

The Other Atlantic HIST386W/486 AAAS 352 Spring 2024

Prof. Pablo Miguel Sierra Silva
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Class Time: Mondays 2:00-4:40 pm, Rush Rhees 305
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 12:00-2:00 pm

Overview

What is Atlantic History? Who are its protagonists? Are there boundaries to a field of study that is supposed to encompass an ocean and three continents? How are we to responsibly study the Atlantic world, its people, languages, beliefs, and practices?

This seminar explores key concepts such as “Atlantic creoles,” the “Black Atlantic” and the “Iberian Atlantic” in light of recent studies on Lusophone merchants, African healers, Native American sailors and pirates of all backgrounds. A focus on unconventional figures will open new perspectives on the construction of difference and power in the Atlantic setting. By decentering historical narratives focused on the nation-state (Mexico, Brazil, U.S., Haiti, Angola, etc.) or empire (English colonies, French Antilles, Spanish America, etc.) this course invites us to analyze cultural and material exchanges, ideological commonalities and differences that emerged across and (often in spite of) imperial ambitions. The circulation of trade items, foods and luxury goods (e.g., chocolate and pearls) will inform our understanding of this expansive, contested region between 1500 and 1800. As a reading- and writing-intensive course, this seminar is recommended for advanced undergraduates and graduate students. All participants in the course will develop an extensive research paper on a topic of their choice throughout the semester. This paper will be revised and resubmitted during the second half of the semester. This course fulfills the “W” requirement for the History major, along with the pre-1800 focus.

The course is divided into five thematic units. The first is an introductory exploration of the theories and frameworks that historians have devised to define Atlantic history. The second unit addresses how Native Americans devised specific social, political and commercial networks to engage Europeans and Africans from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries. A similar chronology will inform the third unit for the course, although this we will focus on questions that inform our understanding of Black diasporic histories in the Caribbean and coastal Americas. The fourth unit will focus on the notion of the Christian Atlantic and what such a concept could possibly mean in the midst of imperial competition and coercive regimes. The fifth unit is centered on your research and the revision process.

Seminar Expectations and Weekly Preparation

You are expected to read one monograph per week or the equivalent of three scholarly articles. Your participation grade for the semester hinges on completing and analyzing these readings. I urge you to NOT accept what you read, but to critique, question, and challenge each text on the strength of its evidence. The success of this course depends on your preparation *before each session* along with your active participation in class.

- 1) Write questions and critiques as you read the assigned material.
- 2) Keep note of the specific pages you want to highlight in discussion. If you have purchased the book, write in the margins (that's what they're for!).
- 3) I expect you to engage in meaningful dialogue throughout the class. Silent participation is very difficult to evaluate in a seminar setting.
- 4) All written assignments for the semester are due by the start of class (2 pm) on Mondays. This is by design and will allow me to provide you feedback in timely fashion. Late papers will be penalized, so please abide by the deadlines.



Ainsy se fait vor le Petit Gouave... Partenay Fecit, 1688. Bibliothèque nationale de France (BNF), accessed via Gallica portal.

Discussion Leaders

Graduate students enrolled in HIST 486 are required to lead two discussion sections during the course of the semester. Undergraduate students will lead one class discussion. This will require you to prepare questions, critiques, and points for discussion. To preface each discussion, discuss the author's trajectory. Do your best to situate the author's study in relation to their trajectory.

- Where did the authors study, who served as their doctoral advisors? Influences?
- Are they associated with a particular school of thought? Embroiled in debates?
- What else have they published, prior to or after the current reading?
- Have they announced their current or future research interests?

Required Books

Clark, Joseph M. H. *Veracruz and the Caribbean in the Seventeenth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022.

- available as an e-book on UofR library website

De Alencastro, Luiz Felipe. *The Trade in the Living: The Formation of Brazil in the South Atlantic, Sixteenth to Seventeenth Centuries*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2018.

Dubcovsky, Alejandra. *Informed Power: Communication in the Early American South*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016.

Fuentes, Marisa. *Dispossessed Lives: Enslaved Women, Violence and the Archive*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016.

Gómez, Pablo F. *The Experiential Caribbean: Creating Knowledge and Healing in the Early Modern Atlantic*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017.

Jarvis, Michael. *Isle of Devils, Isle of Saints: An Atlantic History of Bermuda, 1609-1684*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2022.

- available as an e-book on UofR library website

Lingna Nafafé, José. *Lourenço da Silva Mendonça and the Black Atlantic Abolitionist Movement in the Nineteenth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022.

- available as an e-book on UofR library website

Metcalf, Alida C. *Go-Betweens and the Colonization of Brazil, 1500-1600*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005.

- available as an e-book on UofR library website

van Deusen, Nancy. *Global Indios: The Indigenous Struggle for Justice in Sixteenth-Century Spain*. Durham, Duke University Press, 2015.

- available as an e-book on UofR library website

Kelly Family Book Fund

This fund was established to provide support for history course materials for students in need who are pursuing an undergraduate or graduate degree in history. All undergraduate students taking a history course may apply; preference will be given to those who are majoring in history. All graduate students in a History Department MA or PhD program may apply. To apply for these funds using this link, <https://forms.gle/c2WArDa5g696oKeU6>. Following review of your application, History department staff will contact you to let you know if we are able to assist.

Course Policies

In accordance with the College credit hour policy, which awards 4 credit hours for courses that meet for the equivalent of 3 periods of 50 minutes each week, students are expected to devote at least one hour each week identifying the main lines or argument in course readings, working alone or in groups. In this particular course this might require attending lectures, film screenings or other academic events related to the seminar.

The University of Rochester respects and welcomes students of all backgrounds and abilities. In the event you encounter any barrier(s) to full participation in this course due to the impact of disability, please contact the Office of Disability Resources. The access coordinators in the Office of Disability Resources can meet with you to discuss the barriers you are experiencing and explain the eligibility process for establishing academic accommodations. You can reach the Office of Disability Resources at: disability@rochester.edu; (585) 276-5075; Taylor Hall.

This is a DACA/Undocu-friendly course. The UofR and I are committed to full inclusion in education for all persons. Services and reasonable accommodations are available to students with temporary and permanent disabilities, to students with DACA or undocumented status, to students facing mental health issues, other personal situations, and to students with other kinds of learning needs. Please feel free to let me know if there are circumstances affecting your ability to participate in class or if I can connect you to University resources. For more information see the Burgett Intercultural Center's page: <https://www.rochester.edu/college/bic/support-inclusion/international-students.html#Undocumented>

Academic Honesty

The AS&E Academic Honesty Policy, in parallel to the College Statement of Communal Principles, recognizes our shared obligation to promote honesty and the related principles of respect and responsibility among all members of our institution. It establishes high standards of academic conduct, and requires that each individual meet those standards. All members of the College community further understand that adherence to our shared expectations for integrity requires not only clear communication about those expectations, but the individual and collective courage to uphold them.

As a writing-intensive seminar, there are no midterm or final examinations in this course. However, in your writing assignments you must be especially diligent in crediting the works, thoughts and concepts of other scholars. Avoid the risk of plagiarism in written work or oral presentations by clearly indicating the source of any idea or wording that they did not produce, either in footnotes or in the paper or presentation itself, and in a list of references (e.g., bibliography or works cited page). Sources must be given regardless of whether the idea, phrase or other material is quoted directly, paraphrased or summarized in the student-writer's own words. Direct quotes must always be placed in quotation marks in addition to the other citation information that is required. If ever in doubt, please see AS&E's full Academic Honesty Policy: <https://www.rochester.edu/college/honesty/policy.html>

Course Components for Spring 2024

Book Review (15%)

During the first half of the semester you will write a six-page or eight-page book review, double-spaced, on the three selections for Week 3, 4, and 5 readings. This is not to be a summary of these titles. Your task is to put the three books in conversation with one another and evaluate their arguments comparatively. I will provide a sample review for you to consider.

Abstract and Annotated Outline (15%)

The annotated outline is a crucial element of the course and the foundation for your research paper. *This is a 4-page, single-spaced, assignment.* The objective of the annotated outline is to help you locate and organize primary and secondary sources for your research paper. As you identify potential sources, keep in mind what type of evidence you need to defend your thesis statement. Some of you will require more primary sources to produce a satisfactory paper. For this assignment, you are required to include your tentative title and a 250-word abstract that precedes the annotated outline. Make sure you to clearly explain your argument (with the understanding that it is tentative and will change). The annotated outline should offer a preview of how you will construct your research paper.

Research Paper (50%)

Throughout the semester, you will produce an extensive research paper on a topic of your choice. Prior to committing to a specific topic we will have individual meetings to discuss the viability of your project. Students enrolled in HIST 386W or AAAS 352 will complete a 6,000 to 6,500 word-paper (approximately 20 pages, double-spaced). Graduate students in HIST 486 will produce a 7,500 word-paper (roughly 25 double-spaced pages). Although not required, you are more than encouraged to use your foreign language abilities (Portuguese, French, Spanish, Dutch, etc.) to advance your project. This research process will likely require requesting InterLibrary Loan materials well ahead of time, so be sure to begin this process early on. The writing of the research component will be divided into two phases sections (a full first version of the paper and a revised version of the paper).

- first version of research paper 20%
- final version of research paper 30%

Participation and Attendance (20%)

Participation and attendance are crucial elements of this seminar and are worth 20% of your final grade. This requires coming to class prepared with notes on the assigned text(s) of the week and contributing comments, criticisms and questions. Unexcused absences will lower your attendance grade by 10%. In the event of any absence – excused or unexcused – please notify me in order to adjust class discussion and other activities accordingly. Graduate students enrolled in HIST 486 are required to lead two discussion sections. Undergraduate students will lead one class discussion. This will require you to prepare questions, critiques, and points for discussion.

Course Schedule

Readings marked with an asterisk * have been posted to Course Material on Blackboard
Readings marked with (LW) are available on the UofR library website

PART I – Atlantic Theories

Week 1 – Jan. 22 *Choose three of the four listed below, come ready to discuss:*

Ira Berlin, “From Creole to African: Atlantic Creoles and the Origins of African-American Society in Mainland North America,” *William & Mary Quarterly* 53, no. 2 (Apr. 1996): 251-288 *

Amy Bushnell Turner, “Indigenous America and the Limits of the Atlantic World,” in *Atlantic History: A Critical Appraisal*, 191-221 *

Francisco Bethencourt, “The Iberian Atlantic: Ties, Networks and Boundaries,” in *Theorising the Iberian Atlantic*, 15-36 *

Toby Green, “Beyond an Imperial Atlantic: Trajectories of Africans from Upper Guinea and West Central Africa in the Early Atlantic World” *Past and Present*, no. 230 (Feb. 2016): 91-122 *

PART II – Native American Networks

Week 2 – Jan. 29 Van Deusen, *Global Indios*

Week 3 – Feb. 5 Metcalf, *Go-Betweens*

Week 4 – Feb. 19 Dubcovsky, *Informed Power*

Week 5 – Feb. 26 Review and Research week

Book review on Weeks 2-4 titles – due Monday, February 26 by 2pm

- 6 pages (double-spaced) for HIST 386W/AAAS 352
- 8 pages (double-spaced) for HIST 486

Two potential paper topics – due Friday, March 1 by 2pm

- each topic should be 250 words (500 words total)
- two scholarly articles and one primary source related to each topic

PART III – Black Atlantic Queries

Week 6 – Mar. 4 De Alencastro, *Trade in the Living*

Week 7 – Mar. 11 Spring Break (no session)

Week 8 – Mar. 18 Clark, *Veracruz and the Caribbean*

Abstract and annotated bibliography – due Friday, March 22 by 2pm

- 4-pages, single-spaced

Week 9 – Mar. 25 Gómez, *Experiential Caribbean*

Week 10 – Apr. 1 Fuentes, *Dispossessed Lives*

PART IV – The Contested Christian Atlantic

Week 11 – Apr. 8 Readings for a total eclipse!

Barbara Mundy, *Mapping New Spain*, Chapter 2, 11-27 *

Chimalpahin, *Annals of his Time*, “The 1611 Mexico City eclipse,” 174-193 *

Alexander von Humbolt, *Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain*, xxi-xxxiv*

First version of research paper due Friday, April 13 by 2pm
6000 to 6500 words (20 pages approx.) for HIST 386W and AAAS 352 students
7500 to 8000 words (25 pages approx.) for HIST 486 students

Week 12 – Apr. 15

Sue Peabody, “‘A Dangerous Zeal’: Catholic Missions to Slaves in the French Caribbean, 1635–1800,” *French Historical Studies* 25:1 (January 2002): 58–76 *

Linda Rupert, “Seeking the Water of Baptism: Fugitive Slaves and Imperial Jurisdiction in the Early Modern Caribbean,” in *Legal Pluralisms and Empires* (2013), pp. 199-231. *

Fernando Rodrigues Montes D’Oca, “Two Capuchin friars in defense of African slaves’ liberty: Francisco Jose de Jaca and Epifanio de Moirans,” *Patristica et Mediaevalia*, 36 (2015): 91–108. *

Week 13 – Apr. 22 Lingna Nafafé, *Lourenço da Silva Mendonça and the Black Atlantic...*

Week 14 – Apr. 29 Jarvis, *Isle of Devils, Isle of Saints*

PART V – Research & Revision

- *Final revision of research paper due Monday, May 6 by 2 pm or before*
- **6000 to 6500 words (20 pages approx.) for HIST 386W and AAAS 352 students**
- **7500 to 8000 words (25 pages approx.) for HIST 486 students**
- send as Word document or PDF to pablo.sierra@rochester.edu
- links to Google Docs will not be accepted

Additional Suggested Readings and Research Resources

Bassi, Ernesto. *An Aqueous Territory: Sailor Geographies and New Granada's Transimperial Greater Caribbean World*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2016.

Boxer, C.R. *Women in Iberian Expansion Overseas, 1415-1815*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975.

Braun, Harald E. and Lisa Vollendorf, eds. *Theorizing the Ibero-American Atlantic*. Brill: Leiden, 2013.

Brooks, George. *Eurafricans in Western Africa: Commerce, Social Status, Gender, and Religious Observance from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century*. Ohio University Press, 2003.

Cañisares-Esguerra, Jorge. *Nature, Empire, and Nation: Explorations of the History of Science in the Iberian World*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006.

Cardim, Pedro, ed. *Polycentric Monarchies: How did Early Modern Spain and Portugal Achieve and Maintain a Global Hegemony?* Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2012.

Cromwell, Jesse. *The Smuggler's World: Illicit Trade and Atlantic Communities in Eighteenth-Century Venezuela*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2018.

Crosby, Alfred W. *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492*. Westport: Praeger, 2003.

Daniels, Christine, Michael V. Kennedy, Jack P. Greene, and Amy Turner Bushnell, eds. *Negotiated Empires: Centers and Peripheries in the Americas, 1500-1820*. New York: Routledge, 2002.

Diffie, Bailey W. and George D. Winius. *Foundations of the Portuguese Empire, 1415-1580*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977.

Fernández-Armesto, Felipe. *The Canary Islands After the Conquest: The Making of a Colonial Society in the Early Sixteenth Century*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982.

Ferreira, Roquinaldo. *Cross-Cultural Exchange in the Atlantic World: Angola and Brazil during the Era of the Slave Trade*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Fromont, Cécile. *The Art of Conversion: Christian Visual Culture in the Kingdom of Kongo*. Williamsburg: Omohundro Institute, 2014.

Furtado, Júnia Ferreira. "Lives on the Seas: Women's Trajectories in Port Cities of the Portuguese Overseas Empire," in *Women in Port*, 251-286.

Gómez, Pablo F. "The Circulation of Bodily Knowledge in the Seventeenth-Century Black Spanish Caribbean," *Social History of Medicine* 26, No. 3: 383-402.

Herzog, Tamar. *Frontiers of Possession: Spain and Portugal in Europe and the Americas*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015.

Heywood, Linda. *Njinga of Angola: Africa's Warrior Queen*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2017.

Maxwell, Kenneth. *Conflicts & Conspiracies: Brazil and Portugal, 1750-1808*. New York: Routledge, 2004.

McAlister, Lyle N. *Spain and Portugal in the New World, 1492-1700*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984.

Megged, Amos and Stephanie Wood. *Mesoamerican Memory: Enduring Systems of Remembrance*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012.

Monteiro, John. *Blacks of the Land: Indian Slavery, Settler Society and the Portuguese Colonial Enterprise in South America*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018.

Navarrete Peláez, María Cristina. "Las nodrizas afrodescendientes en el Nuevo Reino de Granada siglo XVII: valor cultural y científico." *Historia y Espacio* 16, No. 54 (2020): 27-46.

Newitt, M. D. D. *A History of Portuguese Overseas Expansion, 1400-1668*. London: New York, 2004.

Palmer, Jennifer. *Intimate Bonds: Family and Slavery in the French Atlantic*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2016.

Parma Cook, Alexandra. "The Women of Early Modern Triana: Life, Death, and Survival in Seville's Maritime District" in *Women in Port: Gendering Communities, Economies, and Social Networks in Atlantic Port Cities* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), ed. by Douglas Catterall and Jody Campbell, 41-68.

Ribeiro Da Silva, Filipa. *Dutch and Portuguese in Western Africa: Empires, Merchants and the Atlantic System, 1580-1674*. Leiden: Brill, 2011.

Ruette-Orihuela, Krisna and Cristina Soriano, "Remembering the Slave Rebellion of Coro: Historical Memory and Politics in Venezuela," *Ethnohistory* 63, No. 2 (April 2016): 327-349.

Schorsch, Jonathan. *Swimming the Christian Atlantic: Judeoconvertos, Afroiberians and Amerindians in the Seventeenth Century*. Leiden: Brill, 2009.

Scott, Julius. *The Common Wind: Afro-American Currents in the Age of the Haitian Revolution*. New York: Verso Books, 2018.

Seed, Patricia. *Ceremonies of Possession in Europe's Conquest of the New World, 1492-1640*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Soriano, Cristina. *Tides of Revolution: Information, Insurgencies and the Crisis of Rule in Colonial Venezuela*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2018.

Studnicki-Gizbert, A. *A Nation Upon the Sea: Portugal's Atlantic Diaspora and the Crisis of the Spanish Empire, 1492-1640*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Sweet, James H. *Domingos Álvares, African Healing, and the Intellectual History of the Atlantic World*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011.

van Groesen, Michiel. *Amsterdam's Atlantic: Print Culture and the Making of the Dutch Atlantic*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017.

Vollendorf, Lisa. "Navigating the Atlantic Divide: Women, Education, and Literacy in Iberia and the Americas," in *Women of the Iberian Atlantic*, 18-36.

Walker, Timothy D. "The Role and Practices of the Female Folk Healer in the Early Modern Portuguese Atlantic World," in *Women of the Iberian Atlantic* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana University Press, 2012), edited by Sarah E. Owens and Jane E. Mangan, 148-173.

Warsh, Molly. *American Baroque: Pearls and the Nature of Empire, 1492-1700*. Williamsburg: Omohundro Institute, 2018.