

SS 150: Peoples and Cultures of the Caribbean Professor Lagana

SPRING 2009: Reading List and Course Outline

Section F-124 Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday 12012:50 PM Room 424

- **Make sure that you read this course outline: answers to just about any questions you have about the requirements for this course can be found here. If you ask me a month from now, for example, when my office hours are or what chapters you should be reading, that probably means you haven't read this course outline. This course outline is also posted on my web page here at Queensborough:
<http://www.qcc.cuny.edu/SocialSciences/flagana/ss-150.asp>**
 - **This is a college-level course and you're all expected to treat it like one. That means coming to class regularly, coming to class prepared, paying attention, acting like grown-ups, and doing all of the assigned readings (that includes the handouts I give the class). If you're not prepared to do all of this, then perhaps you should consider dropping the course now while you can still get a refund.**
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I Required books: these two books will be the basis for class lectures and discussions. They are both available in the bookstore. The book on the Rastafarians should also be on library reserve.

A) James Gilmore. **Faces of the Caribbean.**

B) Leonard Barrett. **The Rastafarians.**

II Other Readings: in addition to the two books listed above, **you have to read at least one of the following five books (all available in the bookstore)**. Each book focuses on a particular aspect of the Caribbean experience.

A) Michele Wucker. **Why the Cocks Fight: Dominicans, Haitians, and The Struggle for Hispaniola.**

B) Polly Petullo. **Last Resorts: The Cost of Tourism in the Caribbean.**

C) Peter Manuel. **Caribbean Currents: Caribbean Music from Rumba to Reggae.**

D) Martha Quinlan. **From the Bush: The Front Line of Health Care in a Caribbean Village.**

E) George Gmelch and Sharon Bohn Gmelch: **The Parish Behind God's Back: The Changing Culture of Rural Barbados.**

III On Library Reserve: these two books will be available at the reserve desk in the library. You might want to look at them for ideas about a research paper or for further information on what we discuss in class.

- A) **Mintz and Price - Caribbean Contours.**
 B) **Horowitz - Peoples and Cultures of the Caribbean.**

IV COURSE REQUIREMENTS: there will be an exam at the end of the semester; there may also be a short exam or a short writing assignment right before spring break. These will count for about 25% of your final grade. In addition, there are two other requirements for the course.

A) You have to write **a book analysis paper (not a high school book report)** on one of the five books listed above. Guidelines for the book paper are included at the end of this course outline. **This paper should be at least 3 pages long (that's 3 typed and double-spaced pages or more); I will not accept a paper that's less than 2 and ½ pages long. This project will be due on March 16 (Monday) at the latest, no extensions, no excuses;** you can also hand it in earlier. **A book paper that is handed in late will have the grade reduced; a book paper that's handed in after Monday March 23 will receive a grade of F.** The book analysis paper will count for about 25% of your final grade.

B) The major project, however, will be a **research paper. This paper must be at least 7-8 pages long (typed and double-spaced) and you have to use at least three or four bibliographic sources (books, magazines, journal articles, internet resources, etc.).** Your paper can be on any aspect of Caribbean history and cultures, both past and present. This includes not only the island nations of the Caribbean (Jamaica, Cuba, Haiti, Puerto Rico, etc.) but also the coastal areas of some Central American countries such as Nicaragua and Panama. Also included would be some areas of mainland South America such as Guyana, Surinam and French Guiana.

C) You **must submit a topic for your research paper by Monday, March 30 (preferably well before then).** If you can't come up with a topic on your own, take a look at the list of suggested research paper topics that I'll be giving out. You also have to give me a brief outline of your paper by that date, indicating what ideas you have about your topic, what kinds of sources you're planning on using, etc.. Your outline must be typed and should be no more than 1-2 pages long. If you can't come up with a topic on your own, make sure that you talk to me so I can give you some suggestions. **It's important that you do your research paper on a topic that you're interested in.** Try not to pick too broad a topic; keep it focused on something specific. **If you don't give me an outline by March 30, the grade you get on your paper will be reduced by 1/2 grade (a paper that deserved a B will get a B-).** **The research paper will be due the week of May 4, any day that week Monday through Thursday (you can hand it in earlier).** **You must hand in your research paper during the week of May 5: no extensions, no excuses. The very last day for handing in your research paper is Thursday, May 7; any paper handed in after that will have the grade reduced.**

D) I'll spend at least one class talking in more detail about the paper: how to research it, organize it, footnote it, etc. I'll also have some handouts for you which will give you very clear guidelines on the correct format and structure of a college-level research paper. A paper that does not use the correct format and structure will be returned to you without a grade.

E) The research paper will count for about 50% of your final grade. The one or two exams will count for about 25% of your final grade, with the book analysis paper also counting for about 25%. **Class participation and especially class attendance will also be taken into account.**

V OFFICE HOURS: if you want to talk to me about the course or about anything else, my office is in Room 119 of the Medical Arts Building (phone #281-5017). My office hours are:: Monday 10:30-11:00, Tuesday 4:30-6:00, Thursday 10:30-11:00 and 3:15-3:45. If you can't make it during office hours, talk to me after class and we can arrange a better time.

VI E-MAIL: you can send any e-mail to the following address: **frankL@worldnet.att.net**
I can also be reached at this address: **flagana@qcc.cuny.edu.**

While I'm on the subject of e-mail, here are three things to remember whenever you send e-mail to one of your professors.

A) Whenever you send e-mail to a professor, make sure that you use some semblance of proper written English". For example, do not use common e-mail and text messaging shorthand such as "u" instead of "you", "r u" instead of "are you", "plz" instead of "please", etc. **I will not reply to any email unless it's written in proper English.**

B) **Any email you send to a professor should come from the free email account you get here at Queensborough (Tigermail); many professors will no longer accept email from a student unless it comes from a Tigermail account.** This account be can easily accessed either from home or at school.. If you send email from another address, be sure to put something in the subject line indicating that you're a student.

C) A few semesters ago I got an e-mail from a student with the e-mail name of "RagingPimp". Another e-mail came from a student calling herself "HotnSexyChicana". Amusing as these sort of names might be, you should all make sure to use a more neutral sounding name for school-related e-mail. Would you send a resume to a prospective employer with the name "RagingPimp"? I hope not. Once again, you should always use your Tigermail account for school-related email.

VII ATTENDANCE: it's important to come to class regularly. **If you miss more than 6 classes without a very good reason, your grade will be reduced. If you miss more than 10 classes without a very good reason, you will probably wind up failing the course.** This includes absences due to things like minor illnesses, parking problems, court appearances, your work schedule, etc.; **these do not constitute excused absences so don't ask.** If you do miss a class or two, try to get the notes for that day from another student. If you're going to be absent for several classes, make the effort let me know by calling during my office hours, e-mailing me or by leaving a message on voicemail. **Do not ask me to tell you how many times you've missed class; it's your responsibility to keep track of your own absences. Also, be sure you get to class on time. Students who walk in late disturb everyone, especially me. If you are going to be more than 10 minutes late to class, don't bother coming at all; you'll be marked absent anyhow.**

VII CLASS RULES: make sure that you get to class awake and on time. Try to refrain from catching up on your reading, napping, eating or conducting your courtships while in class. If you carry a cell phone, make sure to turn it off and put it away before class begins. And please pay attention, or at least pretend to. Students whose minds start to wander may find themselves called on to comment about what's been said in class.

VIII NEWSPAPERS: if you read a newspaper from the Caribbean, bring a copy of it or an article from it into class for everyone to look at and perhaps talk about. If you see any articles about the Caribbean in other publications, you can bring them in as well. More class participation always makes for a more interesting class; remember that class participation affects your grade.

IX ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: don't even think of cheating on any of the exams in this class – **the result will be a failing grade for the semester if you're caught** (you do have the right to appeal to the department committee on academic integrity). **Any written work that you hand in has to be entirely your own work and not the work of anyone else: handing in someone else's work on a written assignment will also result in a failing grade for the semester.**

Notice for Students with Disabilities

Any student who feels that he/she may need an accommodation based upon the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss his/her specific needs. Please contact the office of Services for Students with Disabilities in Science Building, room 132 (718 631 6257) to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

TOPICS FOR THE SEMESTER

This course will be covering a wide range of topics: archaeology, history, politics, economics, food, music, religions, etc. Exactly what aspects of Caribbean history and cultures we talk about depends at least in part on what students are interested in. For this course to be a success, and for you to get something out of it besides just a grade, it's important that you come to class regularly and do all of the assigned readings (that includes all of the handouts I'll be giving the class). I also expect you all to come to class prepared to intelligently participate in discussions.

Required Readings:

1. Gilmore – Faces of the Caribbean. have this book finished by the end of February at the latest.
2. Barrett – The Rastafarians. have this book finished by the first week of April.
3. You are also expected to read all of the various handouts I'll be giving the class throughout the semester. If you miss a class, it's your responsibility to find out if you missed getting any of the handouts.

Here is a tentative, and a very flexible, outline of the major topics we'll be covering this semester

WEEK OF:

January 26. Introduction.

February 2. Some basic facts about the Caribbean (population, politics, geography, etc.)

February 9 and February 16: Important factors in Caribbean history.

February 23: The native peoples of the Caribbean – from 6000 years ago (or more) until 1492.

March 2: 1492 → early 1600s: first European exploration and settlement of the Caribbean.

March 9 → 30: Sugar and Slaves (remember that your book analysis paper is due on March 16. Any book paper handed in after March 23 will receive a grade of F. A topic and an outline for your research paper is due on March 30 at the latest.)

April 8: The Caribbean in the 19th and 20th centuries: the end of slavery and the coming of political independence.

April 8→17: spring break – classes. This would be a good time to start seriously working on your research papers.

April 20: Caribbean Religions.

April 27→ May 4: The musical cultures of the Caribbean. Your research papers are due on Thursday May 7 at the latest – no extensions and no excuses.

May 11: we'll be tying up any loose ends during this last week of the semester.

 ➤ **REMEMBER: you cannot expect to do well in this course unless you come to class regularly, participate in class discussions, and do all of the assigned reading (including the handouts)**

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

1. **February 12 (Thursday)** – no classes.
2. **February 16 (Monday)** – no classes.
3. **March 16** –book analysis papers due (any paper handed in after Monday, March 23 will get a grade of F).
4. **March 30 (Monday)** – last day to officially withdraw from classes.
5. **March 30 (Monday)** – research papers topics and outlines due.
6. **April 8 → 17 (Wednesday → Friday)** – spring break/no classes.
7. **April 20 (Monday)** – classes resume.
8. **Week of May 4** – research papers due – **last day for handing in papers is Thursday, May 7.**
9. **May 14 (Thursday)** – last day of classes.
10. **May 16→May 22:** final exam week – please organize your life so you can be here that week.

SS 150:PEOPLES AND CULTURES OF THE CARIBBEAN

PROFESSOR LAGANA

SPRING 2009: BOOK ANALYSIS PROJECT

There are five books listed on the course outline: **you have to read one of them - no exceptions.** The five books should all be available at the Queensborough bookstore.

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- 1) *Michele Wucker: Why the Cocks Fight: Dominicans, Haitians and the Struggle for Hispaniola.*
 - 2) *Polly Patullo. Last Resorts: The Cost of Tourism in the Caribbean.*
 - 3) *Peter Manuel. Caribbean Currents: Caribbean Music from Rumba to Reggae.*
 - 4) *Martha Quinlan. From the Bush: The Front Line of Health Care in a Caribbean Village.*
 - 5) *George Gmelch and Sharon Bohn Gmelch: The Parish Behind God's Back: The Changing Culture of Rural Barbados.*

You have to write an analytical paper (not a high school book report) on the book you've chosen to read. **This paper must be at least three pages long** (it can be longer if you think you have something to say). That means **three typed (on standard-sized paper) and double spaced pages.** Be sure to staple the pages together before handing it in (pages must also be numbered). Also, make sure that you have a title page in front, with the name of the book you've read and your name on it. **Papers not done in the proper format will be returned to you without a grade.**

The last day for handing in this book paper will be Monday, March 16 - absolutely no extensions and no excuses (you can hand your paper in earlier than March 16). A paper that's handed in one day late will be penalized one-half of a grade (a B paper will get a B-). A paper that's handed in more than one day late will be penalized one full grade (a B paper will get a C) A paper handed in more than a week late will not be accepted and you'll get an F on it. Monday March 23 is the absolute last day for handing in a paper.

Your papers will be graded on the basis of content, organization and the proper use of written English (which means pay attention to spelling, grammar and punctuation). **This paper will count for about 25% of your final grade for the course.** Try to at least make an effort to write an intelligent, college-level paper.

For each of the five books, here are some questions that you should try to focus your report on. When writing this paper, you should imagine that you're writing it for someone who knows nothing at all about the subject of the book.

Make sure that what you hand in is entirely your own work and not the work of anyone else. Any evidence of plagiarism will result in a grade of “F” for the semester, no excuses and no second chances. Remember that I know how to use Google so don’t think you can get away with handing in a paper you did not write yourself.

1) **Why the Cocks Fight**: two countries, Haiti and the Dominican Republic, have shared the island of Hispaniola for about 200 years now. The relationship between the two countries has been, for the most part, one of mutual hostility and conflict. This book explores the political, economic, and cultural factors that underlie the relationship between the two countries. Based on what you read in this book, how would you explain the relationship between Haiti and the Dominican Republic and the various factors that have played a role in the relationship over the past two centuries. How are the two countries different; how are they similar?

2) **Last Resorts**.: as I’m sure all of you know, the tourist industry is an important part of life in virtually all Caribbean islands. Based on what you’ve read in this book, what kinds of economic, social and ecological effects does the tourist industry have on Caribbean societies? Do you think that the cost of tourism is worth whatever benefits the industry brings to the Caribbean? What are some of the alternatives to traditional tourism that are now being explored by some Caribbean nations?

3) **Caribbean Currents**: as this book makes clear, the people of the Caribbean have created an incredible variety of popular music forms, some known all over the world (for example, reggae), some not very well known except within their own society (for example, the music created by people of Indian descent in societies like Trinidad). Pick 2 or 3 of the different musical genres that the author covers in this book and discuss what makes these different forms unique, how they evolved, and the impact they’ve had both within the Caribbean and outside the Caribbean (for example, Cuban rumba music in the 1930's was a major influence on musicians in many parts of Africa; reggae music from Jamaica has become popular all over the world).

4) **From the Bush: The Front Line of Health Care in a Caribbean Village**: this book takes you to the community of Bwa Mawego, located on the small island of Dominica. The residents of the village have some interesting ideas about the causes and treatment of illness. Similar idea can be found throughout the Caribbean. In your paper try to answer the following questions:

- A). What kinds of illnesses do the people of Bwa Mawego recognize?
- B). What do people believe are the causes of these illnesses?
- C). What are some of the remedies, herbal and otherwise, that people use to treat these illnesses?
- D). What are the choices that people make when it comes to taking care of their health and why do they make these choices?

5) **The Parish Behind God's Back: The Changing Culture of Rural Barbados:** what kinds of social, cultural, and economic changes have taken place in the area of Barbados which is the subject of this book. What have been the important factors responsible for these changes? Were these changes the result of changes within Barbadian society or were they changes caused by external factors (for example, the role of the tourist industry). How have these changes affected peoples' lives and how have people tried to cope with these changes?

Do your best to write an intelligent, college-level paper. Also remember that the grade you get on this paper will in part depend on proper spelling, grammar, and the general appearance of your paper so pay attention to your writing. These papers are due no later than Monday, March 16.

➤ **REMEMBER:**

1 **This paper is due no later than Monday, March 16. If your paper is late, the grade on it will be reduced. If it's one day late, the grade is reduced by one-half (a B paper becomes a B- paper). If its more than one day late, the grade gets reduced even more; a B paper becomes a C paper. If the paper is more than a week late, the grade will be an "F". No paper will be accepted after Monday March 23. No extensions and no excuses.**

2. **This paper must be your own work and not the work of anyone else. I want it to be entirely in your own words; don't just copy from the book and don't even think about googling the title of the book and copying a review of it. I know how to use Goggle too. Any paper that shows evidence of dishonesty will result in a failing grade for the semester: no excuses and no second chances.**

3. **Your paper must be typed and it must have a separate title page (no pictures, maps or any other decorations on the title page). Also remember to number your pages.**

4. **Your paper should be at least three pages long (typed and double spaced on standard sized paper). I will not accept a paper that's less than 2 and ½ pages long.**

4. **Your paper has to look neat, with the pages numbered and stapled together.**

5. **Spelling and grammar count so pay attention to your writing. Use the spelling and grammar checker on your computer and read over your paper before you hand it in.**