



2014

## Caribbean Pearls

Rebecca Stuhr  
*University of Pennsylvania*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://repository.upenn.edu/alumni\\_reading](https://repository.upenn.edu/alumni_reading)

---

### Recommended Citation

Stuhr, Rebecca, "Caribbean Pearls" (2014). *Alumni Travel Reading Lists*. 20.  
[https://repository.upenn.edu/alumni\\_reading/20](https://repository.upenn.edu/alumni_reading/20)

Stuhr, R. (2014). Caribbean Pearls. In *Penn Alumni Travel*.

This paper is posted at ScholarlyCommons. [https://repository.upenn.edu/alumni\\_reading/20](https://repository.upenn.edu/alumni_reading/20)  
For more information, please contact [repository@pobox.upenn.edu](mailto:repository@pobox.upenn.edu).

---

## Caribbean Pearls

### Abstract

Suggested resources for the Penn Alumni Travel excursion to the Caribbean. See the Library Guide for this bibliography [here](#).

### Keywords

caribbean, bibliography, penn, alumni, travel, readings, guidebooks

### Comments

Stuhr, R. (2014). Caribbean Pearls. In *Penn Alumni Travel*.

Alumni Travel Reading List  
**Caribbean Pearls**

Prepared by Penn Library Subject Specialist:

Rebecca Stuhr  
Coordinator for Humanities Collections  
Classical Studies & History  
stuhreb@pobox.upenn.edu

---

### **Suggested Resources**

#### *Fiction*

Alvarez, Julia. *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*. Algonquin Books, 1991.

Alvarez is a noted American author who teaches at Middlebury College. She was born in New York, but lived much of her first ten years in the Dominican Republic. Her first novel tells the story of four sisters from the Dominican Republic. While they are still children in the 1960s, the girls move with their family to the United States. The novel describes their progress through the next several decades of their lives.

Brown, Stewart, and John Wickham, eds. *The Oxford Book of Caribbean Short Stories*. Oxford University Press, 1999.

Brown and Wickham hope to “engage, entertain, and inspire” readers with their selection of short stories from the West Indies. Although most authors are from islands and nations other than those to be included on this tour, you’ll get a glimpse of life in the region after colonialism and from the diaspora.

Díaz, Junot. *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*. Riverhead Books, 2007.

Díaz (born in the Dominican Republic, raised in New Jersey) received the National Book Award for Fiction and the Pulitzer Prize for this novel. *Wao* is the story of a young man (Oscar Wao) whose weight and excessive interest in fantasy and science fiction keep him isolated from the usual high school social scene. He longs for romance and imagines his future as a successful writer, à la J.R.R. Tolkien. The action of the novel takes place in New Jersey and the Dominican Republic as Oscar’s search for love and his first kiss are threatened by the family curse. It is difficult to do justice to the novel in a few sentences. You are urged to read and discover for yourself the merits of this excellent novel.

Michener, James A. *Caribbean*. Random House, 1989.

In engaging fiction, Michener narrates a sweeping history of the Caribbean region from 1310 to the rise of Castro in Cuba.

Santiago, Robert, ed. *Boricuas: Influential Puerto Rican Writings—an Anthology*. One World, 1995.

This collection of Puerto Rican authors presents work in a variety of creative fiction and nonfiction genres. The collection is divided into themes, Catharsis, Pride, History and Politics, Identity and Self-Esteem, Love, Faith and Transcendence, and so on. Some well known authors presented in this anthology include Judith Ortiz Cofer, Esmeralda Santiago, Victor Cruz Hernandez, Thomas Piri, José Luis Gonzalez, Edwin Torres, and Julia de Burgos.

Vargas Llosa, Mario. *The Feast of the Goat*. Ferrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2001.

In this novel, Nobel Laureate Vargas Llosa writes about the assassination of Dominican Republic dictator Rafael Trujillo. Vargas Llosa presents the narrative from four perspectives, two are from the time of the assassination in 1961, and two are from three and a half decades later in 1996. Vargas Llosa uses the frame work of Trujillo's rule and assassination to consider the corruption and danger inherent in absolute power. The novel was released as a film in 2005 directed by Luis Llosa, screenplay by Augusto Cabada. (IMDB: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0428532/>)

Brown, Stewart and Mark A. McWatts, eds. *The Oxford Book of Caribbean Verse*. Oxford University Press, 2005.

This anthology represents poets from across the region, including Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic.

### *Film*

*In the Time of the Butterflies*. Dir. Mariano Barroso. MGM Home Entertainment 2002.

This film, like *The Feast of the Goat*, is also based on historical events surrounding the final years of the Trujillo dictatorship. Based on the book by Julia Alvarez, this film tells the story of the three Mirabel sisters who, in 1960, lost their lives opposing the Trujillo regime.

*Sugar*. Dir. Anna Boden and Ryan Fleck, 2008.

This film portrays the story of Miguel "Sugar" Santos, a 19 year old from the Dominican Republic, who is recruited by the Kansas City Royals to play on one of their minor league teams. Miguel is sent to Iowa, where he finds that his path to success is not an easy one.

## *History*

Ferguson, James. *A Traveller's History of the Caribbean*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Interlink, 2008.

This guide for travelers is arranged around themes and topics as opposed to destinations. The narrative begins with Columbus and the impact of European contact, continues through slavery and emancipation, to American influence in the region, independence, and finally finishes with the politics and economics of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The guide also includes a chronology of major events, a political directory, an historical gazeteer, and recommendations for further reading.

Latimer, Jon. *Buccaneers of the Caribbean: How Piracy Forged an Empire*. Harvard University Press, 2009.

Much more than a history of piracy, *Buccaneers of the Caribbean* is a history of the decline and rise of empires in the new world and particularly in the Caribbean.

Mills, Carlton. *History of the Turks & Caicos Islands*. Macmillan Education, 2009.

This history is written by and for the people of the Turks and Caicos Islands. Its three sections take a geographical and environmental look at the islands and their resources and review the past and present social and political history of the islands. It is one of the few studies of the Turks and Caicos Island as a coherent political, social, and environmental entity.

Heuman, Gad J. *The Caribbean, Brief Histories*. Hodder Arnold, 2006.

Higman, B. W. *A Concise History of the Caribbean*. Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Palmié, Stephan, ed. *The Caribbean: A History of the Region and its Peoples*. The University of Chicago Press, 2011.

All three of these last books discuss the history of the entire region either from a chronological or theme based approach. Palmié allows readers to immerse themselves in the geography, climate, history (from 5000 B.C. to the present), and diverse culture of the Caribbean region looking closely at aspects of colonialism and the culture of slavery as well as 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century politics and diaspora. Higman begins his narrative 7200 years ago, asking the question as to why migration took place to the islands in the first place. His history is one of migration, diaspora, colonialism, and tourism. Heuman's *Concise History* focuses on periods of European and American conquest and dominance, slavery, resistance, and independence.