

Historical Memory and the Black Past

21:510:315

Thursday 2:30p-5:20p, Conklin 319

Instructor

Dr. M. Cooper

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Required Text:

Freedom on My Mind: A History of African Americans with Documents (Combined Edition)

Office Location

Conklin Hall, Room 330

Office Hours

Thursday 1:00p-2:00p

Course Description:

This course explores historical memory and the African American past from the colonial period to the Black Power era. Using primary and secondary source material to trace the social, political, economic and cultural forces that shape and influence historical memory, this course grapples with the competing stories that scholars, artists, writers and institutions tell about the black experience in America.

Course Objectives:

By the end of this course:

- Students should be able to identify, describe and chart specific historical events and phenomenon central to the black American experience from the colonial period to the Black Power era.
- Students will be able to discuss and compose essays about the black experience and the competing stories that scholars, artists, writers and institutions tell about the black experience in America drawing on *historical memory* and *memory* theories.
- Students will be able to interpret and analyze a variety of primary and secondary source materials.
- Students will be able to compose essays and papers that analyze, compare and contrast the competing stories that scholars, artists, writers and institutions tell about the black experience in America using secondary and primary sources.

Course Requirements:

Attendance

Students are expected to attend each scheduled class meeting, to be on time, and to be prepared for each class session. The University attendance policy specifies that students are allowed four absences, excused or unexcused, with each further unexcused absence resulting in a deduction of a portion of a letter grade (i.e., B+ dropping to a B). An illness that requires medical attention; curricular or extracurricular activities approved by the faculty; personal obligations claimed by the student and recognized as valid; recognized religious holidays; and severe inclement weather causing dangerous traveling conditions are “excused” absences. Class absences will

inevitably affect your class participation grade. Repeated tardiness will lower your participation grade.

Readings/Weekly Response Paper

The completion of weekly readings is mandatory. You are expected to bring required readings to class meetings: please print out, and bring to class.

Each student is required to answer the following question each week: **How does this week's reading/s engage historical memory and the black past?** Your response should be linked to specific passages—please quote directly from the text. Your response paper should be submitted at the start of class. You will not receive credit for your response paper if you are absent from the class meeting. Your responses, and contributions to class conversations will constitute your participation grade.

Academic Integrity:

Please review Rutgers University-Newark's Academic Integrity Policy and Policy on Plagiarism (<https://spaa.newark.rutgers.edu/phd-university-policy-plagiarism>). Students who violate this policy will be subject to academic penalties under the code in addition to whatever disciplinary sanctions are applied.

Classroom Expectations:

Please set your cell phones to the "silent" notification mode during class sessions. Do not use your cell phone to send "text messages," etc. during class meetings. While I understand that many students use laptops and tablets to take notes, I expect that these devices will be used for those purposes only. Please do not audio or video record class meetings or lectures. You are also expected to refrain from distracting and disruptive behaviors (i.e. "chatting" during lectures/discussions, consuming a full meal in class, etc.).

Writing Workshops

We will have writing workshops (in class) on a regular basis. Students are expected to be fully engaged while working in their cooperative peer review groups.

Students With Disabilities:

If you have a disability and may need accommodations to fully participate in this class, contact the Office of Student Disability Services at the semester's start. Please review the University's statement on this issue below:

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form

on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>. For more information

please contact Kate Torres at (973) 353-5375 or in the Office of Disability Services in the Paul Robeson Campus Center, in suite 219 or by contacting odsnewark@rutgers.edu <<mailto:odsnewark@rutgers.edu>>.

Papers:

Students must complete several papers during the semester— including a midterm paper and final exam paper. Rubrics and composition specifications for each paper will be posted on Blackboard. All writings are to be double-spaced, in 12-pt font, with sources cited in the Chicago format. Extensions will not be granted except for health and family emergencies.

Grading:

Category	Percentage
Weekly Response Papers, Attendance, Participation	30%
Midterm Exam Paper	35%
Final Exam	35%

Course Schedule:

Week	Theme	Readings/Class Activities
Week 1: 9/6	Course Introduction: History, Memory and the Useable Past	Griffin & Hargis. "Surveying Memory: The Past in Black and White" <i>Southern Literary Journal</i> , Vol XL, Number 2 (Spring 2008) 42-69 (on Blackboard).
Week 2: 9/13	Memories of Saltwater Slavery: The Passage and the "Return" *Textbook background reading: Chapter 1	Excerpts: Newton, John. <i>Thoughts Upon the African Slave Trade</i> (1788) (access via Dana Library online); Equiano, Olaudah. <i>The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, Or Gustavus Vassa, the African</i> (1789)(on Blackboard); Flying African folktale excerpts-- <i>Drums and Shadows</i> (on Blackboard); Timothy Powell, "Summoning the Ancestors: The Flying Africans Story and Its Enduring Legacy" (on Blackboard). *Multimedia In-class Memory Exploration: <i>A Son of Africa</i> ; (1996) <i>The Middle Passage</i> (2001)
Week 3: 9/20	Making America, Making Race	Jefferson, Thomas. <i>Notes on the State of Virginia</i> (1781) (on Blackboard); Walker, David. <i>Walker's Appeal</i> (1829) (on Blackboard). *In Class Writing Workshop 1
Week 4: 9/27	American Slavery: Black	Excerpts: Jacobs, Harriet. <i>Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl</i> (1861) (on Blackboard); Douglass, Frederick. <i>Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass an American Slave</i> (1845) (on Blackboard); DeSaussure, Nancy Bostick. <i>Old</i>

	<p>Narratives & White Memoirs</p> <p><i>*Textbook background reading: Chapters 4&5</i></p>	<p><i>Plantation Days</i> (1909) (on Blackboard); Clinkscales, John George. <i>The Old Plantation: Reminiscences of His Childhood</i> (1916) (on Blackboard).</p>
<p>Week 5: 10/4 *</p>	<p>American Slavery: Film, Fiction, Fantasy</p>	<p>Northup, Solomon. <i>Twelve Years a Slave: Narrative of Solomon Northup, a Citizen of New York, Kidnapped in Washington City in 1841 and Rescued in 1853</i> (access via Dana Library online).</p> <p>Independent Film Analysis (Instructions on Blackboard)</p>
<p>Week 6: 10/11</p>	<p>American Slavery: Memorials & Cemeteries</p>	<p>Small, Stephen. "Still Back of the Big House: Slave Cabins and Slavery in Southern Heritage Tourism" (on Blackboard); Frohne, Andrea. <i>The African Burial Ground in New York City: Memory, Spirituality and Space</i> (2015) Chapter 4 (on Blackboard); Ani DiFranco & Nottoway Plantation Controversy article set (on Blackboard)</p> <p>*In Class Writing Workshop 2</p>
<p>Week 7: 10/18</p>	<p>Civil War Memory in Black and White</p> <p><i>*Textbook background reading: Chapter 7</i></p>	<p>Excerpts: Taylor, Susie King. <i>Reminiscences of My Life in Camp</i> (1902) (on Blackboard); Morgan, Sarah Dawson. <i>A Confederate Girl's Diary</i> (1913) (on Blackboard).</p> <p><i>*Multimedia In-class Memory Exploration: In class exploration of oral history interviews revealing Civil War memories passed from generation to generation.</i></p>
<p>Week 8: 10/25</p>	<p><i>African Memories in America? The African Survivals Debate</i></p>	<p>Hurston, Zora. "How it Feels to Be Colored Me" (1928) and <i>Barracoon: The Story of the Last Black Cargo</i> (2018) (on Blackboard); Frazier, E. Franklin. <i>The Negro Family in the United States</i> (1939) "Forgotten Memories" (on Blackboard); Herskovits, Melville. <i>Myth of the Negro Past</i> (1941) "The Significance of Africanisms" (on Blackboard).</p>
<p>Week 9: 11/1 *</p>	<p>Jim Crow: Spectacle Violence & Memory</p> <p><i>*Textbook background reading: Chapter 10</i></p>	<p>Ida B. Wells document set (on Blackboard); excerpt from Alfred Waddel's "The Story of the Wilmington, N.C. Race Riots" (1898) (on Blackboard); Bell, Jeanine. "The Hangman's Noose and the Lynch Mob: Hate Speech and the Jena Six" <i>Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review</i>, Vol 44, 2009 (on Blackboard).</p>
<p>Week 10: 11/8</p>	<p>Imagining and Fictionalizing Jim Crow: History and Storytelling on Film</p> <p><i>*Textbook background reading: Chapters 11 & 12</i></p>	<p>Independent film & oral history interview analysis (Assignment on Blackboard)</p> <p><u>Resources:</u></p> <p>1. UNC Southern Oral History Program https://sohp.org/</p> <p>2. Duke University "Behind the Veil: Documenting African American Life in the Jim Crow South" https://library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/behindtheveil/</p>

		3. "Goin' North: Stories from the First Great Migration to Philadelphia" https://goinnorth.org/ *In Class Writing Workshop 3
Week 11: 11/15	Jim Crow: Remembering and Forgetting Emmett Till	Kolin, Philip C. "Forgotten Manuscripts: 'Blues for Emmett Till' The Earliest Extant Song About the Murder of Emmett Till" <i>African American Review</i> , September 2008 (on Blackboard); Emmett Till document set (on Blackboard).
Week 12: 11/22 *	NO CLASS Thanksgiving Break	Final Paper Planning
Week 13: 11/29	Jim Crow: King's Remembered and Forgotten Dreams	King's speeches document set; Yanco, Jennifer. <i>Misremembering Dr. King Revisiting the Legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr.</i> (2014) (Introduction and Chapter 1) (on Blackboard); Smith, Mychal Denzel, "Is King All That We Are Allowed to Become?" (2018)(online); Hobson, Maurice. " The King of Atlanta: Martin Luther King Jr. and Public Memory"(2018)(online)
Week 14: 12/6	Orangeburg: Riot or Massacre? *Textbook background reading: Chapter 13	Excerpt: Schuler, Jack. <i>Blood and Bone: Truth and Reconciliation in a Southern Town</i> (2012) (on Blackboard). *Multimedia In-class Memory Exploration: <i>Scarred Justice: The Orangeburg Massacre 1968</i> (2009)
*Final Paper Due On Exam Day		