

HIST/AFRC/LALS/GSWs 2401
Indians, Pirates, Runaways and Rebels:
Unofficial Histories of the Colonial Caribbean
Fall 2022

Dr. Yvonne Fabella
College Hall 208C
fabella@sas.upenn.edu

Wed 1:45-4:45
DRLB 4C4



Agostino Brunias, *Free Women of Color with their Children and Servants in a Landscape*, c. 1770-96.
Brooklyn Museum.

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.

Office Hours:

Schedule an appointment with Dr. Fabella here: <https://calendly.com/pennhistoryadvising/>

Course Requirements and Grade Distribution:

- **Participation (20%):**

Students' active, informed participation drives this course! Complete the assigned reading thoroughly and thoughtfully, arriving in class prepared to talk about it. Often, you will be given reading questions beforehand; be ready to discuss those questions in class and cite examples from our texts to support your conclusions. During 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.

- **Response Papers (30%)**

Students are required to submit five, one-two page papers (hard copy) that respond to our weekly readings. Students may choose the weeks for which they write their papers, but **three of the five papers must be submitted before the fall break. Late response papers will not be accepted.** If they choose, students may submit six total response papers, in which case the paper with the lowest grade will be dropped.

Response papers should address one of the prompts listed below, citing specific examples from the texts. Please indicate which prompt you've chosen at the top of the paper.

1. How would you characterize the relationship between the population studied this week (Tainos, pirates, servants, maroons, 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 secondary reading 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. If we read a primary document, identify and contextualize it: what is it, who created it, when, and *why*? What does it tell us about the group being studied this week, and/or about colonialism in the early modern Caribbean?
5. Additional questions specific to a week's readings might be posted to Canvas, and you are welcome to use any of these.

- **Primary source analysis (25%):** Each student will locate one relevant primary source and write a 7-8 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 **Sunday, October 23**. Final research papers are due on **Wednesday, November 23**.

- **Final paper (25%):** A final paper will be due on **12/19**. The assignment sheet will be distributed on the last day of class.

Attendance:

If you feel sick, and especially if you have a fever, please get tested for Covid and do not come to class. To get a free Covid test at the Penn Cares testing site:

<https://coronavirus.upenn.edu/content/current-testing-sites-and-hours>

If you are considering skipping class for any other reason, don't! Your participation – and therefore your attendance – is essential to our class, and to your grade. If you must miss a class because you are ill, or because of some other emergency, contact me as soon as possible by e-mail.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Academic honesty is fundamental to our community. The Penn Code of Academic Integrity can be found online (http://www.upenn.edu/academicintegrity/ai_codeofacademicintegrity.html).

Violations of that Code, including intentional and unintentional acts of plagiarism, will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and may result in failure for the course.

According to the Penn Code of Academic Integrity, plagiarism includes “[u]sing the ideas, data, or language of another without specific or proper acknowledgment. Example: copying another person’s paper, article, or computer work and submitting it for an assignment, cloning someone else’s ideas without attribution, failing to use quotation marks where appropriate, etc.”

Paraphrased ideas and directly quoted text must be cited properly in all written work. If you have questions about how to cite sources correctly, consult with Dr. Fabella or the Weingarten Learning Resource Center.

Masking in Class

While you are not required to wear masks in other university buildings, I ask that everyone wear masks during our class meetings. If you have concerns about this policy, please talk with me so I can explain why it is in place. As a class, we may revisit this policy at a later date, depending on the state of the pandemic. If you are immunocompromised or have other reasons for wanting to maintain classroom masking throughout the semester, please speak to me privately so that I am aware.

Weingarten Center

The Weingarten Center offers a variety of resources to support all Penn students in reaching their academic goals. All services are free and confidential. To contact the Weingarten Center, call 215-573-9235. The office is located in Hamilton Village at 220 S. 40th Street, Suite 260.

- **Weingarten - Academic Support**

Learning consultations and learning strategies workshops support students in developing more efficient and effective study skills and learning strategies. Learning specialists work with students to address time and project management, academic reading and writing, note-taking, problem-solving, exam preparation, test-taking, self-regulation, and flexibility.

Students can take advantage of free on-campus tutoring for many Penn courses in both drop-in and weekly contract format. Tutoring may be individual or in small groups.

Tutors will assist with applying course information, understanding key concepts, and developing course-specific strategies. Tutoring support is available throughout the term but is best accessed early in the semester. First-time users must meet with a staff member; returning users may submit their requests online.

- **Weingarten - Disability Services**

The University of Pennsylvania provides reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities who have self-identified and received approval from Disability Services. Students can contact Disability Services and make appointments to discuss and/or request accommodations by calling 215-573-9235.

Schedule of Class Meetings, Topics, and Assigned Reading

You can access all assigned readings -- or instructions for accessing them -- on our Canvas page, under the "Modules" section

Week 1 (8/31): Introduction

Week 2 (9/7): The Indigenous Caribbean: Taino and Carib/Kalinago

- 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"
 - Reinaldo Funes Monzote, "The Columbian Moment: Politics, Ideology and Biohistory"
 - Jalil Sued-Badillo, "From Tainos to Africans in the Caribbean: Labor, Migration, and Resistance"
 - Lynne A. Guitar, "Negotiations of Conquest"

- Bartolomé de las Casas, *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies*, selections

***At 3:10, we'll meet in the Kress Entrance Lobby of the Penn Museum. We'll spend the remainder of class working on an object-based learning exercise with Taino and Carib/Kalinago artifacts!*

Week 3 (9/14): Privateers, buccaneers, and pirates

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

Week 4 (9/21): Indentured laborers

Simon Newman, *A New World of Labor: the Development of Plantation Slavery in the British Atlantic*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 71-108.

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.

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

****Class will begin in the Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts (6th floor of Van Pelt Library, room 626), where we will learn about and work with Caribbean-related documents from the sixteenth-nineteenth centuries! The second half of class will be held in our regular classroom.**

Week 5 (9/28): Enslaved plantation workers

Simon Newman, *A New World of Labor*, pg. 189-242.

Trevor Burnard and John Garrigus, *The Plantation Machine: Atlantic Capitalism in French Saint Domingue and British Jamaica* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), 25-49. (Available Electronically)

****3:30: Visit from Nick Okrent, Reference Librarian. Bring your laptops for an in-class workshop on searching for sources.**

Week 6 (10/5): No class meeting (Fall break 10/6-7)

Individual student meetings will be held in COLL 208C on 10/4 and 10/5 to discuss research projects and any class-related concerns.

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

Week 7 (10/12): Enslaved women

Hilary Beckles, "Black Female Slaves and White Households in Barbados," in *More than Chattel: Black Women and Slavery in the Americas*, ed. David Barry Gaspar and Darlene Clark Hine (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 111-125.

Katherine Paugh, "A West Indian Midwife's Tale: The Politics of Childbirth on Newton Plantation," in *The Politics of Reproduction: Race, Disease and Fertility in the Age of Abolition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 122-153.

Primary source: Newton Plantation Slave List 1828
<https://lcdl.library.cofc.edu/content/newton-plantation-collection/>

****Post a "shelfie" to our Canvas site! Be sure to hold up a book you found in the library stacks that may be useful to your primary document analysis. In your post, give the book call # and explain the topics and themes of other books on the same shelf, and the shelves around you.**

Week 8 (10/19): Maroon communities

Vincent Brown, "Prologue: The Path to Rebel's Barricade," "Chapter Three: Coromantee Territory," and "Chapter Four: Tacky's Revolt," in *Tacky's Revolt: the Story of an Atlantic Slave War* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2020), 1-16, 85-163.

BRING TO CLASS ONE PRIMARY SOURCE from Van Pelt that you are considering for your research project. (If the source is located in the Special Collections department, please display a photographed image.) You will be asked to identify the source: What is it? Who produced it (include details regarding the author's/artist's personal history)? When and where was it created and published? To the best of your ability, situate the source in its historical context: Why was it created? Who was meant to see it? What purpose was it intended to serve? What message does it communicate?

10/23: PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS PROPOSALS DUE –submit on Canvas

Week 9 (10/26): Free people of color

John Garrigus, *Before Haiti: Race and Citizenship in French Saint Domingue* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006): 51-81.

Primary source: Julien Raimond, "Observations on the Origin and Progression of the White Colonists' Prejudice against Men of Color," 1791

Week 10 (11/2): Free women of color

Jennifer Palmer, "The Fruits of their Labours: Race, Gender and Labour in the Eighteenth-Century French Caribbean," *French History*, Vol. 32 No. 4 (2018): 471-492.

Marisa Fuentes, "Power and Historical Figuring: Rachael Pringle Polgreen's Troubled Archive," *Gender & History*, Vol. 22 No. 3 (2010): 564-584.

Primary source: "A Tavern Keeper Sues for Her Freedom in Martinique (Binture v. La Pallu)," in *Slavery, Freedom and the Law in the Atlantic World*, ed. Sue Peabody and Keila Grinberg (Boston: Bedford's, 2007), 36-42.

Week 11 (11/9): The Kalinago in the Eastern Caribbean

Tessa Murphy, *The Creole Archipelago: Race and Borders in the Colonial Caribbean* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2021) (available electronically on Franklin)

Week 12 (11/16): First drafts of primary source analysis due; bring copies to class to share for peer review

11/23 No class meeting – University operates on a Friday schedule – Research papers due

Week 13 (11/30): Haitian leaders Henri Christophe and Sans Souci, in archives and fiction
Recommended : Watch documentary *Egalité*

Michel-Rolph Trouillot, "The Three Faces of Sans Souci," in *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995)

Alejo Carpentier, *The Kingdom of This World*, excerpts

Week 14 (12/7): Postcolonial colonialism? Journalism and History

The Ransom <https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/haiti>

- The Root of Haiti's Misery: Reparations to Enslavers
- A Staggering Debt: Haiti's Lost Billions
- Credit Industriel: How a French Bank Captured Haiti
- American Gains: Invade Haiti, Wall Street Urged. The U.S. Obligated.

12/19: FINAL PAPERS DUE BY 4PM in COLL 208C