Africana 177: Twentieth Century African American History

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Spring ’14, TR 12:00-1:30P, Moore Building 212

This course is a survey of African American History from the dawn of the twentieth century to the early period of the twentieth-first century. The course will have considerable emphasis on the roles of politics and culture during the modern period of the long black freedom struggle. It will explore major themes in African American history beginning with: the emergence of black organizing, lynching, and the emergence of the NAACP during the height of white supremacy in the dawn of the twentieth century, the implications of World War I, migration, and Garveyism on Black Nationalism during the 1920s, the economic necessity and political realignment of blacks during the Great Depression and the barrier of racial inequality during the New Deal, the implications of World War II and contested concepts of democracy and freedom, African Americans and the dilemma of American democracy during the Cold War era, black religion and the fight for desegregation, the reemergence of Black Nationalism and the demand for racial reform during the post-WWII era, the retreat from the Second Reconstruction, the global implications of racial inequality, to the rise of Obama and the question of post-racialism.

Class time will be devoted in most cases to some lectures but mostly discussions of the readings and films. In some cases primary source materials will used. In such instances students will also be scholars as each will learn how to critically engage historical documents.

In order to pass this course, students must be committed to attending class, doing the readings, participation in class discussions, and submitting assignments on time. Attendance is vitally important; if you miss lectures and discussions, you will not be able to pass this course.

Course requirements are one 6-8 page paper, eight 2-3 page response papers, and a final 8-10 page paper. Your grade for this class is determined by the following: response papers, 20%, in-class participation/discussion, 20%, one 6-8 page paper, 25%, and final paper, 35%. The 6-8 page paper will be due on April 8th; four of the eight response papers must be submitted before spring break and four after spring break. All response papers must be submitted via emailed. The final paper will be due during the exam period.

Books for the course will be available at Penn Book Center, 34th and Sansom Street. All assigned books and supplemental readings will also be on reserve in the Rosengarten Room.

Required Books:
Manning Marable, Race, Reform, and Rebellion, 3rd Edition
Melba Beals, Warriors Don’t Cry
Alex Haley, Autobiography of Malcolm X
Michelle Alexander, The New Jim Crow
Class Schedule

January 16: Overview, Class Expectations

January 21 and 23: The History Of African American History
   Tuesday: Lecture/Discussion-The MLK Holiday: The Image of Black Leadership
   King’s Speech: “I Have Been To the Mountaintop.”
   Nathan Huggins, “Martin Luther King, Jr.: Charisma and Leadership,” 74 Journal of American History 477-481. JSTOR
   Vincent Harding, “Beyond Amnesia: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Future of America,” 74 Journal of American History 468-476. JSTOR
   Thursday: Lecture/Discussion-The History of African American History

January 28 and 30: From the Failure of Reconstruction to the Triumph of White Supremacy: Examining the Color Line and Black Political Organizing During the Dawn of the 20th Century
   Tuesday: Lecture/Discussion-Black Disfranchisement
   Supplement Readings
   Thursday: Lecture/Discussion-Urban Problems, the Pattern of Violence, and Progressive Responses


Visit “Without Sanctuary” website before class meets [http://www.withoutsanctuary.org/]

See the short film on lynching postcards, narrated by Collector James Allen.

**Supplemental Readings**


Brook Thomas, *Plessy V. Ferguson: A Brief History with Documents* (1997)

**February 4 and 6: Uplifting the Race and the Color Line**

**Tuesday:** Lecture/Black Leadership in the Age of Booker T. Washington: Debates about the Economic Sphere, Education, and Politics


**Supplemental Readings**


**Thursday:** Lecture/Discussion-Black Women, Religion, and Religious Institutions


**Supplemental Readings**


**February 11 and 13: World War I Era: Black Urban Migration, Unrest on the Home-Front, and the Politics of Black Print Culture**

**Tuesday:** Lecture/Discussion-WWI and Migration


See YouTube Documentary KETC Living St. Louis “East St. Louis Race Riots” Duration 8:04

**Supplemental Readings**


**Thursday**: Lecture/Discussion-The Harlem Renaissance and Black Print Culture


**Supplemental Readings**


**February 18 and 20**: Black Nationalism During the Interwar Period

**Tuesday**: Lecture/Discussion-Black Nationalism and Garvey


**Thursday**: Lecture/Discussion-Race Politics and the UNIA Movement

Ula Taylor, *The Veiled Garvey*, pp. 41-90.


See short YouTube Documentary “The Influence of Marcus Garvey,” Pts. 1, 3, 4, and 5

**Supplemental Readings**


**February 25 and 28**: The 1930s: The Depression, the New Deal, and the State

**Tuesday**: Lecture/Discussion-FDR and Economic Relief: A New Deal or the Same Old Deal?

**Thursday:** Film-The Scottsboro Boys

**March 4 and 6:** World War II Era: the Illusion of Democracy and the Emergence of Black Protest Politics  
**Tuesday:** Lecture/Discussion-Mobilizing for Freedom: Discrimination, the Federal Government, and the Politics of Racial Equality  
Film-The Tuskegee Airmen  
Mid-term papers due

**Supplemental Readings**  
Ralph J. Bunche, *The Political Status of the Negro in the Age of FDR* (1973)

**March 8-16** spring break

**March 18 and 20:** Black America in the Cold War Era: A Prelude to the Second Reconstruction and the Modern Civil Rights Movement  
**Tuesday:** Lecture/Discussion-The Cold War and the Dilemma of American Democracy  
**Thursday:** Discussion/Film: The Murder of Emmett Till  
Ruth Feldstein, “I Wanted the Whole World to See”: Race, Gender, and Constructions of Motherhood in the Death of Emmett Till, chapter 12, pp. 263-303.  
Film-The Murder of Emmett Till

**Supplemental Readings**  

**March 25 and 27:** Public School Desegregation and the Modern Civil Rights Movement  
**Tuesday:** Lecture/Film  
Film on Charles Hamilton Houston:  
“The Road to Brown”
Supplemental Readings


**Thursday:** Film/Discussion
**Melba Beals, *Warriors Don’t Cry**-required response paper
Film excerpt from “Eyes on the Prize-Little Rock and Ole Miss.”

Supplemental Readings


April 1 and 3: Organizing the Modern Civil Rights Movement

**Tuesday:** Lecture/Discussion-Organizing for Change

Supplemental Readings


**Thursday:** Lecture/Discussion The Call for Reform

Supplemental Readings


April 8 and 10: Malcolm X and Emergence of the Black Power Movement

**Tuesday:** Book Discussion on Malcolm X
Alex Haley, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, 6-8 page paper due**

**Thursday:** the Ideology and Practice of Black Power
Film: “Eyes on the Prize-Malcolm X, Black Power

Supplemental Readings

Komozi Woodard, *A Nation within a Nation: Amiri Baraka (Leroi Jones) and Black Power Politics* (1999)

**April 15 and 17**: The Aftermath of Rebellion: Racial Politics and American Conservatism  
**Tuesday**: Discussion-Understanding the Shift to Electoral Politics  
**Thursday**: Discussion-Black America and the Reagan Revolution  

**Supplemental Readings**

**April 22 and 24**: the New Jim Crow: Race and the Carceral State  
**Tuesday and Thursday**: discussion on Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*.

**Supplemental Readings**

**April 29**: Are We Really in a Post-Civil Rights Era?: Racial Inequality and its Global Implications, Obama and Post-Racialism, and Wrap Up  
**Tuesday**: Discussion-Race in 21st Century America  

**Supplemental Readings**