ENGLIT 1360: Topics in 20th Century Literature: Encountering the Caribbean
Professor Shalini Puri

Artist: Annalee Davis
"Just Beyond My Imagination"
The Caribbean as a Golf Course

Paradise, place of musical and sensual pleasure, tourist destination; our backyard; a region of anti-American revolutions, military confrontations and military bases; a place of poverty, failed states, hurricanes, and earthquakes: these are some of the images we carry of the Caribbean.

This interdisciplinary course will explore the conscious and subconscious images and ideas we hold about the Caribbean. By studying literature, film, music, political speeches, sociological and historical accounts, and experiments in sustainable development and cooperative farming, we will examine various encounters between the US and the Caribbean, asking: What relationship do I as an American have with the Caribbean? How is that relationship shaped by history? What other relationships with the Caribbean are open to me? How can I shape those relationships? What do I need to know about the Caribbean in order to be an effective global citizen and with whom can I work to become one?

Assigned texts will include the memoir *The World is Moving Around Me* about the 2010 Haitian earthquake; a novel entitled *Song of the Water Saints* (about the Dominican Republic and the USA); a selection of poetry and performance poetry, cartoons, newspapers, and blogs; Caribbean
landscape painting and postcards; the documentary film La Operacion, the web-based Guantánamo Public Memory Project, music by Jimmy Cliff and Bob Marley amongst others, representations of Cuban guerrilla leader Che Guevara, and the film Nothing Like Chocolate about a cooperative chocolate plantation.

Requirements for the course will include timely completion of all assigned texts, active contribution to class discussion, occasional journals, one short paper, a web-based project or an interview project, and a longer original research paper on a topic students develop in consultation with the instructor. Students should be willing to share work in progress.

Any student with a GPA of 3.25 is eligible to take a University Honors College course.

Bio:
Shalini Puri teaches courses on World Literature, the Americas, and Interdisciplinary Methods. She was awarded the Chancellor's Distinguished Prize for Teaching in 2010. She likes to teach literature alongside other arts, politics, and cultural debates. If you'd like to get a feel for her approach to engaged interdisciplinary research on the Caribbean, take a look at the website she created for her newest book: www.urgentmemory.com.