LIT 6236/ Fall 2013
Panama Silver, Asian Gold: Migration, Money, and the Making of the Modern Caribbean

The seminar will meet Tuesdays 12:50-3:50 in Turlington 4112

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Office Hours: Wednesday 1-3; Thursday 11-12

To register: Send your name and UF ID to rosenberg@ufl.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This seminar considers two overlooked labor migrations that have profoundly affected the emergence of modern Caribbean literature: The immigration of indentured laborers from India and China into the West Indies and the emigration and return of the Afro-Caribbean workers who built the Panama Canal. Both groups worked under difficult conditions for exploitative wages. However, both used their savings to bankroll their entry into the educated middle class, thereby fostering the conditions that produced the first generation of nationalist politicians, as well as the first generation of Caribbean writers to achieve international acclaim. In this course, students will learn how to use archival material related to these nineteenth and twentieth century migrations, including photos, court cases, newspaper reports, popular songs, and first person accounts of the migrants’ experiences, to enrich their understanding of Caribbean literature.

This course is a PILOT course for inter-collegiate collaborative learning and instruction in digital humanities. It will be taught in collaboration with Professor Rhonda Cobham-Sander at Amherst College and Dr. Donette Francis at the University of Miami and we will be assisted by librarians at each institution. The course makes extensive use of the Digital Library of the Caribbean (www.dloc.com), which open-access digital archive of Caribbean materials, whose technical hub is at UF. Students will have an opportunity to add their annotations to the finding aids in the DLOC collection; some class discussions will be held via video conference; and some assignments will be researched collaboratively or posted online. We hope our initial experiment will sow the seed for future collaborative courses involving students at other institutions, in the United States and abroad. We are counting on the resources you help us develop module to ground such future collaborations. Your level of commitment and participation will matter for students beyond this class. So be prepared to complete a significant amount of the work through independent research and in cross campus collaboration.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
- To understand key concepts, themes, tropes, styles, and aesthetic concerns of Caribbean literary discourse through examining literary representations of the two migrations under study.

- To analyze creative texts in relation to historical events, as well as other disciplinary modes of inquiry such as history, anthropology, sociology.

- To develop and hone skills of literary analysis and research such as archival practice, close reading, critical argumentation, critical synthesis, and thesis writing.
• To illuminate some of the limitations of the colonial archive records of subaltern and
disenfranchised people and the stakes involved in articulating the history of the majority of
Caribbean people —for literary writers and scholars.

• To introduce students to the technology used in digital archiving (producing metadata, exhibit
labels, finding guides) and digital humanities (e.g. Omeka, PBworks, timelines, Zotero) and
explore challenges posed by digital archiving (how can we not reproduce the colonial structure of
existing historical archival materials?). Students are encouraged to produce and publish digital
research projects (such as finding guides, curated exhibits, times lines) that will be included in
the Digital Library of the Caribbean (www.dloc.com) and when appropriate the conference and
exhibits celebrating the Centennial of the completion of the Panama Canal to be held at UF in
spring 2014.

REQUIREMENTS:

Attendance and Participation (in class discussion and responses to wiki postings beyond the
required contributions) 15%
Weekly Reading and Writing Assignments #1-6 45% of the grade
Assignment # 7  Meta Data assignment 10%
Assignment # 8  Final Research Project 30%

Attendance and active participation are mandatory. Twenty percent (20%) of your grade will
be based on your active listening, your reading your engagement in class discussions and your
attendance of office hours.

Readings  Assigned readings are listed in the syllabus for each week. On most days there will be
a literary text as well as an article or two meant to help you with your assignment.

Exercises and Assignments  Students will complete weekly assignments during the first half of
the course, parts of which they will share online with other students at the three campuses. In the
second half of the course you will complete a metadata project, and a final research project.
Details about each of your assignments are laid out in the syllabus.

Class Attendance and Punctuality. I expect you to come to class on time, and to attend
regularly. Failure to do either will affect your final grade.
Class Participation.  This class is a seminar. All students are expected to come to class having
read the assigned materials and having prepared for in-class discussion. “Class participation” is
defined here as participating in discussion generated by the class leader, as well as paying
attention to and offering respectful critiques of in-class and online presentations by other
students.

Office Hours. Since this class meets only once a week, you should plan to see me, singly or with
a classmate, at least three times in the semester. I have scheduled regular office hours for
Wednesdays and Thursdays and I will be checking in at the beginning of the semester to make
sure that everyone in the class can make one of the posted times.
**Week 1**

August 27

**Introduction**

**Readings:**


Selvon, Sam. “Turning Christian”

Claude McKay Poem *Peasants’ Way o’ Thinking*  in James, Winston, *A Fierce Hatred of Injustice: Claude McKay’s Jamaica and His Poetry of Rebellion* Verso, 2001


**Technology and Library Unit:**  (with Laurie Taylor)
Introduction to PBWorks

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**Week 2**

September 3

**SEEING THE ARCHIVE IN THE TEXT**

**Reading:** Coniff, Michael. “Introduction.” *Black labor on a white canal: Panama, 1904-1981*

**ASSIGNMENT 1** SEEING THE ARCHIVE IN THE TEXT

**Technology and Library Unit 1:**  (with Laurie Taylor and Missy Roser)
PBWorks basics & Zotero

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**Week 3**

September 10

**Indentured Women in the Archive**

**Readings:**
Saidiya Hartman, “ The Dead book,” chapter 7 in *Lose Your Mother*
Verene Shepherd, *Maharani’s Misery*

Mahadai Das “They Came in Ships”

**ASSIGNMENT 2:** READING THE COLONIAL ARCHIVE
Guest lecture via Skype: Verene Shepherd

Technology and Library Unit: Introduction to dLOC (individual accounts) and other relevant digital resources for the class.

Week 4
September 17

The Panama Canal Enters Modern West Indian Literature

Herbert de Lisser, Susan Proudleigh (Methuen & Co., 1915) available in


Week 5
September 24

The Construction of identity and Migration in Newspapers

Olive Senior, “Window” in Discerner of Hearts

Guest Lecture: Rhonda Frederick


ASSIGNMENT 3: REPRESENTING WEST INDIANS IN THE PANAMA CANAL ZONE

Week 6
October 1

Indo-Caribbeans enter Modern Caribbean literature
Edgar Mittelholzer, Corentyne Thunder (Guyana) (1941)

V.S.Naipaul, “His Chosen Calling” in Miguel Street pp36-45


ASSIGNMENT 4: Working with Newspapers

Week 7
October 8

Chinese Caribbean
Readings:
Chang, Victor. “Light in the Shop” (Story), small axe, No. 2 (1997), pp.103-
108. (fiction)


Richard Fung My Mother’s Place (Video 1990)

Albert Chong “Aunt Winnie’s Story”

“A Negro Nurse with Chinese Children” taken from the travelogue, The West Indies; painted by A.S. Forrest (1900)


ASSIGNMENT 5: Visualizing the Archives

Week 8
October 15

Listening in the Archive


Roman, Fortune Diggers (Film)


---- Voices from Our America: Interview with Emiliana Bernard Stephenson

pages 331-341

Other/alternative sources: resources:
Panama Canal Museum oral histories
Voices from Our America. Oral Histories of Afro-Panamanians
Persaud, Alice Persaud (1892-1952) Autobiography
Week 9
Contemporary Indo-Caribbean Women Negotiate the Archive
October 22
Ramabai Espinet. *Swinging Bridge*
----- “The Invisible Woman in West Indian Literature.” The Invisible Woman in West Indian Literature’, World Literature Written in English 29,2: 116-26

ASSIGNMENT 6: Listening in the Archives

Week 10
Contemporary Afro-Caribbean Novelist negotiates the archive on Panama
October 29
Maryse Conde *Tree of Life*
US Senate hearing (starts about halfway down the page). This series includes several Senate hearings about Panama Canal Matters

Week 11
Digital Archiving and the Construction of Knowledge
Nov 5
Guest Lecture: Laurie Taylor on Metadata and digital archiving and the Construction of Knowledge

Reading: Familiarize yourself with the citations in dLOC 3 sources you have found important. Also look at examples: “News Flash: Vodou Not Voodoo.” Consider the information included and not included and terms used.

Week 12
Digital Archiving and the Construction of Knowledge
Nov 12
ASSIGNMENT 7: Collaborative Guides and Annotations Due

Week 13
Planning Week for Collaborative Digital Project
November 19
Assignment for 19 November: Explore the digital projects linked in assignment 8 and consider what project you would like to undertake. You may explore other digital humanities projects and introduce them to the class via the wiki and class discussion.

Week 14
Collaborate Project Continued: First proposal due
November 26
ASSIGNMENT 8 Part 1: Write a proposal for your project (250 words) which includes: a title, tentative thesis, and list of sources.

Week 15
Joan Flores Guest Presentation on Primary Research on the Panama Canal
December 3
Guest Lecture: Joan Flores

Report on progress towards part 2 of project (proposal explaining the use of technology) due Friday 6 December
EXPLANATION OF ASSIGNMENTS
The first draft or effort towards toward each assignment is due at 9 a.m. on the morning of the class. The final version should be uploaded to the wiki by noon the Friday of that week. Drafts should be posted on your home page and the final version on both your page and the wiki page for the assignment.

ASSIGNMENT 1: SEEING THE ARCHIVE IN THE TEXT [due 3/6 September]
This assignment helps you understand how and why scholars use archival sources.

- Choose a book of interest from LINK.
- Read and analyze its introduction and bibliography using the reading form.
- Post a paragraph about your findings to LINK.

ASSIGNMENT 2: READING THE COLONIAL ARCHIVE [Due 10/13 September]
This assignment introduces you to how scholars negotiate the colonial archive in making meaning.

1. Focus on 1 witness' testimony from Verene Shepherd's Maharani's Misery. How do you evaluate the significance of this testimony? How do you use other testimonies to qualify (e.g., verify, contradict, etc.) this version?

2. What other conditions influence how we read these sources (e.g., additional historical contexts, the acknowledged absence of information, etc.)?

3. Document your reasoning and analysis (500 words) and post to the Wiki page for this assignment.

4. Using Hartman as your model, imagine your version of events (500 words) and post to the Wiki page for this assignment.

ASSIGNMENT 3: REPRESENTING WEST INDIANS IN THE PANAMA CANAL Zone [Due 24/27 September]
This assignment examines how literary texts transform the historical record.

1. Choose 1 scene from Susan Proudleigh that represents a specific historical event e.g., reasons for migrating to Panama, passage to Panama, encounters with Americans, living conditions, industrial accidents, etc.).

2. Choose 2 related historical sources.

Final project due 13 December
3. How are the West Indian characters represented (e.g., body, race, color, class, gender, skills, profession, and an individual's reasons for migration, etc.)?
   - In the novel?
   - In the 2 historical sources?
   - For each, examine what the author includes and excludes.

4. What do these selections and interpretive choices tell you (500-750 words)?

Suggested sources listed in assignment page in PBworks

ASSIGNMENT 4: WORKING WITH NEWSPAPERS (Due 1 October)

This assignment allows you to think about how newspapers create historical meaning. You may focus on any aspect of Panama or Asian migration for this assignment.

- Browse the newspapers assigned for your campus.
- Select a news item related to the migrants.
- Read the entire issue of the newspaper in which the article appears.
- What kind of items does this newspaper carry (e.g. ads, editorials, letters, news, literary pieces, cartoons)?
- What can you tell about the newspaper's readership and political orientation?

Write (500-750 words) for the Wiki characterizing the newspaper, and post to the Wiki page for this assignment.

ASSIGNMENT 5: VISUALIZING THE ARCHIVES  (Due 8 October)

This assignment asks you to examine how photography historically has constructed the raced subject.

- Choose 1 image from the photo gallery. LINK
- Examine the photo and consider the following:
  - Note the gender of the subjects; their position vis-à-vis, machines, animals, vegetation, buildings or other racial subjects.
  - What do you know about the photographer or what do you imagine he/she was like?
  - Is the photograph dated?
  - Is there a caption?
  - What do these selections and interpretive choices tell you?
Write (500-750 words) on the provenance of the photograph and the way it constructs its subject. Paste the photo from the photo gallery into your Wiki entry.

ASSIGNMENT 6: LISTENING IN THE ARCHIVES. (Due October 22)

This assignment introduces students to oral histories, memoirs, and personal accounts.

- Choose 1 oral account or memoir.
- Who is speaking?
- How do they characterize their relationship to the event they describe?
- What do these narrative choices tell you

Relate (500-750 words) your observations to some aspect of a text you've read so far in the course.

ASSIGNMENT 7: COLLABORATIVE GUIDES ANDANNOTATIONS (Due 12 November)

This assignment teaches you basic skills in digital archiving, and helps you understand how the digital archive constructs knowledge.

- Choose 1 primary source relevant to your final project from dLOC.
- Consider what's included and what's missing in the citation (the citation includes the record information or metadata).

For example:
See citations for any items by Herbert G. de Lisser, ethnically Jewish and was editor of The Gleaner for nearly 40 years, but there is nothing in the citation to make that known. Letters from the Isthmian Canal Construction Workers, which does not exist in any known online library catalog and is only listed in the bibliography of Rhonda Frederick's Colón Man a Come.

In the source you selected, what additional information do you think should be included to make the source more useful for scholars?

Complete the form for your selected item, and post to the Wiki.

ASSIGNMENT 8: BUILDING A COLLABORATIVE DIGITAL PROJECT

This assignment demonstrates how Caribbean Literature engages the archives. This will be a Digital Humanities project (a project for the humanities in the digital age).

You may work individually or in a group.

For this assignment, you should create a digital project to explicate how Caribbean Literature engages the archives. This digital project should use dLOC, along with any other technologies as appropriate and dictated by the academic intent, to make a contribution to scholarly conversations.

For example, your response could be thematic, theoretical, and/or it can use any combination of sources, media, and technologies.
Your assignment should draw on any of the assignments created for this course. Please remember to cite all sources properly including your classmates.

Components:
Part 1: Write a proposal for your project (250 words) which includes: a title, tentative thesis, and list of sources. (Due November 26)
Part 2: Review and select an appropriate technology for delivering the project. Write a proposal explaining how the selected technology supports the project. (Due 6 December)
Part 3: Design and deliver a digital project. (Due 13 December)

Possible examples:
- [Wendy Ewald class work from 2012](#)
- [Diaries of a Prolific Professor](#)
- [Journal created from class papers](#) (example with Haitian Creole)
- [TimelineJS](#) (simple example, for use with larger projects)
- Teaching materials
- Online exhibits
- [About Face](#)
- [Online exhibits by the University of Miami](#)
- [Online exhibits by the University of Florida](#)
- Digital scholarship projects
- [As far as the eye/I can see: Caribbean Art & Visual Culture](#)
- [Slave Resistance: A Caribbean Story](#)