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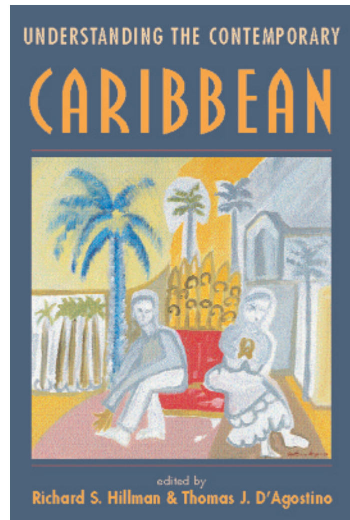
Understanding the Contemporary Caribbean

edited by
Richard S. Hillman and
Thomas J. D'Agostino



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Contents

List of Illustrations ix
Preface xiii

1 Introduction *Richard S. Hillman* 1

2 The Caribbean: A Geographic Preface *Thomas D. Boswell* 19
Defining the Caribbean *19*
Climate and Weather Patterns in the Caribbean *23*
Landforms in the Caribbean *26*
The Caribbean Amerindian Population *31*
Patterns of European Settlement After Conquest *33*
The Rise and Fall of Sugarcane in the West Indies *35*
Population Problems *38*
Emigration from the Caribbean *39*
Urbanization in the Caribbean *41*
Economic Geography of the Caribbean *43*
Conclusion *48*

3 The Historical Context *Stephen J. Randall* 51
Conquest and Colonization, 1492–1800 *52*
Nation Building and Socioeconomic Transition in the Nineteenth Century *60*
The Non-Spanish Caribbean in the Early Twentieth Century *67*
The Emergence of U.S. Hegemony, 1898–1930s *70*
The Emergence of Labor Organizations *74*
War and Cold War, 1939–1959 *75*
The Cuban Revolution *78*
Conclusion *80*

4 Caribbean Politics *Thomas J. D'Agostino* 85
The Past as Prelude *85*
External Influences, Internal Dynamics, and New Forms *87*
The Case of Puerto Rico *91*
Socioeconomic Conditions and Political Consciousness *94*
Postwar Transitions *95*
The Case of the Dominican Republic *102*
The Anglo-Caribbean *103*
The Case of Jamaica *104*
Decades of Challenge and Change: The 1970s and 1980s *110*
The Case of Grenada *113*
The Resurgence of U.S. Interventionism *115*
The Case of Haiti *119*
An Era of Uncertainty: The 1990s and 2000s *121*

5 The Economies of the Caribbean *Dennis A. Pantin* 129
Common Economic History *129*
Some Differences *131*
Current Economic Structure *133*
Current Economic Performance *137*
Current and Projected Economic Challenges *140*
Conclusion *144*

6 International Relations *H. Michael Erisman* 149
Caribbean International Relations: A Historical Overview *151*
The Dynamics of Caribbean International Relations in the Modern Era *156*
International Challenges Confronting the Caribbean *170*

7 The Environment and Ecology *Duncan McGregor* 179
The Physical Setting *180*
Historical and Recent Land Use Change *184*
Climate Change and Caribbean Environments *194*
Sustainability and the Environment: Some Reflections *199*

8 Ethnicity, Race, Class, and Nationality *David Baronov & Kevin A. Yelvington* 209
The Mix of Ethnicity, Race, Class, and Nationality Across the Caribbean *211*
Historical Legacies *212*
Ethnic, Racial, and National Minorities in Caribbean Society *220*
Imagining the Caribbean Nation *223*
Contemporary Realities and Caribbean Migrant Communities *229*
Conclusion *234*

9 Women and Development *A. Lynn Bolles* 239
The Sociocultural Context of Caribbean Women *239*
Caribbean Women's Early Struggles *243*
Women in the Hispanic Caribbean *246*
Caribbean Women's Continuing Struggles *247*
Gender, Class, and Familial Organization *252*
The "Independent" Woman in the Contemporary Caribbean *257*
Women and the Organization of American States *259*
Conclusion *259*

10 Religion in the Caribbean *Leslie G. Desmangles, Stephen D. Glazier & Joseph M. Murphy* 263
Categories of Caribbean Religions *264*
Working the Amalgam *266*
Vodou *273*
Santería *280*
The Rastafari and the Dread *285*
Spiritual Baptists *291*
Caribbean Religions in the Diaspora *299*
Conclusion *301*

11 Literature and Popular Culture *Kevin Meehan & Paul B. Miller* 305
Indigenous Cultural Patterns *306*
The Early Colonial Era: Material Changes and Cultural Adaptation *309*
The Nineteenth Century: Toward Cultural Autonomy *312*
The Early Twentieth Century: Literary Movements, Vernacular Writing, and Cultural Unification *317*
The Mid-Twentieth Century: The Dialectic of Exile and Nationalism *320*
The Late Twentieth Century and Beyond: The Dialectic of Return and Disillusionment *324*
Conclusion *328*

12 The Caribbean Diaspora *Dennis Conway* 333
The Encounter with Europe: Domination of the Caribbean *335*
Caribbean–North American Circulations, 1880–1970 *338*
Caribbean Diaspora Networks, 1970s to the Present *342*
Conclusion *348*

13 Trends and Prospects *Richard S. Hillman & Andrés Serbin* 355
The Intergovernmental Dynamic *356*
Transnational Civil Society *359*
The Forum of Greater Caribbean Civil Society *360*
The Future *361*

List of Acronyms 369
Basic Political Data 371
The Contributors 377
Index 379
About the Book 393

1

Introduction

Richard S. Hillman

The Caribbean is considerably more important and certainly more complex than its popular image suggests.[1] Widely known as an attractive string of underdeveloped island nations in close proximity to the United States, the region's pleasant climate and natural attributes have attracted large numbers of tourists. Short visits to beautiful beaches and resorts, however, have contributed to a superficial vision of the Caribbean region. It is an interesting, significant, and exciting place for much more profound reasons.

Although there is some truth to the stereotype of the Caribbean as a tropical paradise, the region's historic, cultural, socioeconomic, and political influences far exceed its small size and low status in global affairs. Indeed, political and ideological movements and developments in the Caribbean have provoked international reactions. Moreover, throughout history the people of the Caribbean have been engaged in heroic struggles to liberate themselves from the strictures and exploitation of colonialism, slavery, imperialism, neocolonialism, and dependency.

Historically, the perception of the region has varied from that of an extremely valuable asset to more powerful nations to one of benign neglect. Its role as provider of sun, sand, and surf to Americans and Europeans, for example, has obscured the fact that great power rivalries have been played out in the Caribbean. In fact, the United States has intervened in the Caribbean more than in any other geographical area of the world. The impacts of migration patterns, investment, and commerce, as well as illicit narcotics trafficking, have been significant not only in the Western Hemisphere but also in Europe and throughout the world. Similarly, Caribbean literature, art, and popular culture have had global influences.

Thomas J. D'Agostino

Deep Bay, Antigua

The Caribbean peoples have made outstanding contributions in many fields, both in their home countries and in those countries to which they have migrated. Their presence is apparent in professions such as health care and education, as well as in commerce, construction, music, cuisine, sports, and government. U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell, who first rose to the position of chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, is a first-generation U.S. citizen of Jamaican origin. Baseball legend Sammy Sosa was born in the Dominican Republic (in fact, one of every four players in Major League Baseball is from the Caribbean). Many actors like Harry Belafonte and Sidney Poitier, singers like Bob Marley and the Mighty Sparrow, academics like Orlando Patterson, and writers like Derek Wolcott, V. S. Naipaul, John Hearne, Jamaica Kincaid, Aimé Césaire, and Gabriel García Márquez represent the wealth of talent emanating from the Caribbean.

Ironically, as North Americans and Europeans flock to the Caribbean vacationland, the people of the region seek to leave their homelands. Their quest for upward socioeconomic mobility has resulted in large population concentrations abroad. New York City, for example, contains the largest urban concentration of Dominicans outside Santo Domingo. Similarly, New York is the second largest Puerto Rican city next to San Juan. And Miami has become so influenced by Cubans, Jamaicans, and Haitians, among others, that it is commonly referred to as "the capital of the Caribbean."

The Caribbean has always been considered a geopolitical and strategic crossroads (see Maps 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3). From the fifteenth century to the end

Map 1.1 The Caribbean Region

Map 1.2 The Northern Caribbean

Map 1.3 The Southern Caribbean

of the twentieth century—from Christopher Columbus to Fidel Castro—the Caribbean has been the focus of external influences (Williams 1979). First, European colonial powers imposed their systems and control. Later the Monroe Doctrine of 1823 conceived of the region as within the sphere of influence of the United States. As a consequence, the Caribbean was thought of as the backyard of the United States—a U.S. lake, so to speak. The Cold War impinged upon emergent pressures within the Caribbean to define itself autonomously by creating confusion as to the origins of national movements. In the post–Cold War era the potential for continued democratization, expanded free trade, and pragmatic regional integration loom large on the horizon. The Caribbean is increasingly perceived as a vital link in the realization of a Free Trade Area of the Americas.

There are, of course, serious challenges confronting the region as a whole, as well as individual countries. The Caribbean comprises ministates endowed with widely dispersed and, in some cases, sparse resources. Thus, economic development has been problematic. Political evolution also has been complicated. In countries that have experienced long periods of colonialism, with the attendant institutions of the plantation and slavery, it is difficult to overcome deeply ingrained authoritarian legacies in order to promote the consolidation of democracy. This does not mean, however, that historical legacies will determine the future. Moreover, disparate developments such as the Cuban revolution, the Haitian transition toward democracy, and the invasion of Grenada further complicate the absence of a singular paradigm or model that would fit the entire region. Thus, generalizations about Caribbean political and economic development must of necessity be multifaceted and intricate if they are to be meaningful. Yet the different countries of the Caribbean have much in common.

Among the most problematic common features are financial weakness and lack of investment capital. Most production in the Caribbean has involved food processing, the making of clothing, and the manufacturing of sugar and rum. Efforts to expand these activities to earn additional income and provide new jobs through programs of import substitution and industrialization by invitation have been relatively unsuccessful.[2] Also, West Indian governments have sought to protect local industries by imposing tariffs on the importation of foreign goods. But this drove up the prices of domestically manufactured goods, which were often inferior in quality to imported goods.

Among the incentives used to attract investment capital are low-cost labor, factories constructed by the island governments, reduction in taxes or complete tax abatements for a number of years (free-trade zones), government-sponsored training programs, political stability, and proximity to the large North American market.

Companies assembling goods for export to the United States benefit from special U.S. tariffs that either reduce or waive import duties for these prod-

ucts. When duties are imposed, they usually are assessed only on the value added to the products by the Caribbean operations. U.S. firms, seeking to escape high-cost unionized labor, have established assembly *maquiladoras* (factories) in the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, and Barbados. Predominantly female workers typically earn between U.S.$50 and $100 per week in as many as 1,000 *maquiladoras* throughout the Caribbean employing more than 25,000 workers. A significant portion of the moderately priced clothing sold in the United States is now made in these island factories.

Neoliberal economic philosophy purports that it is more beneficial for island producers to export their products. Accordingly, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) require local governments to devalue their currencies to reduce the costs of their products overseas; lower their import tariffs to increase local competition and efficiency; and reduce domestic spending (so their financial reserves will make the loans more likely to be paid off). The main problem with this philosophy is that it creates austerity in the home country. Currency devaluation raises local prices; competition from imported goods can drive local firms out of business, exacerbating already high levels of unemployment; and decreased government spending reduces the amount of money circulating within the island's economy, causing political pressures.

One of the more successful economic mechanisms used by Caribbean nations to fortify their economies has been offshore banking.[3] Some nations provide advantages such as reduction or elimination of taxes on income, profits, dividends, and capital gains in secret accounts.[4] Moreover, legal fees and licenses are charged by the banks, adding valuable foreign currency to the island's economy. First, the Netherlands Antilles, especially Curaçao, and then the Bahamas, the Cayman Islands, Antigua, the Turks and Caicos Islands, Montserrat, and St. Vincent recently became the leading centers in the Caribbean for offshore banking. In the Bahamas and the Cayman Islands, offshore banking is the second leading industry behind tourism, providing 15–20 percent of each country's gross national product.

In sum, although the Caribbean continues to struggle with political and economic challenges, the global scope of the region's impact is inconsistent with its image and size: the Caribbean contains approximately 36 million people—a small percentage of the Western Hemisphere and only a tiny fraction of the world's population. But their impact has been disproportionate to their numbers, and there are many enclaves of Caribbean peoples living in other areas of the world. London, Toronto, Miami, and New York, for example, have a large West Indian presence.

As the world continues to become more interdependent, a global society is emerging within which the Caribbean must be integrated. Therefore, it is very important to increase our understanding of the contemporary Caribbean. Unfortunately, there has been a theoretical confusion resulting from segre-

gated analyses of the region according to superficial criteria. For purposes of convenience (as opposed to more penetrating factors), one finds reference to linguistic divisions, geographic distributions, and chronological dates of independence, for example. These approaches have reaffirmed obvious differences while obscuring common factors that could contain important information for the production of salutary solutions to pervasive problems.

Our earlier research has shown that the Hispanic countries within the Caribbean have been considered an integral part of Latin America, and the English-speaking countries have been excluded based on the assumption that different cultural heritages require a fundamentally different analytical framework. Thus, scholars of Latin America focus on the Latin Caribbean "often to the almost total exclusion of other areas," whereas scholars of the Commonwealth Caribbean "have usually neglected the Latin Caribbean" (Millet and Will 1979:xxi). We have shown that the Caribbean region provides a microcosm of a fragmented third world in which divisions "tenaciously obscure similarities and impede the evolution of common interests and aspirations" and that the absence of a "single, holistic community" has resulted (Hillman and D'Agostino 1992:1–17).

Some authors have argued that there is a "clear dividing line" separating the English-speaking Caribbean countries from their Hispanic, French, and Dutch neighbors (Serbin 1989:146). Some conclude that conflicts in relations between Caribbean countries are due to "misconceptions, misunderstanding, and lack of communication . . . deriving from historical, cultural, racial, and linguistic differences" (Bryan 1988:41). Others have attributed the absence of a single community to the divisiveness of separate Caribbean societies "often fatally hostile to each other" (Moya Pons 1974:33).

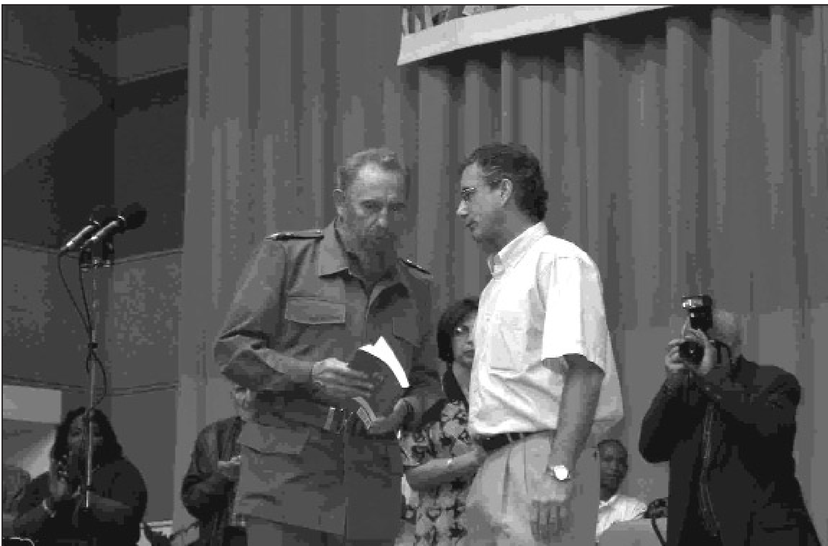
Our approach reveals that beneath obvious differences lie similarities in common historical themes, geopolitical and sociocultural contexts, economic experiences, and accommodation patterns that reflect the pressures of congruent sociopolitical environments. Moreover, we believe that there has been significant convergence of mutual economic and political interests to warrant the promotion of improved relations between the diverse Caribbean states. Nicolás Guillén summarizes this idea succinctly when he characterizes the Caribbean archipelago as one "communal yard" due to its common heritage of slavery, imperial domination, and struggle (Guillén 1976:26). And Pére Labat observed in the eighteenth century that the Caribbean peoples are "all together, in the same boat, sailing the same uncertain sea" (Knight 1990:307). We believe that academic and political navigation in this sea can be enhanced through understanding and appreciating the forces that have shaped the contemporary Caribbean.

Therefore, there is a need for an interdisciplinary introduction to the Caribbean region. Academic, business, and policy interests require understanding this complex and significant area. But the growing numbers of peo-

ple who wish to learn about the Caribbean are not able to use narrowly focused studies. Comprehending existing theoretical analyses of the region's socioeconomic and political conditions presupposes expertise and experience.

Further, there is much misunderstanding about Caribbean attitudes, values, and beliefs regarding the conduct of politics, business, and life. Sensationalized media coverage of political instability, external debt, immigration, and narcotics trafficking has overshadowed valiant Caribbean efforts to define uniquely Caribbean identities and create autonomous institutions, as well as the consolidation of democracy and the promotion of trade, development, tourism, and regional cooperation.

Moreover, although the strategic geopolitical relevance of the region has been recognized throughout history, the Caribbean has become critically important in the emerging global economy within which the volume of trade will impact significantly on the entire Western Hemisphere. The Caribbean Basin Initiative of the early 1980s is testimony to this idea. Unfortunately, the persistence of flawed policies such as the U.S. embargo against Cuba has impeded, rather than enhanced, regional integration. My visits throughout the region over a number of years have convinced me that there is a great need to promote mutual understanding throughout the hemisphere.[5] The tendency to demonize political leaders with whom there is disagreement has constituted a major obstacle to progress in this area. In an era of opening relations with China and Vietnam, Jimmy Carter's visit to Cuba in May 2002 is testimony



Larry Shuman

Richard Hillman presents Fidel Castro with a copy of his book, *Understanding Contemporary Latin America*, Havana, Cuba, January 25, 2002

to the potential for reevaluation of the U.S. position regarding this Caribbean neighbor.

Attention has been drawn to the region by media accounts of current events, Free Trade Area of the Americas discussions, and tourism, as well as increasing business, commerce, and migration from the Caribbean, which augments the need for basic information. In this context, this book provides a basis for comprehension by introducing fundamental background information, major issues, themes, and trends in countries within the Caribbean region. It is designed as a basic resource that will be useful to those studying the area. The writing style is straightforward, with maps and graphics intended to enhance clarity, comprehension, and appreciation of the traditions, influences, and common themes underlying differences within the Caribbean. *Understanding the Contemporary Caribbean* is intended to contribute to the promotion of interest and basic understanding in college and university classrooms, foreign service seminars, corporate training programs, and the general public.

Because definitions of the Caribbean region vary widely, we provide an integrated text by defining the Caribbean to include the circum-Caribbean, with focus on the insular Caribbean. In other words, each chapter makes primary reference to the Greater and the Lesser Antilles. Secondary reference is made to typically Caribbean enclaves in the Atlantic Ocean and on the South American and Central American coasts.

Specifically, the Greater Antilles consists of Cuba, Jamaica, Hispaniola (Haiti and the Dominican Republic), and Puerto Rico. The Lesser Antilles consists of the Leeward Islands and the Windward Islands. The Leewards include Montserrat, Antigua and Barbuda, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saba, St. Eustatius, St. Martin, and St. Barthélemy. (Notice that the French and Dutch halves of St. Martin are spelled differently, St. Maarten [or Sint Maarten] for the Dutch part, and St. Martin for the French part.) The Windwards include Guadeloupe, Dominica, Martinique, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Grenada. The U.S. and British Virgin Islands, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, and the Netherlands Antilles (Aruba, Bonaire, and Curaçao) complete the insular Caribbean. The Bahamas, Bermuda, and the Turks and Caicos Islands, although not within the Caribbean Sea, have much in common with the region. Similarly, Guyana, French Guiana, and Suriname have more in common with the Caribbean than their neighboring South American countries. The same can be said for coastal enclaves in Venezuela and Colombia on the Caribbean coast of South America, as well as the Panamanian, Costa Rican, Nicaraguan, Honduran and Belizean coasts of Central America. Finally, for reasons previously stated, it is not inappropriate to include mention of Miami and South Florida in the context of our expanded definition of the Caribbean.

The theme of unity in diversity, drawn from our previous work, provides an organizing concept (Hillman and D'Agostino 1992). There have been many attempts to describe the Caribbean that reflect our basic thesis. The

fused, or blended, cultures are "distant neighbors" (Hillman and D'Agostino 1992), a diverse village, a disparate community characterized by "fragmented nationalism" (Knight 1990). The whole is certainly greater than the sum of its parts in a "continent of islands" (Kurlansky 1992), a tropical paradise that exists "in the shadow of the sun" (Deere 1990). Transcending the obvious differences, we explore similarities in the legacies of the colonial experiences, slave trade, plantation life, the imposition of Eurocentric institutions, the difficulties of transition to independence, obstacles to socioeconomic and political development, and ethnographic patterns.

The Caribbean is a unique and complex concatenation of virtually every ethnic group in the world. There are those of African, European, American, and Asian origins. Africans came to the Caribbean as slaves from tribes of the Ibo, Coromantee, Hausa, Mandingo, Fulani, Minas, Yoruba, Congo, Mohammedan, Calabar, Alampo, Whydahs, and Dahomeans. Europeans—tracing their ancestries to the Spanish, English, Irish, Scots, French, German, and Dutch—came as conquerors. Indigenous to the region by virtue of early migrations from Asia were North American tribes of Taínos, Arawaks, Caribs, Ciboney, and Guanahuatebey. After the abolition of slavery, Indian and Chinese indentured servants were brought to the Caribbean. Later, small waves of immigrants arrived from Spain, Portugal, France, England, Germany, China, the Jewish Diaspora (Ashkenazi and Sephardic Jews), Italy, the Middle East (Syrians and Lebanese), Latin America, and North America (the United States and Canada).

Each group brought particular traits to the Caribbean. The Africans brought popular tales and legends, folklore, music, arts, and religious beliefs, as well as qualities of perseverance and leadership (Herring 1967:109–113). The Europeans brought their religions and culture, military technology, political and social institutions, scientific discovery, as well as diseases unknown in the region. The indigenous contributions are debated due to scant archaeological evidence (Knight 1990:4–22). However, the Arawaks are reputed to have lived in a pacific communal society, whereas the Caribs migrated and were more belligerent. The aesthetic achievements and social structures of the indigenous peoples were almost completely destroyed by conquest, despite the lasting imprint of linguistic adaptations—such as words like *bohío* (shack or hut), *guagua* (bus), *cacique* (Indian chief or political leader), and *guajiro* (peasant).

Far more interesting and significant than the individual contributions of the various groups constituting the contemporary Caribbean is the process whereby their sociopolitical traits have been amalgamated and Eurocentric dominance has been mitigated. The region has truly been a crucible of various cultures. This blending, not only of institutions but also of ethnicity, has produced the uniquely Caribbean Creoles.[6] Thus, racial variation can be understood in the context of a fluid continuum. As Gordon Lewis observed, "Columbus and his followers came to the New World with a baggage of religious intolerance rather than racial phobia" (Lewis 1987:10).

The most popular religious expressions are a result of a syncretizing process that brought together the elaborate African belief systems with those of the European religious traditions. Thus, elitist practice of Catholicism or mainstream Protestantism is nominal compared to the dynamic integration into daily life of Vodou, spiritualism, Obeah, Santería, or other fusions of European and African or Indian religions. Because the Caribbean was "a society founded on the gross exploitation, in the name of Christianity, of both Antillean Indian and African black" people (Lewis 1987:89), these combinations were crucial to a vast majority of non-Europeans attempting to preserve their beliefs and themselves. While many perceived that "Catholic proselytization was a lost cause . . . the Catholic religion saw [its role] as a war against paganism and superstition" (Lewis 1987:195). Thus, evangelical religions have been making inroads in the Caribbean. As one observer asks, "Who with the slightest missionary spirit could resist a region of poor countries whose populations are always looking for new religions?" (Kurlansky 1992:72).

Occasionally, when it had been impossible to integrate their cultures into the dominant society, certain groups rejected that society and alienated themselves. The first of these were the Maroons, slaves who were able to escape into the rugged terrain of the Jamaican hinterland. These *cimarrones* (runaways) have survived as a separate enclave society. Later on the Rastafarians rejected Anglo values, creating an Africanist belief system loosely based on allegiance to Haile Selassie, the former emperor of Ethiopia.

Understanding the forces that tie Caribbean societies together, as well as those that have challenged and transformed their institutions, requires exploration of the impact of the plantation system, slavery, and the processes through which independence (or pseudo-independence) was gained. Moreover, religion, government, society, and current challenges derive in large part from these origins. Simply stated, the relationships between masters and slaves, the rebellions, the heroic struggles, and the tortuous evolution from colonies to independent states reveal inescapable realities that cannot be ignored in our study of the contemporary Caribbean. The resultant attitudes, values, and beliefs inform our understanding of this complex region.

Caribbean attitudes toward the United States are ambivalent, ranging from disdain to infatuation. A version of dependency theory in which problems endemic to the region are attributed to Europe and the United States has become popular in academic circles. Virulent anti-U.S. sentiment developed early in Cuban history, was cultivated by independence leaders, and given ideological expression through *fidelismo* and Castro's revolution. It was given expression in the present day by U.S. as well as Cuban manipulation of the Elián González dispute, in which the question of a father's legal custody over his son became an international incident.

On the one hand, Michael Manley, Maurice Bishop, and other West Indian leaders have flirted with alternative ideologies such as democratic socialism

Cynthia Sutton

Poster of Elián González, Havana, Cuba. The poster reads, "Return Our Child."

and Marxism as an antidote to dependence on the United States. On the other hand, some Puerto Rican politicians have championed statehood for the island, whereas others fiercely resist it. Some leaders have consistently supported U.S. international initiatives and have always voted accordingly in world forums such as the United Nations. Also, there has been much envy and idolatry of U.S. culture and economic superiority. This has led to massive immigration—both legal and illegal—into the United States. It has also led to "brain drain," whereby Caribbean professionals and the intelligentsia abandon their own countries for U.S. residency and citizenship. This loss of human resources has been extremely problematic for Caribbean societies.

Also, there has been substantial movement within the Caribbean: Dominicans to Miami and St. Martin; Haitians and Cubans to Puerto Rico, Venezuela, and Miami; Jamaicans to Central America and Miami; Trinidadians to Jamaica and Venezuela; and so on. Movement out of the Caribbean has been a safety valve for overpopulation, political oppression, and especially

economic depression. Recently, the European Union began financing border projects on Hispaniola, such that the centuries of animosity between the Dominican Republic and Haiti might be overcome in order to achieve a modicum of economic integration.[7]

Caribbeans nevertheless are proud of their countries, perceiving themselves as holding no candle to the United States or Europe. Michael Manley once remarked to me that "Jamaica is no little dive, it is a sophisticated country" (Hillman 1979:55). Similarly, Edward Seaga told me that "Americans have a dim view" of the third world (Hillman 1979:53). I have known West Indians who have worked their entire lives abroad in order to be able to retire in their homelands. These perspectives ought to be appreciated if we are to develop mutual understanding.

Therefore, *Understanding the Contemporary Caribbean* introduces readers to the region by providing basic definitions, outlining major issues, discussing relevant background, and illustrating the manifestation of these considerations in representative countries. Thus, the text employs both thematic and case-study approaches. Each chapter contains a general discussion, key concepts, ongoing questions, and reference to bibliographic resources (see Table 1.1).

Among the major issues discussed in the text, the most prominent are those related to the Caribbean identity, socioeconomic and political evolution, debt, immigration, narcotics trade, integration, and international relations. These are understood in the context of a background strongly influenced by the legacies of colonialism and the predominant impact of the United States.

The text is part of the series entitled Understanding: Introductions to the States and Regions of the Contemporary World. It is designed to generate knowledge and stimulate interest rather than bring these issues to closure. Each chapter is written as if to teach a class on the subject. In "The Caribbean: A Geographic Preface" (Chapter 2), Thomas Boswell discusses the impact of location, population trends, resource availability, and the environment on economic development and the people in the Caribbean. In "The Historical Context" (Chapter 3), Stephen Randall shows how major themes such as colonialism, plantation life, and slavery have created legacies that persist in influencing contemporary realities. In "Caribbean Politics" (Chapter 4), Thomas D'Agostino analyzes the impact of historical legacies on political development. He shows how different institutions converge in similar patterns of patron-clientelism, elite dominance, and creole fusion.

In "The Economies of the Caribbean" (Chapter 5), Dennis Pantin discusses various attempted solutions to the region's endemic problems and economic programs, the informal economies, the impact of narcotics trafficking, and the emergent trend toward integration. H. Michael Erisman, in "International Relations" (Chapter 6), treats the narcotics trade in more depth due to its bearing on the Caribbean-U.S. relationship. He also discusses regional

Table 1.1 Socioeconomic Indicators for Caribbean States

	Population, 2001	Population Growth, 2002	Urban Population, 2001 (%)	Life Expectancy, 2000 (in years)	Infant Mortality (per 1000), 2000	Literacy, 2000 (%)	GDP per cap PPP U.S.$, 2000[a]
Anguilla	12,446	2.44	N/A	76.5	23.7	95	8,600
Antigua and Barbuda	68,487	0.69	37	73.9	13	86.6	10,541
Aruba	104,000	0.59	51	78.7	6.3	97	28,000
Bahamas	307,153	0.86	89	69.2	15	95.4	17,012
Barbados	268,189	0.46	51	76.8	12	98	15,494
Belize	247,107	2.65	48	74	34	93.2	5,606
British Virgin Islands	21,272	2.16	N/A	75.9	19.6	97.8	16,000
Cayman Islands	36,273	2.03	N/A	79.2	9.9	98	30,000
Colombia	43,035,480	1.6	75	71.2	25	91.7	6,248
Costa Rica	3,886,318	1.61	60	76.4	10	95.6	8,650
Cuba	11,221,723	0.35	75	76	7	96.7	N/A
Dominica	73,199	–0.81	71	72.9	14	96.4	5,880
Dominican Republic	8,505,204	1.61	66	67.1	42	83.6	6,033
French Guiana	182,333	2.57	N/A	76.5	13.2	83	6,000
Grenada	99,000	0.02	38	65.3	21	94.4	7,580
Guadeloupe	435,739	1.04	N/A	77.4	9.3	90	9,000
Guyana	766,256	0.23	37	63	55	98.5	3,963
Haiti	8,114,161	1.42	36	52.6	81	49.8	1,467
Honduras	6,575,264	2.34	54	65.7	32	74.6	2,453
Jamaica	2,668,230	0.56	57	75.3	17	86.9	3,639
Martinique	422,277	0.89	N/A	78.6	7.6	93	11,000
Montserrat	8,437	N/A	N/A	78.2	8	97	N/A
Netherlands Antilles	216,808	0.93	69	75.2	11.1	98	11,400
Nicaragua	5,201,641	2.09	57	68.4	37	66.5	2,366
Panama	2,900,589	1.26	57	74	20.3	91.9	6,000
Puerto Rico	3,950,473	0.51	76	75.9	9.3	89	11,200
St. Kitts and Nevis	41,082	0.01	34	70	21	97.8	12,510
St. Lucia	158,134	1.24	38	73.4	17	90.2	5,703
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	115,881	0.37	56	69.6	21	88.9	5,555
Suriname	419,656	0.55	75	70.6	27.4	94	3,799
Trinidad and Tobago	1,309,608	–0.52	74	74.3	17	93.8	8,964
Turks and Caicos	18,738	3.28	N/A	3.8	17.5	98	7,300
U.S. Virgin Islands	123,498	1.04	N/A	78.4	9.2	N/A	15,000
Venezuela	24,632,376	1.52	87	72.9	23	92.6	5,794

Sources: World Bank, http://www.worldbank.org/data/; United Nations, http://hdr.undp.org/default.cfm; CIA World Factbook, http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html.

Note: a. Gross domestic product per capita purchasing power parity in U.S.$.

integration and documents the long history of external intervention in the region. "The Environment and Ecology" (Chapter 7), by Duncan McGregor, contains his treatment of crucial issues such as the ecology of the region—the natural assets and liabilities inherent in essentially tourist economies challenged by hurricanes, depletion of coral reefs, and pollution.

In "Ethnicity, Race, Class, and Nationality" (Chapter 8), David Baronov and Kevin Yelvington elaborate on the significance of large arrays of peoples and groups living in the same small area. They also touch on the impact of Eurocentricity and the contribution of the different ethnic groups, as well as the creolization pattern. The contribution of women is the focus of "Women and Development" (Chapter 9), by A. Lynn Bolles. In "Religion in the Caribbean" (Chapter 10), Leslie Desmangles, Stephen Glazier, and Joseph Murphy show how imposed European religions have been embellished by syncretic belief systems such as Rastafarianism, Obeah, Vodou, and Santería.

"Literature and Popular Culture" (Chapter 11), by Kevin Meehan and Paul Miller, discusses the most notable writers and the politicized nature of their work. It also mentions the widespread impact of folklore and music—like reggae, salsa, merengue, rumba, *son*, *cumbia*, *tambores*, and calypso. In "The Caribbean Diaspora" (Chapter 12), Dennis Conway shows the geographical diversity and impact of the various groups who leave the region and contribute to brain drain, the safety-valve effect, capital flight, and financial remissions. Finally, in "Trends and Prospects" (Chapter 13), Richard Hillman and Andrés Serbin analyze where the region has been as well as the direction in which it appears to be headed.

■ Notes

1. The terms *Caribbean* and *West Indies* are used interchangeably throughout this book.

2. The phrase *import substitution* refers to a policy of trying to produce goods locally that were formerly imported. *Industrialization by invitation* is a strategy aimed at attracting foreign capital for investment in local industry.

3. Offshore banking includes financial operations conducted by foreign banks that have branches in countries like those in the Caribbean.

4. This has caused speculation that such operations have become money-laundering facilities for illegal activities such as drug trafficking.

5. Among my travels, I visited Cuba as a professor on the faculty of the University of Pittsburgh Semester at Sea Program and presented a copy of my book, Richard S. Hillman, ed., *Understanding Contemporary Latin America* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001), to Fidel Castro during his four-and-a-half hour meeting with Semester at Sea students and faculty in Havana, January 25, 2002.

6. *Creole* is a term used in the Caribbean in reference to the unique admixtures of peoples and cultures.

7. Mireya Navarro, "At Last on Hispaniola: Hands Across the Border," *New York Times,* July 11, 1999, sec. 1, p. 3, col. 1.

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