

**English 6488**  
**Literature, Language, and Culture of the English-Speaking Caribbean**

Semester II, 2017 - 2018  
Thursdays, 5:30 – 8:50

Lowell Fiet  
[lowellfiet@icloud.com](mailto:lowellfiet@icloud.com)  
(787) 568-3020

The course explores varying notions of the Caribbean and Caribbean identity, including the languages spoken and scribal and non-scribal forms of creative expression. The “English-Speaking Caribbean,” does such a space exist in any except ideological or mythical terms? Can “the Caribbean” be defined in geographical, geopolitical, economic, social, and especially cultural terms? What needs to be examined –languages, literatures, cultural performances, music, dance, film—to begin to shape an idea of the Caribbean as an area of study and transcultural beliefs and practices? The goal sought is what Gordon K. Lewis termed “the making of a Caribbeanist,” creating the skills and conditions necessary for the pursuit of serious academic analysis of Caribbean literature(s), language(s), and culture(s).

Readings:

**Literature**

*The Harder They Come* (Film)  
Simone Schwarz-Bart, *My Handsome Captain* (Play)  
Edgar Mittelholzer, *A Morning at the Office* (Novel)  
Trevor Rhone, *Two Can Play* (Play)  
Derek Walcott, *Dream on Monkey Mountain* (Play)  
*Dancehall Queen* (Film)  
Earl Lovelace, *The Wine of Astonishment* (Novel)  
Edwidge Danticat, *The Farming of Bones* (Novel)  
Selections of poems by a range of Caribbean poets, including  
Louise Bennett, Martin Carter, Kamau Brathwaite, Derek Walcott,  
and Lorna Goodison

**Language**

Peter A. Roberts, *West Indians and Their Language* (selections).  
Mervyn Alleyne, “A Linguistic Perspective on the Caribbean” (in Mintz and Price, *Caribbean Contours*)  
- - -, *The Roots of Jamaican Culture* (selections).  
E. Kamau Brathwaite. *History of the Voice*.  
Maureen Warner Lewis, “The African Impact on Language and Literature in the English-Speaking Caribbean” (in *Africa and the Caribbean*).  
Selections from *Sargasso* (II, 2011-12): *Language Policy*.

**Culture**

*Jab: The Blue Devils of Paramin* (film).  
Sidney W. Mintz, *Three Ancient Colonies: Caribbean Themes and Variations*.  
Terry Eagleton, *The Idea of Culture* (selections).  
Roberto Fernández Retamar, *Caliban: Notes on the Culture of Our America* (selections).  
*Song of Redemption* and *Art Connect* (films)  
Antonio Benítez Rojo, *The Repeating Island* (selections).  
Joseph Roach, *Cities of the Dead* (selections).

Richard D. E. Burton, *Afro-Creole: Power, Opposition, and Play in the Caribbean* (selections).

(Nearly all texts will be available in digital versions or through the Richardson Seminar Room.)  
**Books to buy:** Mintz: *Three Ancient Colonies*, Lovelace, *The Wine of Astonishment*, and Danticat, *The Farming of Bones*.

Changes and substitutions may be necessary during the course.

**Course requirements:**

- (1) Attendance and participation. The course will be handled as an interactive seminar and much of the discussion will be student generated. You must be present to give reports, participate in discussions and forums, see films, and listen to reports and lectures. (25%)
- (2) There are no examinations but each student will submit at least two (2) written analyses of works read (25%)  
and give two (2) oral reports as part of student forums (25%).
- (3) There will also be a final written project (and an oral presentation of it). This will be defined as the class progresses. (25%)

Grading system: A, B, C, D, F; Incompletes are discouraged and require consultation with the professor.

**ATENCIÓN:**

*De ser necesario, se realizará evaluación diferenciada a estudiantes necesidades especiales.*

*Las y los estudiantes que reciban servicios de Rehabilitación Vocacional deben comunicarse con el/la profesor/a al inicio del semestre para planificar al acomodo razonable y equipo asistivo necesario conforme a las recomendaciones de la Oficina de Asuntos para las Personas con Impedimento (OAPI) del Decanato de Estudiantes. También aquellos/as estudiantes con necesidades especiales que requieren algún tipo de asistencia o acomodo deben comunicarse con el/la profesor/a.*

Program: INGL 6488, Semester I, 2016-2017 (**The order of readings can change depending on conditions during the semester.**)

Week 1: Course Introduction; texts, requirements, basic premises and assignments  
*Jab* (documentary film)

Week 2: Simone Schwarz-Bart, *Your Handsome Captain* (play)  
Antonio Benitez Rojo, *The Repeating Island* (Chap. I)  
Roberto Fernández Retamar, *Caliban*

Week 3: Trevor Rhone, *Two Can Play* (written reflection --one page-- on the intersections of gender, e/im/migrations, economic inequality, and/or race  
J. Edward Chamberlin, *If This is Your Land Where are Your Stories: Finding Common Ground* (selections)

Week 4: Mervyn Alleyne, "A Linguistic Perspective on the Caribbean" (in Mintz and Price, *Caribbean Contours*)

Mervyn Alleynes, *Roots of Jamaican Culture*

Peter A. Roberts, *West Indians and Their Language* (selections).

Kamau Brathwaite, *History of the Voice*

Maureen Warner-Lewis, "The African Impact on Language and Literature in the English-speaking Caribbean"

Week 5: Edgar Mittelholzer, *A Morning at the Office* (novel)

Derek Walcott, *Dream on Monkey Mountain* (play)

Elizabeth Cooper, "The Conundrum of Race: Rethinking Inequality" (in Palmié and Scarano. *The Caribbean: A History of the Region and Its People*)

H. Hoetink, "'Race' and Color in the Caribbean" (in Mintz and Price, *Caribbean Contours*)

Week 6: Culture; Cultural Resistance; Cultural Survival

Eagleton, *The Idea of Culture* (selection)

Ehrenreich, *Dancing in the Streets* (selection)

Burton, *Afro-Creole* (selection)

Joseph Roach, *Cities of the Dead: Circum-Atlantic Performance* (selection)

Week 7: Earl Lovelace, *The Wine of Astonishment* (novel)

Edwidge Danticat, *The Farming of Bones* (novel)

Week 8: Sidney W. Mintz, *Three Ancient Colonies* (Position Papers)

Week 9: Selections from *Sargasso* (II, 2011-12): *Language Rights and Language Policy*.

Selections from *Sargasso* (I, 2008-09): *Linguistic*

*Explorations of Gender and Sexuality*

Guest lecture in Linguistics; "Field work in Anguilla"

Week 10: *The Harder They Come* (film); *Dance Hall Queen* (film)

Week 11: Caribbean Cultural Marathon (topics to be announced)

Week 12: Caribbean Cultural Marathon (continued)

Abstracts of Final projects

12 June:              Final Projects Due

**A Bibliography will be sent with the electronic version.**

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