

2026



LATINIDAD

in Schools

CURRICULUM RESOURCE GUIDES

TEACHING DOMINICAN HISTORIES



Edmund W. Gordon Institute
for Advanced Study
Teachers College, Columbia University

THE LATINIDAD CURRICULUM INITIATIVE, EDMUND W. GORDON INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY



The Latinidad Curriculum Initiative (LCI) for New York City Public Schools is based at the Edmund W. Gordon Institute for Advanced Study at Teachers College, Columbia University and has been made possible by a generous grant from the New York City Council and in partnership with the United Way of New York City and the Hispanic Federation. Together, our overarching goal is to provide the opportunity for teachers, students, and communities served by New York City Public Schools to explore, celebrate, and expand their study of Latinidad across academic content areas and throughout grades K-12.

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**TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE LATINIDAD CURRICULUM INITIATIVE AND ITS RELEVANCE,
TAKE A LOOK AT OUR STRATEGIC REPORT “THE NEED TO ADVANCE THE STUDY OF
LATINIDAD IN NEW YORK CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS” AND OUR CURRICULAR BLUEPRINT ON
OUR WEBSITE: <https://www.tc.columbia.edu/latinidadnycschools/>**

ABOUT THE LCI CURRICULUM RESOURCE GUIDES



The Latinidad Curriculum Initiative (LCI) for New York City Public Schools aims to enhance the quality of education by providing a dynamic, interdisciplinary curricular framework and lesson plans that celebrate Latinidad and its connection to the histories, accomplishments, and cultures of our City and nation. The resources provided through this initiative seek to help teachers recognize who their students are and to enable the study, active reflection upon, and celebration of the histories, cultures, and intellectual contributions of Latinas and Latinos, thus providing a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of the city we live in and the places we call home. A curriculum that enables the study of Latinidades and their multiple and ever-evolving forms is meant to enhance school experiences by providing children and youth of all backgrounds opportunities to celebrate where we come from, what we have achieved, and what we desire for our families, communities, city, country, and world in the future.

As part of our curriculum development, in the second year of our initiative we hosted a series of Knowledge Building and Curriculum Writing Workshops during the 2025-2026 school year. The knowledge building workshops invited scholars and topical experts to engage with New York City Public Schools educators and administrators around the concept of Latinidad. We held four of these workshops at Teachers College, Columbia University:

- **Centering Afro-Latinidad in New York City**, on October 9, 2025
- **Narratives of Latinidad in New York City**, on November 4, 2025
- **Sounds of Latinidad: Integrating Music and Arts Education into the K-12 Curriculum**, on January 13, 2026
- **Lessons for the Study and Celebration of Latinidad**, on March 12, 2026

During knowledge building sessions, educators discussed the dynamic and multidimensional aspects of Latinidad; reflected personally and professionally on their connection(s) to this concept; and brainstormed in conversation with workshop facilitators and each other around how to incorporate lessons and resources about Latinidad into their teaching practice. As an outcome of these workshops, the LCI has created an ongoing series of **Curriculum Resource Guides**, published on our website (<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/latinidadnycschools/>) and designed for New York City educators, that is meant to complement the lesson plans we are developing for New York City Public Schools. The first four guides, described below, highlight content from our knowledge building workshops. These Curriculum Resource Guides thus represent a collaborative effort and body of knowledge and, while not exhaustive, include valuable and reliable resources—including scholarly and fictional texts; primary source documents; music, film, and audiovisual content; and historical and conceptual contexts—that teachers aiming to address the overlooked histories, knowledges, and contributions of the various communities that make up Latinidad in K-12 classrooms will benefit from using. They address just a few of the many important topics, regions, and heritage and national identities of Latinidad in New York City; our aim is to publish more as our curriculum develops. Our first four guides cover the following topics:

- **Centering Afro-Latinidad in New York City**: This guide, authored by Yosef Medina and utilizing work done by the Afro-Latin@ Forum, offers a brief historical and conceptual background for understanding the importance of New York City as a main locus of Afro-Latinidad—including for intellectual, political, and artistic life and culture—in North America since colonial times. It also provides summaries of the interdisciplinary lesson plans within our larger curriculum prepared by Medina and his colleagues at the Afro-Latin@Forum that specifically address Afro-Latinidad, or the experience of descendancy from both the African as well as Latin American and Caribbean diasporas.



- **Teaching Dominican Histories:** Authored by Alexa Rodríguez, this guide provides lists of materials organized by school level—children’s books, novels, scholarly books, academic articles, city excursions, music, videos, documentaries, and websites—that could be used in the classroom or at home to teach about the history and ongoing contributions of Dominicans in New York City.
- **Latinidad in Sounds:** Integrating Music and Arts Education into the K-12 Curriculum: Priscila Santana wrote this resource for those interested in using a music-centered lens and applying sound as a medium for mapping histories, forging connections, and (re)collecting memories to enrich students’ engagement with the diverse cultural ecosystems of New York City. It includes specific recommendations of genres, songs, and artists to explore.
- **Narratives of Latinidad in New York City:** Eddie Rivero, a scholar of bilingual education, curated this guide which consists of a reading list, organized by grade level, of texts that can inform culturally responsive teaching across K-12 settings.

We would like to thank the experts who facilitated these workshops and authored the Curriculum Resource Guides, the educators who participated in these workshops and made suggestions for resources, and the New York City Council for providing funding to make these possible.

— LATINIDAD CURRICULUM INITIATIVE AT TEACHERS COLLEGE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY



Five Boro Story Project. (2021). *Micailhuittl: Día de Muertos* on 34th Av.

TEACHING DOMINICAN HISTORIES



Author

Dr. Alexa Rodríguez

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About the Author

Alexa Rodríguez, PhD, is an Assistant Professor at the University of Virginia (UVA) whose research examines schools, migration, and the formation of racial and national identities in both Latin America and the United States (US). She is currently working on a book, *Crafting Dominicanidad* (forthcoming with University of North Carolina Press), which examines how Dominicans used public schools to articulate and circulate competing notions of racial, class, and national identity during the early twentieth century. She is also director of the digital humanities project *Dominican Voices Project/Proyecto Voces Dominicanas*, a bilingual digital archive that consists of audio and videotaped interviews of Dominicans born and raised in the Dominican Republic during the early twentieth century. The project preserves local histories and educates students, teachers, and the general public in the English and Spanish-speaking countries about the history of education and childhood in the Dominican Republic. Her work has been published in *Paedagogica Historica*, *History of Education Quarterly*, *Latino Studies*, *City & State New York*, *Clio and the Contemporary*, and the blog of the *History of Education Society* in the United Kingdom (UK).

Prior to joining UVA, Dr. Rodríguez worked as a postdoctoral research associate in the Dominican Studies Institute of the City University of New York (CUNY DSI). Dr. Rodríguez completed her PhD in History and Education at Teachers College, Columbia University, her MEd in Educational Studies at Johns Hopkins University, and her BA in History and American Studies at Fordham University. Dr. Rodríguez was also a 2020 dissertation fellow and a 2024-2026 postdoctoral fellow for the National Academy of Education and Spencer Foundation.

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TEACHING DOMINICAN HISTORIES IN NEW YORK CITY

Dominican immigrants comprise 40.9% of the foreign-born Latinx/e population in New York City (NYC) and represent a significant portion of the nearly 400,000 Latinx/e students enrolled in New York City Public Schools (NYCPS).¹ Given the large number of students of Dominican descent, this guide aims to contribute to a culturally responsive curriculum, reflective of the diversity of the city and education system, by providing teachers with useful resources that can help educate students on the history of Dominicans in the city.

Migration from the Dominican Republic to the US has never been a one-way journey. From the earliest waves of migration, Dominican migrants have maintained communication with, and frequently traveled back to, their homeland. Many US-born children of Dominican descent report spending their summers with extended family and finding various ways to connect with their roots in the Dominican Republic.² To honor this cultural connectedness, this resource guide offers materials that highlight the history, culture, and society of Dominicans both in the US and on the island.

This guide includes six categories: **Children's Books and Novels**, **Excursions**, **Scholarly Books and Articles**, **Music**, **Videos and Documentaries**, as well as **Websites**. These categories provide teachers with a range of activities and resources suitable for students across different grade levels, accommodating various learning styles.

Educators can include **Children's Books and Novels** into their Literacy, English Language Arts, and Social Studies lessons. Organized by school level, these might be read together as a class, assigned as homework, or used as excerpts for in-class textual analysis to study particular themes or topics such as migration, community, coming of age, identity, and self-discovery.

Excursions offer opportunities for students to integrate what they have learned in class with experiential, and place-based learning. Suggestions for educational field trips include plays, libraries, and a walking tour in a historic Dominican neighborhood. The *Repertorio* is a Spanish-language theater that has presented productions of Julia Alvarez's *In the Time of the Butterflies* (*En El Tiempo De Las Mariposas*) and Junot Díaz's *The Brief and Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (*La Breve y Maravillosa Vida de Oscar Wao*), iconic novels by Dominican American authors that narrate the experiences of Dominican Americans. After reading a novel in class, it can be brought to life if students have the opportunity to watch it performed in Spanish with English subtitles.

Scholarly Books and Articles provide research to help support teachers interested in understanding the history of Dominicans in NYC. For example, it is a little-known fact that in 1613, Juan Rodriguez was the first person, and free Black man, from the Spanish colony of La Española to arrive in Hudson Harbor and reside in what is now known as NYC. He became "the first person of non-Native ancestry to have ever resided for a substantial length of time in the area."³

The research in this section illustrates how Dominicans have played a crucial role in the development of the US and NYC for centuries. In addition to providing important historical and political background for educators teaching about Latinidad, it can be incorporated as excerpts or readings in higher grade levels for students to engage with directly.

1 NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs. (2019). *A Demographic Snapshot: NYC's Latinx Immigrant Population*.

2 See Kang, Nancy, & Torres-Saillant, Silvio. (2018, 26 September). Currents in Dominican American Literature. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Literature*. For an example in a novel, see *How the García Girls Lost Their Accents* by Julia Alvarez.

3 Stevens-Acevedo, Anthony, Weterings, Tom, & Álvarez Francés, Leonor. (2013). *Juan Rodriguez and the Beginnings of New York City*. CUNY DSI.



Dominicans and Dominican Americans have made a significant impact on **Music** both on the island and in the US. This category includes a variety of songs suitable for textual analysis in Art, English Language Arts, or Social Studies classes, allowing students to explore how Dominicans address themes such as migration and travel. For instance, Milly Quezada's song "Volvió Juanita" can be paired with novels or other non-fiction texts for deeper analysis around Dominican migration. Additionally, these songs can serve as part of a music lesson to demonstrate how US genres, such as house music, have influenced the Dominican genre of merengue. A great example is the NY-based group Proyecto Uno's hit "El Tiburón." Resources including explanations of these songs and their cultural significance are provided for teachers to incorporate into their lessons.

Videos and Documentaries provide educators with visual resources that could be played in class as full-length videos or clips, or assigned as homework. Teachers may choose to assign the PBS documentary "Julia Alvarez: A Life Reimagined" to supplement their study of her novels or to provide background before or after they watch a performance of *En El Tiempo De Las Mariposas* at the *Repertorio*. The video "Lost in Washington Heights | NYC's Little Dominican Republic" could be used as a virtual "walking tour" for those unable to visit Washington Heights in person. Elementary educators might be interested in using this for a Social Studies lesson and ask students to talk about what makes this community distinct and compare and contrast it to their own communities.

Websites are included to offer educators additional digital resources, including an interactive map of Washington Heights, a digital project on the impact of Dominicans on music, Dominicans serving in World War II, and documents related to the first persons of African descent in the Dominican Republic. Some websites, such as *Fighting for Democracy: Dominican Veterans from World War II*, include lesson plans that can be easily added to history, government, civics, and social studies classes. Others, like *First Blacks in the Americas*, provide background on the history of the early inhabitants of Black-African ancestry of today's Dominican Republic, on a website that teachers and students can explore.



A note about a key resource: The CUNY Dominican Studies Institute and how to leverage it

The Dominican Studies Institute of the City University of New York (CUNY DSI) is the nation's first university-based research institute devoted to the study of people of Dominican descent in the US and other parts of the world. Many of the digital projects and resources included in this guide were created by CUNY DSI. These include, but are not limited to, *A History of Dominican Music in the United States*, *Fighting for Democracy: Dominican Veterans from World War II*, and *First Blacks in the Americas*. Teachers are encouraged to use these resources or reach out to CUNY DSI if they have any questions about how to use them in their classrooms. CUNY DSI routinely provides educational workshops for students and teachers in K-12 schools in NYC.

Educators can consider looking at their website for more information.



CHILDREN'S BOOKS AND NOVELS

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



Islandborn

Author: Junot Díaz

Illustrator: Leo Espinosa

Grades: Elementary (Picture book)

Summary: This picture book tells how Lola finds out about her family roots and where she is from. Lola's teacher asks everyone in the classroom to share their origins, but because Lola left The Island when she was a baby, she could not remember. Talking to her family and friends, Lola travels and imagines a journey back to The Island.



Plátanos Are Love

Author: Alyssa Reynoso-Morris

Grades: Elementary (Picture book)

Summary: This picture book depicts the cultural and historical importance of *plátanos*, or plantains, to Latinx communities. It explores the interactions between a young girl and her abuela in the kitchen through dishes like *tostones*, *mangú*, and *maduros*, as well as how *plátanos* represent love.



The Secret Footprints

Author: Julia Alvarez

Illustrator: Fabian Negrin

Grades: Elementary (Picture book)

Summary: This picture book offers a new take on the legend of the Ciguapas. Humans struggled to follow the Ciguapas because these creatures had their feet on backward and inhabited underwater caves. Ciguapas are fearful of humans, but in Julia Alvarez's story, Guapa is a brave Ciguapa who is curious about humans, and about a boy in particular. Getting closer to this boy and his family, Guapa learns that not all humans are mean as she encounters acts of kindness.



Growing up Pedro

Author: Matt Tavares

Grades: Elementary (Late/early middle)

Summary: This book tells the story of Pedro Martínez's origins and roots when he was a child who dreamed of playing in the major leagues with his brother. Pedro is a great and accomplished former baseball player from Manoguayabo in the Dominican Republic, who was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame and played for the New York Mets, the Boston Red Sox, and the Philadelphia Phillies. He was awarded the Cy Young Award three times.



MIDDLE SCHOOL



Before We Were Free

Author: Julia Alvarez

Grades: Middle and High School

Summary: This book tells the story of Anita de la Torre, a girl living in the Dominican Republic under the Trujillo dictatorship. It shows how Anita navigates adolescence while facing how most of her family emigrates to the US, the disappearance of her Tío Toni, and how the regime's secret police persecutes the relatives that stay in the Dominican Republic. Anita is eventually forced to flee as well.



How Tía Lola Came to (Visit) Stay

Author: Julia Alvarez

Grades: Middle School

Summary: As one of the books in Julia Alvarez's *The Tía Lola Stories* series, this one tells the story of the arrival of Tía Lola into Miguel's life. Because of his parents' divorce, Miguel and his Mami move to Vermont. Tía Lola comes from the Dominican Republic to support them in this transition.



The Poet X

Author: Elizabeth Acevedo

Grades: Middle School

Summary: This book tells the story of Xiomara Batista, an avid writer and poet in Harlem. Xiomara hides her thoughts and feelings in a leather notebook, writing about her frustrations, desires, and love. But her mother cannot find out about what she writes. Xiomara receives an invitation to be part of her school's slam poetry club, where she would be able to share her talents publicly, risking that her mother discovers what she does.

HIGH SCHOOL



Clap When You Land

Author: Elizabeth Acevedo

Grades: High School

Summary: Camino Rios lives in the Dominican Republic. Her father lives in NYC and visits her in the summer. Camino's sister, Yahaira, also lives in NYC. One day, their father dies in a plane crash. Navigating loss and grief, this book tells the story of how Camino and Yahaira get to know each other after losing their father. They discover his secrets and their sisterhood, and in the process learn about forgiveness.



How the García Girls Lost Their Accents

Author: Julia Alvarez

Grades: High School

Summary: This book tells the story of Carla, Sandra, Yolanda, and Sofia, the four García sisters, as they leave the Dominican Republic and move to NYC in 1960, amidst political oppression.



In the Time of the Butterflies

Author: Julia Alvarez

Grades: High School

Summary: This book is historical fiction, inspired by the story of the Mirabal sisters. After visiting their husbands imprisoned in the Dominican Republic during Trujillo's dictatorship one day in 1960, three of the Mirabal sisters were murdered: Patria, Minerva, and María Teresa. The Mirabal sisters were known as las mariposas, or the butterflies, in the underground. As they grew older, they became more involved in the opposition. Readers learn more about their lives, their fight, as well as about the story of Dedé, the fourth sister who survived.



Dominicana

Author: Angie Cruz

Grades: High School (Upper 11th or 12th Grade)

Summary: Ana Canción marries Juan Ruiz at the age of 15. Juan, who is twice her age, takes her to NYC. Although Ana does not love him, she marries to be able to bring her family to the US. Ana and Juan now live in Washington Heights. Because of the political challenges in the Dominican Republic, Juan goes back to take care of his family's wealth. In NYC, Ana is now able to explore the city the way she wants, but Juan eventually comes back. Written in musical prose, this book shares Ana's story of migration and self-discovery.



Neruda on the Park: A Novel

Author: Cleyvis Natera

Grades: High School (Upper 11th or 12th Grade)

Summary: The Guerrero family has been living in Nothar Park, a fictional and predominantly Dominican neighborhood in northern Manhattan, for 20 years. Demolition to build luxury condos starts, and one of the elders in the community, Eusebia, decides to take action to stop the destruction of her community. Eusebia's daughter, Luz, works at a top Manhattan law firm and has a romantic relationship with a white developer from the company building the condos, leading to questions of loyalty and sacrifice.



Plantains and Our Becoming: Poems

Author: Melania Luisa Marte

Grades: High School (Upper 11th or 12th Grade)

Summary: This poetry collection centers around Afro-Latinidad and the diaspora from the Dominican Republic and Haiti. The poems focus on legacies of colonialism, racism, and trauma, as well as on ancestral knowledges, self-love, joy, Black identities, and stereotypes.



The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao

Author: Junot Díaz

Grades: High School (Upper 11th or 12th Grade)

Summary: This book tells the life of Oscar and his Dominican American family. Oscar's dream is to be the next J.R.R. Tolkien and to fall in love. However, due to the fukú, which has cursed his family over generations, Oscar may not be able to find love.



The Farming of Bones

Author: Edwidge Danticat

Grades: High School (Upper 11th or 12th Grade)

Summary: This book focuses on the story of Amabelle Désir. Amabelle is a young Haitian woman in the Dominican Republic. She is the servant and companion of a rich colonel. The slaughter of Haitian workers under Trujillo's dictatorship forces Amabelle to flee and return to Haiti. The violence separates Amabelle from the man she loves and wants to marry, Sebastien, a cane worker in the Dominican Republic. The book pays tribute to those who died and were displaced because of the Parsley Massacre.

EXCURSIONS



Family Folklore and Popular Culture

Location: Alianza Dominicana Cultural Center, 530 W 166th Street, New York, NY 10032

Grades: K - 5th Grades

Description: Open Saturdays 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM.



CUNY DSI

Location: The Dominican Studies Institute of the City University of New York, 160 Convent Ave, New York, NY 10031

Grades: 7th - 12th Grades

Type: Library

Description: The CUNY DSI offers an extensive collection of both primary and secondary sources that span historical and contemporary topics related to Dominican studies.



African and Indigenous Heritages Collection

Location: El Museo del Barrio, 1230 5th Avenue at 104th Street, New York, NY 10029

Grades: 3rd - 12th Grades

Type: Museum

Description: This museum is dedicated to showcasing Latin American and Caribbean art and culture, with a particular emphasis on Puerto Rican heritage. The African and Indigenous Heritages Collection features artifacts from the Taínos, the Indigenous people who once inhabited much of the West Indies in the Caribbean, including what is now the Dominican Republic. Open Thursday through Sunday from 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM.



Walking Tour of a Community: A Field Trip to Washington Heights

Location: Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC)

Grades: 5th - 12th Grades

Type: Walking tour

Description: This lesson plan explores the influence of Dominicans in Washington Heights. It provides teachers with a guide to help students analyze the role and impact of community groups and leaders, research the neighborhood and identify its key figures, and relate the lesson to their own experiences. The unit concludes with students creating “zines,” either on paper or digitally, as their final project. To find the walking tour, follow the information indicated in the lesson plan available on the website of the Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC), BMCC’s OpenLab (2022, May 18).



Repertorio Español

Location: Repertorio Español, 138 East 27th Street, New York, NY 10016

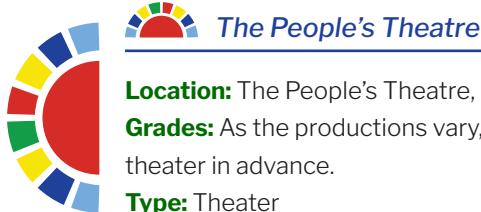
Grades: As the productions vary, appropriate age groups will depend on the play being staged. Repertorio Español’s website states that “Repertorio does not permit anyone under the age of 12 in the theater with the exception of those attending a specified children’s production.” They recommend reaching out to the theater in advance for inquiries about age-appropriate offerings.

Type: Theater

Description: Repertorio Español is a theater company that features work that celebrates and represents Latinidad. All the performances are in Spanish, with English subtitles and Spanish subtitles available for those who are deaf or hard-of-hearing. The theater often features works by Dominican American authors. For example, the company has showcased as part of its rotating productions the play *En El Tiempo De Las Mariposas* (*In the Time of the Butterflies*), which is about Julia Alvarez’s 1994 novel of the same title. Through historical fiction, the novel tells the story of the Mirabal sisters, who were activists against the dictatorship of Rafael Leónidas Trujillo in the Dominican Republic. There is a study guide available on Repertorio Español’s website to learn more about the play and its story.

Another relevant play with an available study guide is *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (*La Breve y Maravillosa Vida de Oscar Wao*). It tells the story of Oscar, a Dominican American first-year college student at Rutgers, who seeks love and dreams of being a writer like J.R.R. Tolkien. There is a study guide available on Repertorio Español’s website to learn more about the play and its story.

Take a look at the theater’s website to find its programming and additional resources.



Location: The People's Theatre, 700 West 192nd Street, Suite 2, New York, NY 10040

Grades: As the productions vary, appropriate age groups will depend on the play being staged. Please check with the theater in advance.

Type: Theater

Description: The People's Theatre, based in Washington Heights and Inwood, partners with immigrant communities to advance social justice and equity through theater. Some performances may be relevant to learn more about Dominicanidad. For example, the play *Domino Effect* was presented in April 2025. It explored the story of how four generations of people were playing at a domino table in Washington Heights.

Take a look at the theater's website to find its programming and additional resources.





SCHOLARLY BOOKS AND ARTICLES



A Tale of Two Cities: Santo Domingo and New York after 1950

Author: Jesse Hoffnung-Garskof

Publication Information: Princeton University Press, 2007

Summary: In 1990, 10% of all Dominicans were living in NY. This book, by a history professor, describes the social and cultural changes during the second half of the twentieth century that led to this statistic. It details the ties that bound together the Dominican Republic and the US during this period, telling the stories of both Dominican migrants who came to New York from Santo Domingo in large numbers at this time, pursuing jobs in garment factories, hospitals, and homes as domestic workers, and how such migration affected lives in the Dominican Republic. In exploring the rise of shantytowns in Santo Domingo in the wake of US intervention and the pursuit of modernization alongside the cultural and political experiences of Dominicans in New York, this book gives a glimpse into Latin American-US relations of the 20th century through the Dominican case.



Currents in Dominican American Literature

Authors: Nancy Kang and Silvio Torres-Saillant

Publication Information: Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Literature, 2018

Summary: This article highlights Dominican American literature, or creative writing by US-based authors who have Dominican heritage and were shaped by life and education in the US. This literary tradition has a long history, stretching back to at least the early 19th century; it gained strong visibility in the 1990s and continues to grow today. The authors distinguish this body of work as distinct from literature written by Dominicans who immigrated as adults and primarily wrote in Spanish while maintaining strong ties to their homeland, and who often hoped to return once political or economic conditions improved. Over time, however, many of the latter settled permanently and raised families in the US. Their children, shaped by US society, became Dominican American writers and contributed to this unique literary tradition, which is to be celebrated.



Dominican Migration to the United States, 1970-1997: An Annotated Bibliography

Author: Sarah Aponte

Publication Information: CUNY DSI, 1999

Summary: This resource provides a list of books, scholarly articles, and chapters on Dominican migration in the late 20th century, with brief descriptions of each work.



Dominican Women across Three Generations: Educational Dreams, Goals and Hopes

Authors: Rosie M. Soy and Stefan Bosworth

Publication Information: CUNY DSI, 2008

Summary: This academic article highlights female experiences from three generations of Dominican immigrant families living in NYC. It explores their access to education and its influences on their lives and trajectories.



Forgotten Migrations from the United States to Hispaniola

Author: Ryan Mann-Hamilton

Publication Information: *Trotter Review*, 19(1), 2010, 124-142

Summary: Departing from his own family history of migration, the author of this article reflects on important but often overlooked aspects of the African Diaspora, such as the resettlement of African Americans in the Dominican Republic. Describing a conversation with his younger cousin, who had been raised in Brooklyn and who had always considered himself purely Dominican, he recounts the cousin's reaction: 'So we're black?' upon learning more about this migration history. This article is thus a useful resource for those seeking to critically examine the experiences of Afro-Latinos and the (de)construction of racial and national identity categories.



Juan Rodriguez and the Beginnings of New York City

Authors: Anthony Stevens-Acevedo, Tom Weterings and Leonor Álvarez Francés

Publication Information: CUNY DSI, 2013

Summary: This piece offers a deep dive into the biography of Juan Rodriguez, the free mulatto or black man from Santo Domingo-La Española who arrived in NY in 1613 on a Dutch ship and lived amongst the Native Americans. He is regarded as the first settler, and the first settler of Black and Latino background, to have also become a New Yorker before it became New Amsterdam. This resource draws from an impressive amount of Dutch and Dominican archival manuscripts, transcriptions, and translations.



Los Dominicanyorks

Author: Luis Guarnizo

Publication Information: In Eric Paul Roorda, Lauren Derby, and Raymundo González (Eds.), *The Dominican Republic Reader: History, Culture, Politics*, Duke University Press, 2014, 490-494

Summary: This chapter discusses Dominicans living in NYC, and is part of a larger reader (see description below) that seeks to go beyond surface knowledge and stereotypes of Dominican history and culture to provide details about the history, politics, and culture of the country since before the arrival of Columbus through to this century.



Quisqueya on the Hudson: The Transnational Identity of Dominicans in Washington Heights

Author: Jorge Duany

Publication Information: CUNY DSI, 2008 (2nd Edition)

Summary: This book is based on field research on the ethnic identities, popular culture, and everyday experiences of Dominicans living in Washington Heights.



Reflections on 1521 Rebellion: Teaching the History of Early Afro-Descendants in Latin America

Author: Alexa Rodríguez

Publication Information: *Latino Studies*, 20(4), 2022, 555-561

Summary: This article reflects on the significance of the first recorded 'Black-led' rebellion in the Americas (Guess, 2021; Stevens-Acevedo, 2019) that took place on December 26, 1521, among a group of enslaved Black people against plantation owners in the Spanish colony of La Española, now the location of the Republic of Haiti and the Dominican Republic. The author analyzes why this rebellion has been overlooked by historians, and examines recent scholarship and resources for K-12 educators to teach about Afro-descendants and their histories in Latin America and the Atlantic.



Spinning the Zoetrope: Visualizing the Mixed-Race Body of Dominican Actress Zoe Saldaña

Author: Rachel Afi Quinn

Publication Information: *Latin American and Latinx Visual Culture*, 1(3), 2019, 44-59

Summary: This article analyzes Dominican American actress Zoe Saldaña and the way she is interpreted by audiences of the global marketplace from a transnational feminist cultural studies lens. The author argues that Saldaña's mixed-race status and ability to represent both Black and Latina identities have given her a racial ambiguity, with the way she is read and her popularity reflecting the distinct racial logics of US and Dominican audiences. It is a useful piece for examining the gendered and racialized experiences of Latinos in the US and beyond.



The Dominican Americans (The New Americans)

Authors: Ramona Hernández and Silvio Torres-Saillant

Publication Information: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1998

Summary: This book explores the history and experiences of Dominican Americans, helping fill a gap in understanding of one of the largest immigrant groups in the US. It begins with Dominican roots and history, then explains the long relationship between the Dominican Republic and the US and why many Dominicans immigrated. The authors discuss important topics such as education, health, drugs and violence, religion, performing arts, popular music, food, race, and gender. A major focus is on how Dominicans have adjusted to life in the US, including both the challenges they faced and the opportunities they gained. The book also highlights the achievements of notable Dominican Americans in fields like sports, art, law, music, and activism. It also enables understanding of the political and economic causes of Dominican emigration to the US overall, it shows how Dominicans have grown as a community, gained political influence, and continue to shape American society.



The Dominican Diaspora: From the Dominican Republic to New York City—Villagers in Transition

Author: Glenn Hendricks

Publication Information: Teachers College Press, 1974

Summary: This book presents an ethnographic study of a group of Dominican immigrants from the same village to NYC, focusing on their acculturation processes, while also comparing this group's experiences to those of other ethnic and national communities in the city and their implications for the educational system. The research is framed around the concept of a "social field," considering both the immigrants' place of origin and their lives in the US. Much of the data comes from participant observation rather than statistics. By following their expanding social networks, the researcher observed hundreds of individuals, making an early contribution to understanding what would become one of NYC's largest immigrant communities.



The Dominican Republic Reader: History, Culture, Politics

Authors: Eric Paul Roorda, Lauren Derby, and Raymundo González (Eds.)

Publication Information: Duke University Press, 2014

Summary: This book seeks to go beyond surface knowledge and stereotypes of Dominican history and culture to provide details about the history, politics, and culture of the country since before the arrival of Columbus through to this century. The reader includes visually informative illustrations and 118 selections, including essays, speeches, journalistic pieces, songs, poems, legal documents, testimonials, creative writing, and interviews, many originally written in Spanish.



They are Taken into Account for Their Opinions

Author: Ginetta E. B. Candelario

Publication Information: In *Black behind the Ears: Dominican Racial Identity from Museums to Beauty Shops*, Duke University Press, 2007, 177-222

Summary: This book explores how Dominican identity is shaped both in the Dominican Republic and in the United States through historical and ethnographic analysis. The book explains that Dominican national identity has long been defined as "not black," even while acknowledging black ancestry. The author proposes that Dominican identity discourse and its displays are not driven by a desire for whiteness, but by ideals of being both Indigenous to the Republic (indios) and Hispanic, and the desire to assert a unique Dominican sovereignty in the context of Spanish colonialism, US imperialism, and Haitian unification. The author shows how these historical forces continue to show up in modern views of history, museums, and beauty standards. For example, the author argues that beauty culture, especially hair texture, plays a major role in defining Dominican identity because it is seen as more flexible than skin color or ancestry. Candelario supports her analysis through interviews, participant observation in a Dominican beauty salon, and research in museums and historical archives in the US and the Dominican Republic.



“Yankee, Go Home...and Take Me With You!” Imperialism and International Migration in Santo

Domingo, Dominican Republic, 1961–1966

Author: Jesse Hoffnung-Garskof

Publication Information: *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies / Revue Canadienne Des Études Latino-Américaines et Caraïbes*, 29(57-58), 2004, 39-65

Summary: This article looks at how US political and military action in the Dominican Republic helped shape the large wave of Dominican migration to the US in the early 1960s. The US tried to control Dominican politics through both force and cooperation, while presenting itself as an ally to the Dominican people. Many Dominicans used this situation to find opportunities to move to the US. However, this migration did not ultimately create a fair or equal relationship between the two countries, which might transcend imperialism. Instead, it led to a new form of inequality, as migrants moved between a struggling Dominican economy and difficult living conditions in US cities.

MUSIC

Dominicanmusicusa.com is an open-source digital platform that tells the history of Dominican music over the 20th century in the US. Unless otherwise indicated, the following songs along with their histories and context can be accessed through this website under the “Narratives” menu or the “Audios” menu.



Mamá Tingó

By: Johnny Ventura y su combo

Grades: 6th - 12th Grades

Resources: See the “Audios” menu.



Colé

By: The New York Band

Grades: 6th - 12th Grades

Resources: See the “1980s: The Internationalization of Dominican Beats” narrative.



El Tiburón

By: Proyecto Uno

Grades: 6th - 12th Grades

Resources: See the “1990s: New Musical Trends” narrative.



Guallando

By: Fulanito

Grades: 6th - 12th Grades

Resources: See the “1990s: New Musical Trends” narrative.



La Maricutana

By: Damirón y Chapuseaux

Grades: 6th - 12th Grades

Resources: See the “1950s: Here Comes the Dominican Merengue: Mambo and Cha Cha Make Way” narrative.



Linda Quisqueya

By: Trío Borinquen

Grades: 6th - 12th Grades

Resources: See the “1910s & 1920s: The Early Presence of Dominican Music” narrative.



Mis Amores-Loreta

By: Luis Herrero y su Orquesta Dominicana Feat. Davilita

Grades: 6th - 12th Grades

Resources: See the “1930s: Dominicans and the First Latin Music Dance Craze” narrative.



Obsesión

By: Aventura

Grades: 6th - 12th Grades

Resources: See the “2000s: Bachata Overtakes the World” narrative.



Volvió Juanita

By: Milly Quezada

Grades: 6th - 12th Grades

Resources: See the “1980s: The Internationalization of Dominican Beats” narrative.



El Carbonero

By: Josecito Román y su Orquesta Quisqueya

Grades: 6th - 12th Grades

Resources: Available on YouTube.



Ojalá Que Llueva Café

By: Juan Luis Guerra

Grades: 6th - 12th Grades

Resources: Access this song and its context on the npr.org “Music News” website, as it was featured on the October 15, 2024 edition of the Morning Edition show.

VIDEOS AND DOCUMENTARIES



Lost in Washington Heights | NYC's Little Dominican Republic

Source: YouTube, posted by Time Travel Walk, August 12, 2021

Grades: K - 12th Grades

Description: Walking tour of Washington Heights.

Julia Alvarez: A Life Reimagined

Source: PBS: American Masters, 2024

Grades: 5th - 12th Grades

Description: This documentary centers on the life of poet and novelist Julia Alvarez, a trailblazer who opened the door for an entire generation of Latinx/e authors.

Dreams Ensnared: The Dominican Migration to New York

Source: Sonia Fritz, Puerto Rico, 1994

Grades: 7th - 12th Grades

Description: This documentary explores how Dominican women, facing severe socioeconomic challenges, are compelled to migrate first to Puerto Rico and later to NY. It highlights the various reasons and methods by which Dominicans leave their country, even risking dangerous and illegal journeys by yola, small boats.

My American Girls: A Dominican Story

Source: PBS: POV, 2001

Grades: 7th - 12th Grades

Description: This film documents the Ortiz family, first-generation Dominican immigrants, for a year. Filmed in the vérité style, it highlights the family's journey and explores the joys and sacrifices of pursuing the American dream.

WEBSITES

A Demographic Snapshot: NYC's Latinx Immigrant Population

Source: NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, 2021

Description: This fact sheet presents key demographic and economic characteristics of the Latinx population in NYC in 2019 and provides historical context with data from the past 30 years.



A History of Dominican Music in The United States

Source: CUNY DSI

Description: This exhibit is the first open-source digital tool that chronicles the history of Dominican music in the US over the past century. Through multimedia resources and descriptive essays that provide relevant historical context, it explores larger themes of immigration, identity, and diversity, and highlights the impact of Dominicans on US culture.



Dominican Historic Neighborhoods: Washington Heights

Source: CUNY DSI, *An Interactive Map Showcasing the Geographic Boundaries of a Proposed Dominican Historic District in Washington Heights*

Description: This interactive map highlights schools, religious organizations, non-profit groups, and notable sites and social institutions that illustrate the historic Dominican presence in Washington Heights.



Dominicans in New York: An Exhibit from the Dominican Archives and Library Collections

Source: CUNY DSI and New York Council for the Humanities, 2020

Description: This exhibit highlights experiences and impact of Dominicans in NYC. Through archival documents, photographs, and memorabilia, the exhibit examines how Dominicans built lives in the city, formed communities, and contributed to its diversity. A curated selection of images and biographical details explores the complexity of Dominican life in NYC, offering valuable insights into the community's history, culture, and evolving demographics.



Fighting For Democracy: Dominican Veterans from World War II

Source: CUNY DSI and CUNY Libraries, *Educational Resources*

Description: This exhibit highlights the experience of Dominican veterans in World War II, tracing their stories from their arrival in the US, their incorporation into the war, and their post-war experiences.



First Blacks in the Americas

Source: CUNY DSI, *The African Presence in the Dominican Republic*

Description: This is the first digital bilingual platform dedicated to the history of early inhabitants of Black-African ancestry of the Dominican Republic, then a Spanish colony named La Española (Hispaniola, in English).



Juan Rodriguez

Source: Museum of the City of New York

Description: Webpage on Juan Rodriguez, the first documented non-Indigenous inhabitant to live on Manhattan Island.



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