

ISLAND LITERATURE

Universidade dos Açores/FLAD-SiPN
June 2018
M-R 9:30-11:50AM
Room TBD

Prof. Vincent Barletta
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Office: TBD
Office Hours: TBD

Course Description

Focus is on the Azores in dialogue with other island cultures, such as Cabo Verde, Cuba, Haiti, Mauritius, and Tahiti. Students will work to theorize the particularity of islands (real and imagined) as a locus for literary/cultural production. Why are islands so good to think with? What sorts of subjectivities take form on islands? What is the impact of colonialism, post-colonialism, and globalization? Through close readings of primary and secondary texts, class excursions, and guest lectures, students will gain a more historicized and theoretically grounded understanding of Azorean culture while developing the tools to situate the Azores within a broader framework of human experience and expression.

Learning Goals

- Students will be able to apply critical terms and methodology in completing a literary analysis following the conventions of standard written English.
- Students will be able to locate, apply, and cite effective secondary materials in their own texts.
- Students will be able to analyze and interpret texts within the contexts they are written.
- Students will be able to communicate both orally and in writing about texts in different genres and styles in a clear and articulate manner.

Required Texts

1. Defoe, Daniel. *Robinson Crusoe*. 2003 [1719]. ISBN: 978-0141439822.
2. Devi, Ananda. *Eve Out of Her Ruins*. 2016 [2006]. ISBN: 978-1941920404
3. Díaz, Junot. *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*. 2008. ISBN: 978-1594483295.
4. Melo, João de. *My World is Not of This Kingdom*. 2003 [1983]. ISBN: 978-0970765246.
5. Spitz, Chantal T. *Island of Shattered Dreams*. 2007 [1991]. ISBN: 978-1869692995.
6. Walcott, Derek. *Omeros*. 1992. ISBN: 978-0374523503.
7. All other readings will be made available by the instructor.

Course Requirements

- Attendance (5%): Students may miss one class meeting for any reason whatsoever. After this, each additional absence (regardless of the reason) will cost 1% of the attendance grade (e.g., a student with three absences will receive 4% for attendance).
- Reading (15%): Students must come to class having read the material assigned for that day. Each day, students will be responsible for demonstrating—through discussion or in-class assignments—that they have read the assigned material.

- Reader's Journal (10%): Each student is responsible for posting twice per week to the course blog. These posts should be exploratory and reflect an honest engagement with the material, our discussions, and the question of "island literature."
- Midterm Exam (30%): Before the excursion to Velas, the professor will distribute two exam questions. Students will have the weekend to answer each question in no more than 1500 words (a total of 3000 words maximum) and submit it to the professor.
- Final Essay (40%): This must be no more than 4000 words in length. In consultation with the instructor, students will write an essay that develops some aspect/theme from class readings and/or discussion. The goal of this exercise is both to use the concept of "island literature" to examine a literary work (or group of works) while also using close literary analysis to develop a richer sense of what "island literature" can mean.

Course Calendar

Week 1	M Jun 4	Course introduction; Homer: <i>Odyssey</i> (selections)
	T Jun 5	Bacon: <i>New Atlantis</i> (selections); Hogan: "Of Islands and Bridges"
	W Jun 6	Walcott: <i>Omeros</i> (part 1); Van Sickle: "The Design of Derek Walcott's <i>Omeros</i> ."
	R Jun 7	Walcott: <i>Omeros</i> (part 2)
Week 2	M Jun 11	Shakespeare: <i>The Tempest</i> ; Sarnecki: "Mastering the Masters"
	T Jun 12	Camões: <i>Os Lusíadas</i> (selection); Klein: "Camões and the Sea"
	W Jun 13	Melo: <i>My World is Not of This Kingdom</i> ; Patrick: "The Past as Bad Dream"
	R Jun 14	Melo: <i>My World is Not of This Kingdom</i>
	Jun 15-17	Excursion to Velas, São Jorge; Melo: <i>My World is Not of This Kingdom</i> ; Submit midterm exam by June 17 at 11:59pm
Week 3	M Jun 18	Defoe: <i>Robinson Crusoe</i> ; Festa: "Crusoe's Island of Misfit Things"
	T Jun 19	Defoe: <i>Robinson Crusoe</i>
	W Jun 20	Spitz: <i>Island of Shattered Dreams</i> ; DeSouza: "Francophone Island Cultures"
	R Jun 21	Spitz: <i>Island of Shattered Dreams</i>
Week 4	M Jun 25	Devi: <i>Eve Out of Her Ruins</i>
	T Jun 26	Devi: <i>Eve Out of Her Ruins</i> ; Damlé: "Becoming Otherwise"
	W Jun 27	Díaz: <i>The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao</i>
	R Jun 28	Díaz: <i>The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao</i> ; Saldívar: "Conjectures on Americanness"
	Jun 30	Deadline to submit final exam (by 11:59pm)