

The Afro-Latin American Experience

HIST 508:367

Mon./Thurs. 9:50-11:10 am

Classroom: Frelinghuysen Hall, B5 (VIRTUAL DURING FALL 2020)

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Virtual Office Hours: Mon. and Thurs., 2:00-3:00 p.m.



Course Description

Outside of Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean is the region with the largest population of people of African ancestry. This course is a historical introduction to the study of the experiences of people of African descent in Latin America and the Caribbean. The course will be guided by the following questions: What and where is “Afro-Latin America”? What is the history and legacy of slavery in the Spanish, French, and Portuguese-speaking Americas? What are the shared struggles of Africans and their descendants across geographical space and time?

The first half of the course begins in the era of chattel slavery while the second half focuses on the period after the abolition of slavery to the present in Latin America and the Caribbean. There will be an especially strong emphasis on the issues of race, gender, politics, and power. Through primary and secondary source readings, we will explore major historical topics including: slavery and the Middle Passage, the Haitian Revolution, struggles for citizenship in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, scientific racism, political violence, rebellion and revolution, transnational and diasporic networks, and the rise of black social movements in the twentieth century into the present.

This course counts towards the new **Law and History Minor/Certificate** in the History Department. It meets the **SAS Core Learning Goal for Historical Analysis [HST-2]**: You will learn how to: employ historical reasoning to study human endeavors, using appropriate assumptions, methods, evidence, and arguments.



Learning Goals

1. Develop a critical, comparative understanding of the historical experiences and lives of people of African descent in Latin America and the Caribbean from the Middle Passage to the present.
2. Recognize the importance of race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, and other markers of social difference in affecting the diverse lives of people of African descent in Latin America and the Caribbean.
3. Critically analyze primary sources and secondary sources on Afro-Latin American life, culture, and politics.

Required Text

Christopher Schmidt-Nowara, *Slavery, Freedom, and Abolition in Latin America and the Atlantic World* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2011) [**Available online**]

All other course readings will be made available on Canvas (under “Resources”).

Course Format

Due to COVID, this course will be conducted remotely and asynchronously. The general format of the course will be the following: all lectures will be recorded and posted on Canvas; there will be a discussion forum on Canvas for almost every class session (see “Class Participation” below for more details).

Academic Integrity at Rutgers

PLEASE do **NOT** cheat or commit plagiarism!!!

- Any student found **cheating on exams will receive an F** and may be reported to SAS.
- **Plagiarism is a violation of the Academic Integrity policy of Rutgers University. Cite your sources properly and please use your own words.** Below is the Rutgers definition:
 - **Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is the use of another person's words, ideas, or results without giving that person appropriate credit. To avoid plagiarism, every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or appropriate indentation and both direct quotation and paraphrasing must be cited properly according to the accepted format for the particular discipline or as required by the instructor in a course. Some common examples of plagiarism are:
 - Copying word for word (i.e., quoting directly) from an oral, printed, or electronic source without proper attribution.
 - Paraphrasing without proper attribution, i.e., presenting in one's own words another person's written words or ideas as if they were one's own.
 - Submitting a purchased or downloaded term paper or other materials to satisfy a course requirement.
 - Incorporating into one's work graphs, drawings, photographs, diagrams, tables, spreadsheets, computer programs, or other nontextual material from other sources without proper attribution.
- **If you are confused about citing sources properly or paraphrasing, please refer to “Resources for Students” (website below) or see me during office hours.**
 - <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/resources-for-students/>

Academic Accommodations

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>.

If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

Important Information:

- Please address me as Professor Barragan **in both class and emails**.
- Expect delays on any emails received after 7pm and on weekends.

Course Assignments and Grading

Class participation (discussion leadership, participation)	20%
Two Short Essays	25% (12.5% for each essay)
Midterm Exam	25%
Final Exam	30%

- **Class Participation (Discussion Leadership & Participation):** Since this course will be held remotely, participation will be weighed differently. In particular, participation will be based on successful completion of **leading and participating in discussion on Canvas (look for “Discussions”)**.
 - For most class sessions, we will have an **assigned discussion leader** (you will be able to sign up for discussion leadership the first week of class). A discussion leader is an assigned student who is responsible for leading discussion on a specific session’s readings.
 - Whoever is tasked with being the discussion leader for the day will post a **brief summary of the text(s) or material(s) they are in charge of** (meaning like a paragraph or two) and **at least 2 discussion questions**. Everyone will then respond to the discussion leader post with at least a paragraph (you can also raise your own points). If you post more than that, I will be happy. That will help your participation grade.
 - The discussion leader must post by the **end of the day the readings are due** (so, **by 5pm on Monday or Thursday, depending on your session**). Everyone else must post **over the course of the following two days**. This means that for Monday readings, non-discussion leaders must post by the end of the day on Wednesday at 5pm. For Thursday readings, non-discussion leaders must post by the end of the day on Saturday at 5pm.

- **Two Short Essays:**
 - **Essay #1:** You must write a short essay (3-4 pages, double-spaced, 12 pt. font) that compares two different “Free Womb” laws in the following countries of Latin America: Argentina, Chile, Peru, Gran Colombia, Uruguay, Paraguay, Brazil, Cuba and Puerto Rico (i.e. compare Gran Colombia and Argentina, etc.).
 - Laws available online: <https://thefreewombproject.com>
 - **Pay attention to issues relating to age, class, gender, family relations, war, the role of the state, etc.**
 - ******ESSAY IS DUE by 5PM on Thurs., Oct. 29**

 - **Essay #2:** You must write a short analysis (3-4 pages, double-spaced, 12 pt. font) about a film documenting the Afro-Latin American experience, focusing especially on any social and historical themes in the film (i.e. slavery, race, whitening, displacement, activism). You must include references to **at least two lectures or readings**.
 - *****ESSAY IS DUE by 5PM on Thurs., Dec. 10**
 - See below for list of films. All are available streaming off the Rutgers libraries website or Youtube (feel free to contact me if you would like to analyze a film not listed below):
 - [They Are We](#) (Cuba/Sierra Leone, 2019), Rutgers library
 - [Pelo Malo](#) (Venezuela, 2013), Rutgers library
 - [Orfeu Negro](#) (Brazil, 1959), Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kF8Ae09bWJk&t=3648s>
 - [Dólares de Arena](#) (Dominican Republic, 2014), Rutgers library
 - [De cierta manera](#) (Cuba, 1974), Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F_FaWYhtW80
 - [La Playa D.C.](#) (Colombia, 2012), Rutgers library
 - [Nana](#) (Dominican Republic/US, 2015), Youtube (Only available in Spanish without subtitles): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VHdxE57X2A0&t=960s>

- **Take-home Midterm and Final Examinations:** Questions for both the midterm and final exams will be shared a week before they are due.

Grade Cut-offs:

A = 90 – 100

B+ = 85 – 89

B = 80 – 84

C+ = 75 – 79

C = 70 – 74

D = 60 – 69

F = 0 – 59

WEEKLY READINGS AND TOPICS

Introduction

Session 1 (Thurs., Sept. 3): **RECORDED LECTURE** What is Afro-Latin America? What is race? What is ethnicity?

Week 1: The Making of Atlantic Slavery and Colonialism

Session 1 (Mon., Sept. 7): **RECORDED LECTURE**, Africa and the Transatlantic Slave Trade

- Readings:
 - *Slavery, Freedom, and Abolition in Latin America and the Atlantic World*, 9-18
 - Primary Source: Selection from Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*

Session 2 (Thurs., Sept. 10): **RECORDED LECTURE**, The Colonial Encounter in Latin America and the Caribbean

- Readings:
 - *Slavery, Freedom, and Abolition in Latin America and the Atlantic World*, 32-47
 - Primary Source: Bartolomé de las Casas, *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies*, 9-30 (Read “Preface,” “Hispaniola,” “The Kingdoms of Hispaniola,” “The Islands of Puerto Rico and Jamaica”)
 - <http://www.columbia.edu/~daviss/work/files/presentations/casshort/>

Week 2: Slave Economies and Societies in Latin America and the Caribbean

Session 1 (Mon., Sept. 14): **RECORDED LECTURE**, Sugar, Gold, and Urban Slavery

- Reading: *Slavery, Freedom, and Abolition in Latin America and the Atlantic World*, 52-66, 70-77

Session 2 (Thurs., Sept. 17): **DOCUMENTARY**

- WATCH “Black in Latin America 4: Mexico and Peru—The Black Grandma in the Closet”
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gQeLxP_yIFU

Week 3: Culture and Resistance

Session 1 (Mon., Sept. 21): **RECORDED LECTURE**, Ethnic and Spiritual Cultures

- Reading:
 - Primary Source: “‘El rey de los *congós*’: The Clandestine Coronation of Pedro Duarte in Buenos Aires, 1787” (155-173)

Session 2 (Thurs., Sept. 24): **RECORDED LECTURE**, Resistance and Freedom

- Reading:
 - *Slavery, Freedom, and Abolition in Latin America and the Atlantic World*, 66-70
 - Primary Source: “The War against Palmares: Letter from the Governor of Pernambuco, Ferão de Sousa Coutinho (1 June 1671) on the Increasing Number of Insurgent Slaves Present in Palmares” and “Combating Palmares (c. 1680)” (264-267, on Canvas)

Week 4: Crisis and Insurrection in the 18th Century Colonies

Session 1 (Mon., Sept. 28): **RECORDED LECTURE**, The Haitian Revolution

- Reading:
 - *Slavery, Freedom, and Abolition in Latin America and the Atlantic World*, 90-105
 - Primary Source: “The Constitution of Hayti (1805)”
 - <http://faculty.webster.edu/corbetre/haiti/history/earlyhaiti/1805-const.htm>
- Listen to “Not Even Past” Podcast on Haitian Revolution (14 minutes):
<https://15minutehistory.org/2013/02/06/episode-11-the-haitian-revolution/>

Session 2 (Thurs., Oct. 1): **RECORDED LECTURE**, Conflict and Crisis in Spanish and Portuguese America

- Reading: *Slavery, Freedom, and Abolition in Latin America and the Atlantic World*, 78-86

Week 5: Undoing Slavery I: The Wars of Independence and Gradual Abolition

Session 1 (Mon., Oct. 5): **RECORDED LECTURE**, To Serve the King or Insurgents

- Reading:
 - *Slavery, Freedom, and Abolition in Latin America and the Atlantic World*, 105-116
 - Primary Source: “In the Royal Service of Spain: The *Milicianos Morenos* Manuel and Antonio Pérez during the Napoleonic Invasion, 1808-1812” (315-325)

Session 1 (Thurs., Oct. 8): **RECORDED LECTURE**, Gradual Abolition Laws in Spanish America

- Reading:
 - Camilla Townsend, “In Search of Liberty: The Efforts of the Enslaved to Attain Abolition in Ecuador, 1822-1852” (37-56)
 - Primary Source: Gradual Abolition Law in Gran Colombia (Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador) 1821:
 - <https://thefreewombproject.com/colombia/>

Week 6: Undoing Slavery II: Racial Politics and The Abolition of Slavery

Session 1 (Mon., Oct. 12): **RECORDED LECTURE**, Liberalism and Citizenship

- James Sanders, “‘Citizens of a Free People’: Popular Liberalism and Race in Nineteenth-Century Southwestern Colombia” (277-313)

Session 2 (Thurs., Oct. 15): **RECORDED LECTURE**, The Second Slavery in Brazil, Cuba, and Puerto Rico

- Reading: *Slavery, Freedom, and Abolition in Latin America and the Atlantic World*, 120-155
 - Primary Source: The Rio Branco Law, 1871
 - <https://thefreewombproject.com/brazil/>

Week 7: Mid-term

Session 1 (Mon., Oct. 19): WORK ON MID-TERM

Session 2 (Thurs., Oct. 22): MID-TERM DUE

Week 8: Race and Struggles for Citizenship in the Late 19th Century

Session 1 (Mon., Oct. 26): **RECORDED LECTURE**, Racelessness and the Wars of Independence in Cuba

- Readings:
 - Ada Ferrer, “Cuba, 1898: Rethinking Race, Nation, and Empire” (22-46)
 - Primary Source: José Martí, Selection from “Our America” (Cuba, 1891) (122-127)

Session 1 (Thurs., Oct. 29): **RECORDED LECTURE**, Scientific Racism, Eugenics, and Whitening

- Reading:
 - Brodwyn Fischer, “Quase Pretos de Tão Pobres? Race, Class, and Criminal Justice in Rio de Janeiro” (31-59)

→ → → ESSAY #1 DUE BY 5pm

Week 9: Race and New Politics in the 20th Century

Session 1 (Mon., Oct. 26): **RECORDED LECTURE**, Populism, *Mestizaje*, and Racial Democracy

- Readings:
 - Matthew B. Karush, “Blackness in Argentina: Jazz, Tango and Race Before Perón” (215-245)
 - Primary Source: Selection from Gilberto Freyre, *The Masters and the Slaves* (Brazil, 1933) (330-334)

Session 2 (Thurs., Oct. 29): **DOCUMENTARY**

- WATCH “Black in Latin America 2: Brazil: A Racial Paradise”
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gh7c46U5hhY&t=2209s>

Week 10: Anti-Blackness in the Caribbean

Session 1 (Mon., Nov. 9): **RECORDED LECTURE**, Dominican Republic and Haiti

- Reading:
 - Eric Paul Roorda, “Genocide Next Door: The Good Neighbor Policy, the Trujillo Regime, and the Haitian Massacre of 1937” (301-319)

- Listen to NPR Podcast on “Dominicans, Haitians Remember Parsley Massacre” (10 minutes): <http://www.npr.org/2012/10/01/162088692/dominicans-haitians-remember-parsley-massacre>

Session 2 (Thurs., Nov. 12): **DOCUMENTARY**

- WATCH “Black in Latin America 1: Haiti and the Dominican Republic: The Roots of Division”
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uklSf8CJ5GQ&t=1351s>

Week 11: Race and Revolution

Session 1 (Mon., Nov. 16): **RECORDED LECTURE**, The Cuban Revolution and Afro-Cubans

- Reading:
 - Devyn Spence Benson, “Not Blacks, but Citizens: Racial Rhetoric and the 1959 Revolution” (30-71)

Session 2 (Thurs., Nov. 19): **DOCUMENTARY**

- WATCH “Black in Latin America: Cuba: The Next Revolution”
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k7p30a4aayA&t=191s>

Week 12: Afro-Latin American Organizing in the Mid-20th Century

Session 1 (Mon., Nov. 23): **RECORDED LECTURE**, Dictatorship, Resistance, and Black Organizing, 1950s-1970s

- Reading:
 - Jerry Dávila, “Challenging Racism in Brazil: Legal Suits in the Context of the 1951 Anti-Discrimination Law” (163-185)

Session 2 (Thurs., Nov. 26): NO CLASS – HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

Week 13: African-Americans and Afro-Latinxs in the United States

Session 1 (Mon., Nov. 30): **RECORDED LECTURE**, Black Power in the United States and Diaspora

- Reading:
 - Teishan A. Latner, “Assata Is Welcome Here: Black Radicalism, Political Asylum, and the Diplomacy of Exile and Freedom” (199-264)

Session 2 (Thurs., Dec. 3): **RECORDED LECTURE**, Culture and Afro-Latinxs in the United States

- Listen to NPR Podcast “Garifuna: A U.S.-Honduran Story” (18 minutes): <https://www.npr.org/2015/01/23/379420599/garifuna-a-u-s-honduran-story>

Week 14: Contemporary Black Social Movements in Latin America

Session 1 (Mon., Dec. 7): **RECORDED LECTURE**, The Rise of Black Social Movements

- Reading:
 - Tianna Paschel, “Rethinking Black Mobilization in Latin America” (222-263)

Session 2 (Thurs., Dec. 10): **RECORDED LECTURE**, Challenges and Threats to Afro-Latin American Organizing

- Reading:
 - “Marielle Franco: Brazil’s favelas mourn the death of a champion” (*The Guardian*, 2018):
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/mar/18/marielle-franco-brazil-favelas-mourn-death-champion>
 - WATCH: “Suárez Gold: Afro-Colombian Miners Defending Their Heritage, 2013”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r0t-75-FLqY>

→ → → **ESSAY #2 DUE BY 5pm**

Final Exam TBA

HAVE A GREAT WINTER BREAK!!! ❄️❄️❄️