

THE HISTORY OF THE SPANISH-SPEAKING CARIBBEAN

HIST 292

Spring 2006

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Office Hours: Weds 2:30-4:00pm,
Thurs 1:00-2:00pm,
and by appointment.

This course moves beyond images of Caribbean sun and sand to explore the historical processes through which African, European, and Native American elements have combined to produce the various cultures of Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico. The course begins with the indigenous people of the late fifteenth century, investigates the impact of Spanish colonialism, and then explores interactions with the United States. It also highlights the ways in which historians have treated the themes of slavery, economic transformation, cultural nationalism, political sovereignty, and gender relations in relation to this region.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students are encouraged

- * to further their understanding of the academic discipline of history as defined by its investigative, interpretative, expository, and argumentative elements;
- * to identify and analyze the ways in which the history of the Spanish-speaking Caribbean been "constructed," or created, through the interpretation of the remnants of the past;
- * to develop the research skills to locate the primary and secondary sources appropriate for the exploration of this history;
- * to evaluate primary sources and to understand their use in the construction of history;
- * to become familiar with some of the methodologies and critical perspectives employed by historians to understand and explain the experiences of people in the Caribbean; and
- * to develop clarity of professional expression when writing or speaking about the major events and people that historically have shaped these experiences.

COURSE FOCUS

One question will be the focus of the course. What active human processes have created the similarities and differences that exist amongst the peoples, governments, and cultures of Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico?

It is your responsibility to work toward a final historiographic paper that limits the scope of this question to a manageable topic that may touch on themes such as leadership, slavery, foreign relations, economic beyond sugar, etc. You then should discuss the different ways historians have explained change and/or continuity within your topic. This course provides the framework to begin a systematic review of the various historical treatments of the Caribbean experience.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Sagas and Inoa, eds., *The Dominican People: A Documentary History*

ISBN: 1558762973

Alvarez, *In the Time of the Butterflies* ISBN: 0452274427

Fernandez, *Prisoners of Colonialism* ISBN: 1567510280

Mintz, *Workers of the Cane* ISBN: 0393007316

Barnet, ed. *Esteban Montejo* ISBN: 1880684187

Eckstein, Susan, *Back From the Future: Cuba under Castro* (e-book available through the Reeves Library catalog)

Additional readings may be required, as noted in the course schedule below.

EVALUATION

Participation	10%
Midterm	15%
Final Exam	20%
Collaborations	25%
Final Project	30% (10% draft, 20% final paper)

Class Participation - This course will have fewer lectures than an introductory course would have. You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings. You are responsible for mastering of one assigned component of the readings and teaching it to your assigned group. After the groups have discussed the reading separately, the whole class will review the issues raised in the groups. The participation grade also is based on the quality and quantity of the student's provocative debate, insight, and questioning, and his or her ability to respectfully allow others to do the same. This grade reflects the student's comprehension of the information associated with the readings, lectures, and films.

Exams will be heavily weighted toward essays. These exams also will include short identification questions that ask you describe briefly the historical significance of several items. You would explain the ways in which the item fosters, prevents, and/or reflects change. When possible you should also establish the connection between the terms. Exams also may include map and primary source evaluation sections. In all cases, prior to the exams you will receive a guide to possible items.

Collaboration Assignments - You will be assigned responsibility for the social, political, economic, or cultural history of one country. In assignment, you will focus on historical literature related to that experience. In class, you will teach your group members about that topic. Your group then will create a collective report that summarizes each of its members' contributions. Those reports will be discussed with the entire class. I encourage you to review your material with the other members of your group before coming to class.

Final Project - You will produce an eight to ten-page historiographic essay that critically reviews historians' treatment of one limited topic within the Spanish-speaking Caribbean. This is not a research paper what requires the analysis of primary sources. Instead you will analyze the

secondary literature on your topic to delineate the most significant arguments and their possible interaction with the major schools of historical thought. You should consult at least seven major scholarly works for this project.

Attendance Policy: Attendance is the responsibility of the individual student. However, success in the course will be closely linked to comprehension of the lectures, group presentations, and reading discussions. Because all students are negatively impacted by anyone's absence on the date that the collaborative assignments are due, **I will penalize absence on any of those dates with a reduction of 5 points for the student's final grade.** If a student plans to arrive more than five minutes late to class, he or she might consider making other arrangements. Absence on the date of an assignment, discussion, or exam will be excused only with a note for the appropriate college administrator or recognized physician.

Also, as a courtesy, please set all personal communication devices to silent mode.

Submission Formats and Late Policy - All submissions should be typewritten, with one-inch margins on all sides. The annotated bibliographies should be single-spaced. All other submissions should be double spaced. The font should be between 11 and 12 points. The student's name, course number, assignment number, and submission date should be typed in the upper left corner of the first page. After this header, one blank line should appear before the assignment title, which should be centered between the left and right margins. This title should be followed by one blank line before beginning the assignment. A hard copy of all submissions is required and electronic versions will be accepted only with my prior approval. Please follow **Chicago-style citation** for all papers associated with your final project. See <http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/history/bibliography.html> to [re]familiarize yourself with that method. Feel free to ask me if you have any questions.

All assignments are due at the beginning of class on their due dates. Ten points will be deducted from the paper's grade if it is submitted more than ten minutes after the start of class and this deduction will be repeated for each consecutive late day after the assigned due date.

College Policies

A. Students with any physical, psychological, medical, or learning disability should privately contact me and Laurie Roth, Director of the Learning Center, to arrange the appropriate accommodation for full participation in the course. Ms. Roth can be reached at 610-861-1510 or by email, melmr01@moravian.edu. Please make these arrangements within the first few weeks of the course.

B. Moravian College expects its students and faculty to maintain a high level of academic honesty. Question of academic honesty and plagiarism are addressed in the Student Handbook under the Academic Standards section.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1

Jan. 16 - Intro, Goals, Historiography Power Point

Jan. 18 - Caribbean Contact, - Reading - Restall, *Seven Myths of Spanish Conquest*, pp. xiii-26. (handout)

Week 2

Jan. 23 - Today's Spanish-Speaking Caribbean

Assignment # 1 - Group presentations (15 minutes each) - Teach the class about your country and some of its history. Defend the present quality of life in your assigned country. Assigned Categories: Social, Political, Cultural, and Economic. Describe the best and worst thing about your country.

Jan. 25 - Contact - Readings *The Dominican People*, Oviedo and Las Casas;

Week 3

Jan. 30 - Establishing a Colonial System

Dominican People pp. 27-55.

What do the readings tell us about each of the components of Spanish Caribbean History, the social, political, cultural, and economic?

Feb. 1 - Establishing a Colonial System

Interpretations - *Dominican People* pp. 27 -55

In-class exercise - To what do the authors attribute change and continuity?

Week 4

Feb. 6 - Submit research proposals, in-class film *Burn!*

Feb. 8 - Historical Literature on the Post-Contact Colonial System

Assignment #2 - Use JSTOR or EBSCOHost to find two scholarly articles that treat the seventeenth-century history of your country. Focus on your assigned theme. Bring a copy of each cover page to class, along with copies of the pages that contains the authors' clearest statements about change and continuity. Highlight those statements and write a one page evaluation of these interpretations. What seems plausible, implausible, or incomplete?

In class - The members of each group will discussion each other articles to determine the commonalities and differences in the historical treatment of their country. Submit a one-page

statement describing these commonalities and differences.

Week 5

Feb. 13 - The Unique Aspects of Spanish American Slavery and Testimonial History

Reading - *Esteban Montejo* - First Half

Feb. 15 - Slavery

Esteban Montejo - Second Half

In class - groups create a chronology of Esteban Montejo's life

What are the uncertainties and how could one attempt to rectify them?

Week 6

Feb. 20 Slavery

Assignment #3 - Use JSTOR or EBSCOHost to find two scholarly articles related to slavery in your assigned country. Focus on your assigned theme. Bring a copy of each cover page to class, along with copies of the pages that contain the authors' clearest statements about change and continuity. Highlight those statements and write a one-page assessment of these interpretations.

In class - after group members have had an opportunity to discuss the main points of each member's articles, create a table that lists each author's treatment of the whites, free people of color, slaves, and foreign governments, describing the level of involvement.

Feb. 22 **Midterm**

Week 7

Feb. 27 Challenges to Colonialism and 19th Century Independence Movements in the Spanish Caribbean

Reading - *The Dominican People*, pp. 61-100.

March 1 U.S. Intervention

Reading - *Prisoners of Colonialism*, "Introduction" through "Andres' Cap"

March 6 and 8 - **Spring Break**

Week 8

March 13 *Prisoners of Colonialism*, "Revolutionary Violence" to the end

March 15

In class debates - Can a comparison be made between U.S. intervention in the Caribbean and present U.S. intervention in Iraq? Terrorists or Freedom Fighters, how does one decide?

Week 9 - Twentieth-Century Economic Development

March 20 - Reading - *Worker in the Cane*, first half

Paper Draft due

March 22 - Reading - *Worker in the Cane*, second half

Week 10

March 27 - Twentieth-Century Economic Development

Assignment #4 - What comparisons can one make between the lives of Esteban Montejo and Don Taso? Submit a brief essay that addresses this question, while focusing on your assigned theme. Use evidence for the two related texts to support your argument. In class, discuss those social, political, economic, and cultural issues with the members of your group. Submit a brief report describing the group's agreements and disagreements about the comparison.

March 29 - Twentieth-Century Internal Politics

Readings - Julia Alvarez, *In the Time of the Butterflies*

Week 11

April 3 - Twentieth-Century Internal Politics

Readings - *In the Time of the Butterflies*

April 4 - Moravian Service Day - "Commonwealth, Independence, or Statehood - Making U.S. Citizens Aware of the Puerto Rican Status Options."

April 5 - Twentieth-Century Internal Politics

Women as Agents of Change before 1959.

Assignment # 5 - Class presentations how have historians brought women into history in your country? Use JSTOR or EBSCOHost to find two scholarly articles related to women's history in your assigned country. Focus on your assigned theme. Bring a copy of each cover page to class, along with a copy of the page that contains the author's clearest statement about change and continuity. Highlight the most concise statement about change and continuity.

Week 12

April 10 The Cuban Revolution and Its Impact

Reading - *Back From the Future: Cuba under Castro*

April 12 - **Final Paper Due**

Week 13

April 17 - **Easter, No Class**

April 19 - The Cuban Revolution and Its Impact

Reading - *Back From the Future: Cuba under Castro*

Week 14

April 24 - The Cuban Revolution and Its Impact

Reading - *Back From the Future: Cuba under Castro*

April 26 - Final Debate

How have the historians who study your country presented exciting interpretations, and what have they failed to explore properly? What historical actions have make each country unique?

I reserve the right to modify this syllabus. In those instances, I will notify you as promptly as possible.