
ANTH 07

First Year Writing Seminar: HAITI AND ITS VISITORS

Winter 19 9L MWF 8:50-9:55am
x-hour: Th 9:05-9:55
Rockefeller 209

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“For eighty years Haiti has been judged,” wrote Louis-Joseph Janvier in 1883. His 600-page treatise, *Haiti and Its Visitors*, denounced how outsiders had misunderstood his native country. Today, Haiti still conjures a string of erroneous stereotypes, some celebratory, others derogatory: First Black Republic; Black Baghdad; Pearl of the Antilles; Poorest Country in the Western Hemisphere; Avengers of the New World; Cursed Nation. This course considers how people, near and far, past and present, have imagined, represented, and judged Haiti. Through engagement with the writing of travelers, politicians, journalists, and anthropologists, we explore the meaning Haiti holds in the minds of Haitians, members of the Haitian diaspora, and foreigners who have visited, studied, and reported about the country. Special attention will be paid to the politics of representation at work in these divergent accounts of Haiti. We will consider how social hierarchies—concerning race, class, gender, and nation, among others— influence how people represent and apprehend Haiti as a place in the world. We will use the tools of ethnography—structured observation, interviews, and reflective writing—to explore how Haiti figures in international tourism, foreign aid, development policy, missionary work, global media, and anthropological scholarship. Our collective discussions and writing will allow us to contemplate and understand the role this Caribbean nation has played in shaping, as well as challenging, commonplace conceptions about race, religion, politics, and philanthropy. Students’ final writing projects involve producing, in teams of two, their own podcasts.

Course Learning Goals

In this course, we will work to accomplish two core goals. The first is to strengthen your writing ability—your sense of structure, argument, voice, and style—and to, in turn, help you feel more integrated in the scholarly community at Dartmouth. In addition to the writing assignments, you will also write in class as part of an ongoing writing workshop. The aim of the in-class writing is not to create finished products but to generate creative inspiration and critical thinking about the class material and assignments. You will have opportunities to practice different forms of writing, including ethnographic vignettes, peer reviews, interview write-ups, object description,

personal essays, podcast production, and research-driven papers. By the end of the class, you should feel more confident in your ability to express your thoughts in writing, including in different genres, for different audiences, and with various forms of ethnographic evidence. You should also feel more comfortable to engage in structured, critical, and creative debates with your peers—in writing and orally. Please also review the specific course outcomes for First Year Seminars: <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~writing/first-yearseminaroutcomes.html>

The second core goal is to pique your interest in the discipline of anthropology and in Haiti as a “place-in-the-world.” Since all writing is about something, you will also learn, through this process, something about our shared topic: Haiti and its representations. In so doing, you will also extend some core anthropological analyses of power, identity, and difference. This includes being able to: (i) thoughtfully and systematically consider how power relations between countries and people structure international relations and intercultural perceptions and relationships; (ii) historically and analytically trace how the work of representing Haiti in particular ways has impacted understandings of racial, gendered, economic, religious, and political difference; (iii) express in your own words some key questions and techniques that cultural anthropologists use to explore intercultural understanding; and (iv) be aware of your own position in the world and be able to reflect on how this impacts your relations with others.

Course Texts

- *Brother, I'm Dying*, Edwidge Danticat
- *Haiti: Aftershocks of History*, Laurent Dubois
- Select articles, essays, blogposts, podcasts, and films

Expectations, Ethics & Norms

Respect and academic discourse

A core social value in anthropology is *respect*. Acting with respect means honoring the worth of each person and their contributions to the community. In this classroom, you are likely to encounter ideas that you find surprising or even uncomfortable. You should feel free to express yourself; at the same time, you should also feel free to—respectfully—challenge ideas with which you disagree. This means listening and responding to each other with attentiveness, sincerity, and appreciation. It means recognizing that our diverse backgrounds and perspectives broaden our understandings of and abilities to address the social issues that concern us all.

Absences

Daily attendance is imperative. Out of respect for your fellow students and me, I expect you to come to and be prepared for class unless you are sick or have some other legitimate, unexpected circumstance. I will excuse one absence for whatever reason and do not need to be notified for this exception. If you need to miss more than one class for a school-sponsored activity, serious illness, or family emergency, please communicate this with me, so we can develop a plan. Otherwise absences will not be excused. Please note that I *do* use X-Hours – not every week, but

often – and you are expected to attend. *If you miss more than two classes and these absences are unexcused, your participation grade will be lowered by one letter grade at the end of the term.*

Tardiness

You are expected to arrive to class on time and stay for the entire period. Regular occurrences of unexcused tardiness or premature departures will result in your *participation grade being lowered by one letter grade at the end of the term.*

Readings

All books are available for purchase at campus or online bookstores, or to borrow through Baker-Berry Reserve or the Reserves link on our course Canvas site. All articles or other media are available through Baker-Berry Reserves and/or accessible through Canvas. Films and podcasts are available as streamed resources and should be viewed prior to class, unless otherwise noted. (I may also show films, in part or in full, during class times.) All media should be considered “readings.” You will be held accountable for them on assignments.

In order to refer to course readings in class, you are expected to do the readings *before* class on the date that they are assigned. You are expected to bring *hard copies* of the readings—that is, the books and printed articles—unless otherwise indicated by SAS. If the costs of printing documents or purchasing textbooks are prohibitive, please speak with me. Not doing so means you are unprepared for class and you may be marked absent.

Late work

The quarter system is a very fast-paced learning environment. Turning in assignments late creates a cascading problem for both the student, peers who are collaborating on assignments, and me. Unless there is a critical issue, I will deduct one letter grade for each day an assignment is late.

Electronics in the classroom

Students are not permitted to use cellphones or laptops in the class, barring special accommodations from SAS or permission from me. Good data show that taking notes by hand improves learning and retention compared to taking notes on a laptop. Plus, laptops can be distracting. There may be specific classes where laptops will be helpful, and I will inform you of this in advance. If I see you using you an electronic device without permission, I may not say anything, but I will mark you absent for the day.

Communication

My preferred method for communicating with students is *face-to-face*. For involved or personal concerns, please attend *office hours*. Many minor concerns and basic questions can be posed *before or after class*. I will try to be available ten minutes before or after class for this purpose. If speaking face-to-face is not possible, students may also email me, either directly or using the Canvas portal. Please recognize that email is another place to practice respect and to maintain reasonable expectations. I try to reply to emails within 24 hours, excluding weekends, when I will be offline. If you have an urgent issue, please note this in your email subject line and/or drop by my office, and also be in touch with your class dean.

Dartmouth Policies & Resources

Academic Honor

You are reminded that the Academic Honor Principle applies to all work done in and outside of class. Research papers and take-home essays, if applicable, must contain citations to any content obtained from others. For guidelines, see Sources and Citations at Dartmouth: <http://writing-speech.dartmouth.edu/learning/materials/sources-and-citations-dartmouth>.

Student Accessibility & Accommodations

Students with disabilities who may need disability-related academic adjustments and services for this course are encouraged to see me privately as early in the term as possible. Students requiring disability-related academic adjustments and services must consult the Student Accessibility Services office in Carson Hall 125 or by phone: 646-9900 or email: Student.Accessibility.Services@Dartmouth.edu. Once SAS has authorized services, students must show the originally signed SAS Services and Consent Form and/or a letter on SAS letterhead to me. As a first step, if you have questions about whether you qualify to receive academic adjustments and services, you should contact the SAS office. All inquiries and discussions will remain confidential.

Religious Observances

Some students may wish to take part in religious observances that fall during this academic term. Should you have a religious observance that conflicts with your participation in the course, please come speak with me before the end of the second week of term to discuss appropriate accommodations.

Learning Resources

Academic Skills Center (ASC): Open to the entire Dartmouth community, the ASC assists students in achieving their academic goals through tutoring and learning skills trainings.

Research Center for Writing, and Information Technology (RWIT): RWIT is a free service dedicated to helping members of the Dartmouth community develop more effective strategies for generating and organizing their ideas, finding and evaluating research sources, and presenting and revising compositions in a variety of media. We have the special privilege of working with a writing tutor in this course, who will be available to work with you on your papers. More details to come during a class visit by the tutor.

Dartmouth College Library: The Dartmouth College Library provides support through subject area specialization, course materials and reserves, reservable learning spaces, workshops and classes for students, research, scholarly publication, copyright, media, book arts, and more. The Library's Research Guides by subject area and your discipline's subject librarian are sources of specialized help for your course and students.

Bias and Discrimination

There are several avenues at Dartmouth for students to report experiences of bias or discrimination in the classroom or during class-related activities. You can bring your experience and concerns to me or to the chair of the department. Another option is to submit a Bias Impact Report. You can leave your name or remain anonymous on this report. A third option is to report

the incident to the Ethics Hotline, a third-party system that allows people to bring complaints and concerns forward anonymously. If you have concerns about sexual discrimination or misconduct, you are encouraged to contact the Title IX coordinator. For more information and resources on these matters, you should contact the Office of Leadership and Pluralism.

Course Assignments

1. Participation, including in-class writing – 10%

The class will involve significant participation, including discussion, in-class writing, and peer review. I will provide many opportunities for you to participate, including making contributions to discussion, advising your peers, reading aloud your writing, and participating in out-of-class enrichment activities. None of these modes of engagement is mutually exclusive, nor do I expect that each of you will choose to participate in the same ways all the time. However, I believe it is pedagogically important for you to process what you are learning each week, in some relatively low-stakes but structured way.

A key part of your participation will be your commitment to *revising*. I will take time to carefully read and respond to your writing, as will your peers. Whether delivered through class discussions or through written responses on papers, our comments and suggestions for revision are to be taken seriously. That said, writing is a process. In order to provide low-pressure opportunities for feedback, some assignments are ungraded or graded on a check-scale. The feedback provided on these assignments is crucial nonetheless. Your participation will be assessed through my observations and your self-evaluation, and will be assigned on a 100-point scale.

2. Thick Art Description– 15%

This assignment involves a visit to the Hood Museum where we will look at and analyze a selection of works by Haitian artists. You will then write a “thick description” of the artwork (500-750 words), which is a description that not only describes the contents of a thing or act but also offers an interpretation of its sociocultural meaning. Using only words, not images, you will render the object visible to us by detailing its appearance, placing it in a sociocultural context, and opining on its significance as a cultural artifact. This is graded on 100-point scale.

3. Final Essay and Podcast – 75% (broken down into several parts)

This final project asks you to develop an argument in oral and written form related to the themes of the course. Working with a peer, you will create a podcast that elaborates a narrative and analytic argument to questions of interest. You will also individually write a final essay connected in some way to your podcast and other materials encountered through the class.

a. Question Map – 5%

In approximately 500 words, you will generate ideas and ask questions about the theme you hope to explore, and how these relate to the politics of representation. Be sure to include mention of how you will incorporate anthropological concepts in what you create. You are expected to include at least 3 sources (outside of class readings) that you hope to use when exploring this topic and your own identity formation in relation to it. You are also expected to include at least 3 key questions related to this topic to which you don't yet know the answer, but that

you aim to learn about through this assignment. Feedback from this assignment will inform your final project. This is graded on a check scale.

b. Interview Report – 15%

For this assignment, you will interview someone with a significant relationship to Haiti, such as someone who identifies as Haitian or has spent time in Haiti. (I have a list of potential people, although you may also choose someone you know.) The interview will revolve around a set of three questions related to a theme you wish to explore. Potential themes include race, religion, politics, or aid or philanthropy. Following the interview, you will write a field-note report about the interview (about 500 words). The report will, first, explain (not *transcribe*) your questions and the summarize the responses, offering direct quotations as need. (Aim to quote the three most telling passages from the interview.) The second task in the report is to reflect on what you learned from this interview: how it helped you answer your questions, what you found surprising or unexpected, and how it shaped your knowledge and approach to interviewing. Pending permission, you will record the interview for use in the podcast. This is graded on 100-point scale.

c. Seed Paper – 15%

You will write a “seed paper”—a long abstract (1000 words)—that will define the theme and questions you want to address, identify the anthropological discussion(s) that are relevant to it, and engage in some preliminary analysis of your material. This is graded on a check scale. Feedback from this assignment will inform your final project.

d. Peer Review – 5%

You will engage in a peer review of another classmate’s seed paper, which includes offering and responding to feedback. This is graded on a check scale.

e. Podcast – 15%

Working with a peer, you will create a podcast presentation of your final paper that will be “aired” during the final days of class. I will offer various opportunities during class time to learn about podcast storytelling and to connect with educational technology and library experts who can serve as resources for this work. In addition to the podcast, you will also be asked to create a podcast script and to write a reflection of the podcast experience. The podcast is graded on 100-point scale.

f. Final research essay – 20%

The final research essay should be approximately 2500 words. The final essay is due during finals period. This is graded on 100-point scale. More details to follow.

Course Schedule

Readings are listed in the order they should be read. If not one of the required books, the reading will be available on Canvas. Please note that this schedule is provisional by design. I may add, delete, or change readings as the course develops. Please check Canvas for the most up-to-date schedule.

WEEK 1

Introduction to the Course

Friday:

Workshop: Free-write on representing Haiti

WEEK 2

First Black Republic and Its Legacies

Monday:

Readings: Dubois, Introduction and Chapter One

Wednesday:

Readings: Trouillot, “The Odd and the Ordinary”; Mintz, “Haiti”

Workshop: Free-write and discussion about Question Maps

Friday:

Readings: Dubois, Chapters Two and Three

Workshop: Peer discussion of Question Map

WEEK 3

Artistic Resistance

Monday:

Readings: Dubois, Chapters Five and Six

Workshop: Question Map due, reflections on Question Maps

Wednesday:

Readings: Brown, “Haiti’s Political Murals”; Smith, “Atis Rezistans”; Kivland, blogpost on Jerry’s graffiti

Workshop: Discussion of “thick description”

Thursday (x-hour): Hood Visit

Friday:

Workshop: Draft of Thick Art Description due (300 words); Peer read aloud and discussion

WEEK 4

Haiti's "Place-in-the-World"

Monday: *No class—MLK Day* (rescheduled for x-hour)

Wednesday:

Readings: Trouillot, "The Caribbean Region"; *The Price of Sugar* (film)

Workshop: Thick Art Description due

Thursday x-hour:

Readings: "Island Time" and "Poetry and Hope in Haiti"

Workshop: Podcast tutorial

Friday:

Readings: Dubois, Chapters Seven and Eight, and Epilogue

Workshop: Peer selection and meetings to discuss podcast projects

WEEK 5

Haiti and U.S. Politics

Monday:

Readings: Farmer, "Blood, Sweat, and Baseballs"

Workshop: Peer discussion of interview plans

Wednesday:

Readings: Dupuy, "Globalization, the World Bank, and the Haitian Economy"; Kivland, blogpost on deportation

Workshop: Podcast interview tutorial

Friday:

Readings: Glick-Schiller, "Everywhere We Go, We Are in Danger"

Workshop: Interview questions due; Peer discussion of interview questions

WEEK 6

Race and the Anthropologist

Monday:

Readings: Magloire, "Haiti and the Anthropological Imagination"

Workshop: Free-write on imagining Haiti

Wednesday:

Readings: Schuller, "Mister Blan"; Ulysse, "Reflecting on Boundaries, Protection, and Inspiration"; Kivland, excerpt

Workshop: Peer discussion of positionality

Friday:
Readings: TBA
Workshop: Class visit with RWIT tutor

WEEK 7

Vodou and its Mis/representations

Monday:
Readings: Hurbon, selections; Brown, “Making Wanga”

Wednesday:
Readings: McAlister, “From Slave Revolt to a Blood Pact with Satan”
Workshop: Seed Paper due; Writing as re-writing discussion

Friday:
Workshop: Readings: Your peer’s seed paper
Workshop: Peer review

WEEK 8

Politics of Development

Monday:
Readings: TBA
Visit with Professor Ted Rutland

Wednesday:
Kivland, “To Defend or Develop”; *Assistance Mortelle* (film)
Workshop: Response to peer and professor review due

Thurs x-hour:
Workshop: Podcast meetings at Jones

Friday: Wilentz, selections from *Farewell, Fred Voodoo*
Workshop: Interview report due; Podcast script due

WEEK 9

Living in Insecurity and Creating Dangerously

Monday: *No class* (read ahead)

Wednesday:
Readings: Danticat, whole book
Workshop: Peer review of podcast plans

Thus x-hour:
Workshop: Podcast meetings at Jones

Friday:
Readings: Whatever you need to read for your projects

WEEK 10
Presentations and Culminating Reflections

Monday:
Readings: Whatever you need to read for your projects
Workshop: Podcast presentations

Wednesday:
Readings: Whatever you need to read for your projects
Workshop: Podcast presentations

Final Papers are due by Monday, March 11 (midnight).