LAH 3931, Section 081C

Film, Baseball & Tourism of the Caribbean

Focused on the late Twentieth Century to the present, this course analyzes race, sexuality and the rooting of national and personal identities in differing sources of political power among Spanish-speaking Caribbean nations and their US diasporas, especially those of Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. Through the study of film, baseball and tourism, students examine the many ways in which constituents of these societies, both in the Caribbean and in the United States, contend with longstanding categories of identity and efforts to represent their cultures and interests that lie outside of their control. Because the vast majority of these diasporas arrived in the United States from the 1950s through the early 1990s, this course also reveals how larger frameworks such as the Cold War and the post-1989 global embrace of neoliberalism severely limited the ability of Caribbean peoples to represent themselves or break out of the restrictions that US geopolitical interests and economic policies placed on them.

Goals: This course begins by excavating the origins of certain racial myths and symbols of Caribbean identity in two historical processes: 1) the emergence of a hierarchy of "good" to "bad" Latinos among Cubans, Puerto Ricans and Dominicans in the 1960s; and 2) the construction of criteria for judging the cultural and social acceptability of Latinos in US society through corporate marketing campaigns and the entertainment industry. Subsequently, students launch a broader exploration of how immigrant communities' class position have intersected with their perceived or self-constructed racial identity to yield varying degrees of social acceptance and political enfranchisement/empowerment in mainstream US society.

Students study the history of baseball in order to grasp how a sport that once helped galvanize nationalist sentiment in Cuba and the Dominican Republic to contest US influence could have become, by the end of the Twentieth Century, a vehicle for individual economic success in the United States. While the achievements of Dominicans and Cubans in Major League Baseball (US) have been well-publicized over the years, the effects of their rise and example are less discussed. They lie at the heart of this class because the symbolic legacy of baseball players' success stories parallels, in important ways, the transnational migrant/immigrant story of "making it in America" that keeps so many islanders dreaming about the future rather than contesting the unjust political system that limits their own reality.

By studying tourism as a vehicle for economic development and a highly limited avenue for socio-economic advancement in the Caribbean, students understand the strategies on which individuals and communities of the Caribbean have come to rely in order to survive in a global economy that affords their own nation-states little if any room for negotiating the terms of participation, let alone representation. Sex tourism has become not only a primary part of the national economy for the Dominican Republic and
Cuba but an unusually accepted part of popular culture, even if "sex work" per se is not seen as or discussed as such. A mostly free-lance form of entrepreneurial commerce with little or no regulation, sex work for women (and men) engages and reproduces many of the features of exotic "Latino" identities that first emerged in Hollywood films like *West Side Story* and are perpetually recycled through icons like Jennifer López or on-line dating sites.

Finally, films function in this class as both sources of knowledge and subjects for analysis themselves as students explore the contradictions and paradoxes of negotiating power through spontaneous, everyday forms of performance as well as intentional public spectacles. By referencing and discussing films on a weekly basis, students become increasingly aware of how the power to represent—whether the Self or the Other—remains an integral part of any historical and contemporary struggle for change, liberation or survival.

**Course Requirements:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class attendance and participation in daily discussions</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papers 1, 2 &amp; 3 (15% each)</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[100%]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Special Guest Lecturer:** We are honored to host NBC Vice President of Ideas and Insights, Reny Díaz Arango, in our class on January 19th. It will be regular session, as usual, with 30 minutes of time for Mr. Díaz to give his presentation and 20 for us to pepper him with questions. *Attendance is mandatory. You may bring interested guests to the class upon approval by Dr. Guerra.*

1. **Class Attendance and Participation in Daily Discussion:** Attendance is (obviously) mandatory since most of the information, analysis and building-blocks for the class are acquired live and in person. Responding to the presentations and queries of your peers is as important as responding to those made by the professor.

   - **Lectures are particularly important for two reasons:** first, because they provide the framework for understanding the chronology and historical struggles at play; and second, because students should learn how to write good papers and make strong arguments from listening to good lectures.

   - **Discussions are the mainstay of this course:** we discuss films, readings and student presentations in every class. If you do not speak, Professor Guerra has no way of judging whether you are prepared for class, did the reading or have thought about the issues raised in the material.

   - **By the second week of class, each student will sign up for two discussions for which s/he will write and distribute a set of discussion questions based on the films and/or readings assigned for that day.** The goal is not for the student to lead the discussion or take over for Professor Guerra but, rather, to demonstrate
a deeper level of preparation on that particular day and to jump-start debate with
original questions that get peers and professor thinking.

- Consistent with the policy of the UF College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, repeated absences from the course may result in Professor Guerra preventing a student from attending the class or dropping the student from the course with a failing grade.

2. Group Presentation: At the time of the second class meeting, students will be asked to choose one of the four group presentation topics given in the course schedule below. You will be assigned to work with the other students in your group to design a presentation that responds to the issue, topic or question posed. The goal is to have students connect what they are learning to contemporary, observable and current events around them.

- For example, if you are asked to find out how Latino identity or Caribbean history is represented through the sale of "heritage" or "ethnic goods", you could find and analyze examples by doing research on-line, going to the local mall, checking out the "ethnic foods" aisle at Publix, interviewing the owner of a local restaurant or Latino/Latin American foods store. In other words, **DO FIELD RESEARCH and HAVE FUN! ORGANIZE YOUR EVIDENCE IN WAYS THAT ENGAGE THEMES AND ARGUMENTS RAISED IN THE CLASS.** In doing so, you will not only provide fresh ideas but invite the members of the class outside of your group to discuss them.

- Each member of the group presenting will provide Professor Guerra with an individual, one- to two-page explanation of the individual work that s/he did in addressing the group’s topic. This explanation might include material or thoughts not included in the group presentation.

- Group presentations should last no longer than 10 minutes and should generate 5 to 10 minutes of follow-up discussion from class peers. All four group presentations are scheduled for Thursday class meetings.

3. Three Analytical Papers (15% each). A major goal of this class is to help students become skilled, dynamic thinkers who can express complex ideas and original arguments in writing. There are no exams in this class (not even a final exam), so writing is the most significant part of a student's performance. Because the class relies on a combination of films, cultural criticism and interdisciplinary writings, students are challenged to construct individual arguments for their papers from the readings exclusively. Additionally, students will be permitted to use outside sources that supplement or complement the materials provided in the class but reliance on outside sources should be sparing. Students should primarily rely on and process the assigned readings and films. Students are required to provide evidence from the readings to support an argument made in a paper; while lectures are appropriate as well, readings must represent the principal sources from which to draw examples and specific points of
fact that substantiate a thesis. This class is replete with primary sources on which to comment far beyond the boundaries set by the time constraints and agenda of the class.

**Due dates for the papers are as follows:**

- **FIRST PAPER DUE MONDAY, FEBRUARY 1ST BY 4:00 PM.**
- **SECOND PAPER DUE FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26TH BY 4:00 PM.**
- **THIRD PAPER DUE MONDAY, MARCH 28TH BY 4:00 PM.**

  - Papers must be 4-6 pages long, double-spaced and typed in 12-point font.
  - Each paper will respond to one or two questions provided at least one week in advance of their due date.
  - Your essay should be analytical in style: that is, it must present an argument substantiated by evidence drawn from the assigned reading and directly cited.
  - You are required to underline your thesis statement so that there will be no problem identifying an argument.
  - All papers must be handed to Kym Dalton, secretary at the Center for Latin American Studies in **hard copy form** by 4:00 PM the date they are due. Emailed papers are only accepted in an emergency; a hard copy version must be handed to the professor later.
  - Late papers will be penalized by half a grade for every day they are overdue, unless an extension has been requested in advance and granted.

**4. Final Research Paper (25%):** The final paper for this course should engage the themes and issues raised in the materials and films that comprise the latter two units of the course, "Unit 4. Negotiations" and "Unit 5. Revelations." However, this paper should move beyond the materials analyzed by the class in these sections to engage external research that uses academic secondary sources selected by the student as well as primary sources.

  - Primary sources for the paper must include some combination of newspapers, magazines, literature, memoirs, television, movies, documentaries, radio and/or social media. The quality of research conducted for the paper will determine a full 50% of its grade.

  - In order to ensure that students are on track for the submission of this final paper, **the topic of final paper is due to the professor, together with a preliminary bibliography by FRIDAY, APRIL 5TH BY 4:00 PM.**

  - Papers must be 7-12 pages long, double-spaced and typed in 12-point font.

  - All papers must be provided in hard copy to Kym Dalton, secretary at the Center for Latin American Studies or directly to Prof. Guerra.
Final papers are due by Thurs April 28th by 4:00 PM.

5. Course Materials: Books for this course are available at the UF Bookstore. Unless otherwise indicated, other essays, documents and articles assigned for this course are available electronically through links provided by UF Library Course Reserves or at Library West. Some will be made available through SAKAI.

NOTE: Because the viewing of films is an essential, weekly requirement of the course and there is only one copy of each film available at Library West reserves, Professor Guerra will expect that all students in the class provide their peers with their emails and/or (if willing) cell phone numbers so as to facilitate access and sharing of films by direct communication and arrangement. Professor Guerra will collect emails and contact information on the second day of class.

- Films are on reserve (as are all other class materials) on a two-hour, in-library basis at Library West. However, if students can arrange to view them in groups or in pairs, that will undoubtedly ensure that every one has access.

- Students are expected to view films assigned in advance of class on the following dates (also given in course schedule below):
  - West Side Story
  - East of Havana
  - Balseros
  - Juan de los Muertos
  - Who the Hell is Juliet?
  - 30 por 30 (ESPN documentary)

Grading Scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>GPA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Letter Grade with GPA equivalent:

A  4.0
A- 3.67
B+ 3.33
B  3.0
B- 2.67
C+ 2.33
C  2.0
C- 1.67
D+ 1.33
D  1.0
D- 0.67
E  0

Excused Absences: Students who will not be able to take an exam at the scheduled time, need an extension of the due date for a paper or were unable to attend class due to illness must provide medical
Prof. Lillian Guerra
Office: 307 Grinter
Class Mtg Tues 10:40-11:30
Office Hours: Th 2:00-4:00
Class Mtg Thurs 10:40-12:35
lillian.guerra@ufl.edu
Location: CSE #E220
documentation of their condition at the time. Students who have other conflicts that will prevent them from being able to complete an assignment on time must notify Professor Guerra in advance and discuss whether or not the extension or make-up exam is merited. Students must also notify Professor Guerra if they will incur absences due to UF-sanctioned activities (such as participation in UF teams, etc.).

**Academic Honesty:** Violations of academic honesty standards include but are not limited to cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of another’s work as one’s own, bribery, conspiracy and fabrication. The criteria for assessing whether student behavior meets one or more of these violations as well as the sanctions imposed may be reviewed at the website: [http://www.aa.ufl.edu/aa/Rules/4017.htm](http://www.aa.ufl.edu/aa/Rules/4017.htm)

**Students with disabilities:** Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to Professor Guerra when requesting accommodation. Contact the Disability Resource Center through their website: [http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)

**Make-up Policy and Extra Credit:** There is no extra credit. There is no way to make-up for missing discussions of the weekly reading assignment. These will normally take place before or after lecture on Thursdays, unless otherwise noted below in the course schedule. Unexcused absences from discussion will result in a participation grade of zero for that week. Evaluation of oral participation in discussion is based on the criteria described immediately below this section.

**Other Course Policies:** All cell phones must be turned to vibrate at the beginning of class. *Internet websurfing, texting, checking of email, or other tasks unrelated to note-taking during lecture, discussion or other classroom activities is not permitted.* Professor Guerra will confiscate the cell phone or laptop of any student found engaging in these activities during class and s/he may be asked to leave the classroom. A second violation will result in disciplinary sanction.

---

**Course Schedule**

**Unit 1. Historical and Theoretical Foundations:**

*The Power of Representation and Commodifications of the Other*

Tu Jan 5th **Intro.** Symbols of Self and Other in Today’s Transnational Caribbean

Th Jan 7th **NO CLASS; READ FOR DISCUSSION THURSDAY!**

Tu Jan 12th **Lecture:** “Don’t Panic, I’m Hispanic”: Latinos, Inc.

Th Jan 14th **(double period session) Lecture:** Puerto Ricans, the American Dream and “Cold War Caribbean Latinos”.

*For discussion in class:*


- **Reading:** Ana Y. Ramós-Zayas, *National Performances: The Politics of Class, Race and Space in Puerto Rican Chicago* (University of Chicago Press, 2003), Chapter 1 only, “Performing the Nation”, pp. 19-42. [Scanned chapter available through UF library course reserves.](#)

- **Reading:** Jorge Duany, “Nation on the Move: The Construction of Cultural Identities in Puerto Rico and the Diaspora,” *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 27, No. 1 (Feb 2000), pp. 5-30. [Electronic journal article available by searching the library database called JSTOR or through a a link on UF library course reserves.](#)
Unit 2. Paradoxes: The Search for Self-Representation and Political Authenticity

Tu Jan 19th Special Guest Speaker: Reny Díaz Arango, Vice President of Ideas and Insights, NBC.

Th Jan 21st (double period session) Film Workshop and Discussion. The Goals of West Side Story. For discussion in class today:

- Film (to be seen before class): “West Side Story” (USA, 1961) on reserve at Library West.


Tu Jan 26th Lecture: Taíno Nation? Race, Language and Culture among Island and US Puerto Ricans, 1950s-Present

Th Jan 28th (double period session) Lecture: Forging the US Dominican Diaspora, 1960s-Present (No reading this week; be sure to get a head-start on reading of Black Behind the Ears for Tuesday, Feb. 5th)

Class Presentation, Group 1. Topic of presentation: Finding the History of Puerto Ricans and Puerto Rico in US Media/Market Culture. For discussion in class today:


FIRST PAPER DUE MONDAY, FEBRUARY 1ST BY 4:00 PM.

Tu Feb 2nd In-class film-viewing: “My American Girls” (2001)

Tu Feb 4th (double period session) Film workshop on documentary seen Tuesday in class and discussion. Does Being “Indio” Mean Not Being “Black” among Dominicans in the United States and the Island? For discussion in class:


Tu Feb 9th Lecture: (Almost) Everything You Wanted to Know About the Cuban Diaspora but Were Too Afraid to Ask
Th Feb 11th (double period session) In-Class Film Viewing and Discussion of Reading and Film. Cuban Exile Identity vs. Cuban Immigrant Identities: Is There a Difference?

For discussion in class:


- **In-class film-viewing followed by discussion:** “Campaign for Cuba” (1992)

Tu Feb 16th Lecture: The Mariel Boatlift: Why They Came, What Happened & Why it Matters

Th Feb 18th (double period session) In-class Film-viewing and Discussion of Reading and Film. Cold War Cubans and US Cuba Policy in the Post-Cold War Age. **For discussion in class:**


- **Reading assigned:** Lillian Guerra, “Elián González and the ‘‘Real Cuba’’ of Miami: Visions of Identity, Exceptionality, and Divinity,” *Cuban Studies/Estudios Cubanos* 38 (2007), 1-25. Electronic journal article available by searching the library database called JSTOR or through a link on UF library course reserves.

- **In-class film-viewing followed by discussion:** “Más allá del Mar / Beyond the Sea” (2003)

**Unit 3. Race, Class & Gender Struggles:**

*Baseball & Tourism in a Neo-Liberal Transnational Economy*

Tu Feb 23rd Lecture. From Cold War to Culture War: Daily Dissidence and “Official Dissidence” among Island & US Cubans, 1989-Present

Th Feb 25th (double period session) Class Presentation, Group 2 and Film Workshop. **Topic of presentation:** Will the Real Cuban or Dominican Please Stand Up? Getting Beyond the Racial and Political Monoliths of Diaspora Identity.

- **In-class film-viewing followed by discussion:** "Frontline: Saving Elián" (2000)

**SECOND PAPER DUE FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26TH BY 4:00 PM.**

**SPRING BREAK FEB 29TH TO MARCH 4TH**

Tu Mar 8th Lecture. The Changing Role of Baseball in the Caribbean: The Cases of Cuba and the Dominican Republic
Th Mar 10th (double period session) Discussion of Reading and Film. Fighting Racism through Revolution or Fighting the Revolution through Race? *For discussion in class:*

- **Film (to be seen before class):** “East of Havana” (Cuba/USA, 2007) on reserve at Library West.

- **Reading assigned:** Sarah A. Blue, “The Erosion of Racial Equality in the Context of Cuba’s Dual Economy,” *Latin American Politics and Society*, Vol. 49: No. 3 (Fall 2007), 35-68. Electronic journal article available by searching the library database called JSTOR or through a link on UF library course reserves.

- **Reading assigned:** Alejandro de la Fuente, “The New Afro-Cuban Cultural Movement and the Debate on Race in Contemporary Cuba,” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 40 (2008), 697-720. Electronic journal article available by searching the library database called JSTOR or through a link on UF library course reserves.

- **Website of “Queloides”, an exhibit of Cuban art curated by Alejandro de la Fuente, to review:** [http://www.queloides-exhibit.com/](http://www.queloides-exhibit.com/)

Tu Mar 15th In-class film-viewing: “Lost Son of Havana” (2009)

Th Mar 17th (double period session) Discussion. Vehicle of Nationalism or Catalyst for Individualism? The Effect of Baseball on Life and Identity in Rural DR. *For discussion in class:*


Tu Mar 22nd Lecture. Fantasy Islands: A Brief History of Tourism, Sex Tourism and the Transnational Space of the Caribbean

Th Mar 24th (double period session) Class Presentation, Group 3 and discussion. **Topic of presentation:** Selling Cuba, the DR and Puerto Rico On-Line: A Historian’s (Critical) Point of View. **Discussion:** Sex Work, Not Prostitution: What's the Difference? *For discussion in class:*


**THIRD PAPER DUE MONDAY, MARCH 28TH, BY 4:00 PM.**

Tu Mar 29th. The Fiction and Reality of "Love" as a Commodity / Survival Strategy. *For discussion in class:*

Th Mar 31st (double period session) Class Presentation, Group 4 and discussion.
Topic of presentation: "What I Did Last Summer...And How It (Did/Did Not) Change Me": Critical Reflections on Being a Tourist. For discussion in class:


FINAL PAPER TOPICS AND PRELIMINARY BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE MONDAY APRIL 4TH BY 4:00 PM.

Tu Apr 4th Lecture: Cruising the Caribbean: Leisure, Love, Exploitation & Environmental Destruction on the Cheap

Tu Apr 7th (double period session) Discussion. How Does Tourism Differ from Sex Tourism in the Caribbean? How are They Related? For discussion in class:


Unit 4. Revelations: Finding "The Real" in the Reel for the Case of Cuba

Tu April 12th. Discussion and Film Workshop. (Foreign-Made) Documentary Film as Entertainment or Emotional/Political Voyeurism? Part I. For discussion in class:


- Film (to be seen before class): “Balseros” (Spain, 2005) on reserve at Library West. Watch before class.

Tu April 14th (double class session) Discussion and Film Workshop. Fictional Film as Documentary, Documentary as Fictionalized Entertainment. For discussion in class:

- Reading assigned: Ann Marie Stock, "'Imagining the Future in Revolutionary Cuba: An Interview with Fernando Pérez' Film Quarterly 60: 3 (Spring 2007), pp. 68-75. Electronic journal article available by searching the library database called JSTOR or through a link on UF library course reserves.

- Film (to be seen before class): "Juan de los Muertos [Juan of the Dead]" (Cuba, 1998) on reserve at Library West.

- Film (to be seen before class): “Who the Hell is Juliet?” (Mexico, Cuba, 1996) on reserve at Library West.

Tu April 19th Final Class Meeting. Lecture and Discussion. Film, Baseball and Tourism of the Caribbean: Stages for Performing Change and Challenging Reality

FINAL RESEARCH PAPERS ARE DUE BY THURSDAY, APRIL 28TH.
Prof. Lillian Guerra
Class Mtg Tues 10:40-11:30
Class Mtg Thurs 10:40-12:35
Location: CSE #E220
NO FINAL EXAM!!!