on March 6, 2017 and write a short paragraph about the talk that you submit within one week, you will receive an additional 10 points on your lowest quiz score. Other extra credit opportunities may be announced during the term. All will be work 10 points each.
HOW TO SUCCEED IN THIS CLASS

**Attendance.** Show up! Most exam and quiz questions are taken DIRECTLY from class discussion and lectures. Missing classes, sleeping in class, or doing work for another course during our meetings will mean that you miss information that is directly relevant to your ability to earn a good grade. Additionally, missing more than THREE classes, without an excused absence, will result in a ten-point deduction from the final paper for each instance of unexcused absence. See Policies: https://www.wright.edu/academic-affairs/policies/attendance-and-drop-policy.

**Planning & Preparation.** Do the work! Every reading assignment will be discussed on the day on which it appears in the syllabus. Being prepared means that you must come to class having already read the material and with a copy of the assigned reading. Failure to do so means that you will essentially not be able to follow along in class and therefore not know what is relevant to either a required paper, project, quiz or exam. To avoid getting behind on your work and being lost in class, try the following:

1. **Allow yourself one hour each weekend to plan the week’s work for all of your classes.**
2. **Allot a minimum of two hours of study/reading/review time, for each hour of class that you have.**
3. **Include your study time on a calendar and treat your study time as a meeting and avoid interruption or distraction.**
4. **Read Ahead!**
5. **Allow for two levels or kinds of reading during your study time.** The first level of “plain sense” or factual reading is to grasp the overall plot, major characters, important scenes, and important terms of a given text. The second reading is for the “literary sense” or significance/meaning(s) of the text. With this you are to consider things like relevance and importance of events, symbolism, etc.

**Participation.** Be an active learner! Instructor guided discussion and small group work are essential learning tools in this class. Even if you are shy, it is important that you speak up in class, put your ideas forward and have others respond to them. Doing this will allow you to test and refine your ideas about a text, come up with paper topics, and of course avoid major mistakes in argumentation. Additionally, **participation involves two kinds of responses**, which correspond to the two levels of reading identified above. The first is the “matter of fact” or factual response and the second is one that demonstrates that you have thought about how and why the text functions as well as its overall importance. **CAUTION:** We will read material that many, including me, will find repulsive, offensive or contrary to your personal, political, or faith-based beliefs. You are free to disagree with any conclusions of me, or your classmates, on the basis of **textual evidence** from course material. However, personal opinion or belief does not constitute an argument and should have no bearing on how you evaluate the texts. **NO CELL PHONES.**

**Follow Up.** The sky is falling! Ok, so it’s not right now but do not wait until your grades are suffering or worse, until you receive a poor final grade in order to seek help from me or from the University Writing Center (https://www.wright.edu/university-college/academic-help/writing-center). I am available in office hours every week to discuss course material. I am also available via email outside of office hours and by telephone (*during office hours). If you don’t understand something in class or if you miss a class, it is your responsibility to seek help. It’s also best to see me in office hours rather than send an email. I do not provide notes for missed classes via email, nor do I respond to emails between 5pm Friday and 9am Monday. **Don’t be complacent!** If you are earning Cs on the majority of assignments, don’t say to yourself ‘that will be a fine grade for the course’. Find ways to become a more active learner both in and outside of class.
# Course Schedule

## Week 1  Discovery & Columbian Humanism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 17</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Columbus, “Letter of Columbus”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>SONG</strong>: Mighty Shadow, “Columbus Lie” <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A2ikjb_d2Cg">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A2ikjb_d2Cg</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 19</td>
<td>NO CLASS - INSTRUCTOR TRAVEL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Related Reading</strong>:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Michel-Rolph Trouillot, <em>Silencing the Past, Power and the Production of History</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Miguel Leon-Portilla, <em>The Broken Spears: the Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peter Hulme, <em>Colonial Encounters: Europe and the native Caribbean, 1492-1797</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Calypso Rose, “Columbus” (Song)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Week 2  Discovery & Columbian Humanism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 24</td>
<td>Reséndez, “Caribbean Debacle”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Related Reading</strong>:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anthony Pagden, <em>The fall of Natural Man: the American Indian and the Origins of Comparative ethnology</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bartolomé de Las Casas, <em>A Brief Account of the Destruction of the Indies</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Christopher Columbus, <em>The Log of Christopher Columbus</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Week 3  Discovery & Columbian Humanism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 31</td>
<td>Wynter, “Columbus and the Poetics of the Propter Nos”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 02</td>
<td>Wynter, “Columbus and the Poetics of the Propter Nos”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Related Reading</strong>:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vera Lawrence Hyatt and Rex Nettleford, eds. <em>Race, Discourse, and the Origins of the Americas: a New World View</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sylvia Wynter, “‘A Different Kind of Creature’: Caribbean Literature, The Cyclops Factor, and the Second Poetics of the Propter Nos”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Week 4  Discovery & Columbian Humanism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 07</td>
<td>Benitez-Rojo, <em>The Sea of Lentils</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 09</td>
<td>Benitez-Rojo, <em>The Sea of Lentils</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Related Reading:
- Lope de Vega, *The New World Discovered by Christopher Columbus*
- Peter Martyr d’Anghiera, *Decades of the New World*
- Amerigo Vespucci, *The Letters of Amerigo Vespucci and other documents illustrative of his career*

### Week 5: Slavery

#### Feb. 14

#### Feb. 16
- MANDATORY CUSHING LIBRARY VISIT - DR. REBECCA HANKINS (Archivist, Curator, Librarian)
- Related Reading: Root, Deborah, *The New World Discovered by Christopher Columbus*
  - Gomes Eannes de Azurara, *Conquest and Discoveries of Henry the Navigator: Being the Chronicles of Azurara, Portuguese Navigators & Colonizers of the Fifteenth & Sixteenth Centuries*
  - A.D. de C.M. Saunders, *A Social History of Black Slaves and freedom in Portugal 1441-1555*

### Week 6: Slavery

#### Feb. 21
- Nellis, “The Atlantic Slave Trade”; PAPER DUE

#### Feb. 23
- Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, Chps. 1, 2, 5

- Related Reading: Hilary Beckles, “Centering Woman: the Political Economy of Gender in West African and Caribbean Slavery”

### Week 7: Slavery

#### Feb. 28
- Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, Chps. 7-9

#### Mar. 02
- Warren, “The Key of the Indies”

- Related Reading: Inikori, Joseph E. *Africans and the Industrial Revolution in England: A Study in International Trade and Economic Development*
  - Marcus Rediker, *The Slave Ship: A Human History*
### Week 8 Indenture and Society

**Mar. 07** Kale, “Very Particularly Situated”

**Mar. 09** Goveia, “The Social Framework”

**Related Reading:**
- Sydney Mintz, *Sweetness and Power*
  - Eric Williams, “The Abolition of the Caribbean Slave System”
  - David Lowenthal, *West Indian Societies*
  - Franklin Knight, “Social Structure of the Plantation Society”

**EXTRA CREDIT:** BENZVI Lecture - Monday, March 6, 2016 LAAH 453

### SPRING BREAK

### Week 9 Indenture and Society

**Mar. 21** Jackson, “Creole Indigeneity”

**Mar. 23** FINAL PAPER WORKSHOP

**Related Reading:**
- Lamming, “The Peasant Roots of the West Indian Novel”
  - Antonio Benítez-Rojo, “From the Plantation to the Plantation”
  - Kenneth Ramchand, *The West Indian Novel and its Background*
  - Elizabeth DeLoughrey, *Routes and Roots: Navigating Caribbean and Pacific Island Literatures*

### Week 10 Resistance and Freedom

**Mar. 28** Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism* (PDF Online)

**Mar. 30** VIEWING, Égalité for All: Toussaint L’Ouverture and the Haitian Revolution
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IOGVgQYX6SU
  - NO CLASS - INSTRUCTOR TRAVEL

**Related Reading:** C.L.R James, *The Black Jacobins*
### Week 11  Resistance and Freedom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Apr. 04 | Fanon, “Concerning Violence”  
[http://www.openanthropology.org/fanonviolence.htm](http://www.openanthropology.org/fanonviolence.htm) |
| Apr. 06 | Castro, “Program Manifesto of the 26th of July Movement” |

**Related Reading:** David Scott, *Conscripts of Modernity*  
Frederick Douglass, “Lecture on Haiti”  
David P. Geggus, ed., *The Impact of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World*

---

### Week 12  Resistance and Freedom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Apr. 11 | Fanon, “The Pitfalls of National Consciousness”  
[https://www.marxists.org/subject/africa/fanon/pitfalls-national.htm](https://www.marxists.org/subject/africa/fanon/pitfalls-national.htm) |
| Apr. 13 | Kincaid, *A Small Place*; Basquiat, “50 CENT$”  
**PROSPECTUS & BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE** |

**Related Reading:** George Lamming, *The Pleasures of Exile*  
*Sylvia Wynter, “Beyond Miranda’s Meanings: Unsilencing the Demonic Ground of Caliban’s Woman”*

---

### Week 13  Resistance and Freedom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apr. 18</td>
<td>Kincaid, <em>A Small Place</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr. 20</td>
<td><strong>CONFERENCES/WORKSHOP</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Related Reading:**  
Carole Boyce Davies, *Black Women, Writing, and Identity: Migrations of the subject*  
Carole Boyce Davies and Elaine Savory Fido, eds., *Out of the Kumbla: Caribbean Women and Literature*  
Kamala Kempadoo, *Sexing the Caribbean: Gender, Race, and Sexual Labor*  
Doug Henwood, “Profiteering in the Hemisphere”  
Stephanie Black, dir., *Life and Debt*  
Tariq Ali, *Pirates of the Caribbean*  
Angelique V. Nixon, *Resisting Paradise: Tourism, Diaspora, and Sexuality in Caribbean Culture*
Week 14

Apr. 25  CONFERENCES/WORKSHOP

Apr. 27  CONFERENCES/WORKSHOP

Week 15

May 02  REDIFINED DAY; NO CLASS

MAY 04  FINAL PAPER DUE

Paper Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FEBRUARY 21</td>
<td>SHORT PAPER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APRIL 13</td>
<td>PROSPECTUS &amp; BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAY 04</td>
<td>FINAL PAPER</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional Information and Resources

Select Supplemental Reading Material


Digital Collections of the Aztez Codices: http://www.lib.utah.edu/digital/collections/mesoamerican


Macpherson, Anne S. “Viragos, Victims and Volunteers: Creole Female Political Cultures and


