

Introduction to African and African American Studies (Fall 2015)

Conklin 346 MW 10-11:20 am

Course Objectives

In this course you will study the early African American experience using both primary and secondary sources that range from scholarly articles and books, to songs, photographs and artwork. Using these sources you will develop and sharpen your rhetorical, analytical, and critical thinking skills as we explore the arguments, evidence and questions that presently shape the field of African American studies. Through in-class discussions, lectures, debates, and written assignments, you will also demonstrate your understanding of the major events that shaped the early African American life so that by the end of the semester you will:

- A) Gain a greater understanding of the relationship between race and class.
- B) Identify the contribution of African Americans to early American history and culture.
- C) Evaluate the impact of American slavery, capitalism and democracy on African American socio-cultural and political expression.
- D) Compare and contrast the philosophies, roles and approaches of early African American leaders to American inequalities.
- E) Identify the primary strategies African Americans employed to resist oppression in the U.S.

Course Description

As the United States marches into 2016, it seems odd that we would *still* have courses dedicated to the journey of a people who have seemingly made it into every fathomable stretch of American life. Certainly, we might all be hard pressed to find an area of American society that African American people have yet to successfully enter as figures of influence. Yet the contemporary realities of African American life now do not belie the truths of its past. Indeed, our insistent focus on this country's present — and future — makes it difficult to tell and retell the stories of those who died to help the nation realize its full democratic potential. In every way, the continued realization of American freedom is intimately tied to the preservation of black life, community, and culture. As we look to the African American past this semester, we will retrace the paths of those who have worked to ensure that the nation's ideologies about freedom and equality are congruent with its lived realities for all Americans. In the next several weeks, we will consider the meanings of freedom and democracy to people of African descent in the United States from colonial times to the Reconstruction Era. Primarily, we will think about the ways in which the backdrop of a developing democratic country (the first of its kind) deeply impacted the identity construction and culture of African American people. Please note that the scope of this course will not allow us to discuss every detail of the early African experience in the United States, so I do not ask you to remember an extensive list of dates, places and names. I do, however, expect that you will work to gain insight on the trends, ideologies and events that make some of the major names, dates and places in early African American life important.



Elizabeth Jennings
First woman to fight for the integration of public buses. Ca. 1854

Instructor: L. Hunter

How to contact me:

Email:

lahunter@scarletmail.rutgers.edu

lpbhunter@gmail.com (please CC all messages and assignments here.)

Office & Office Hours:

Conklin rm. 326

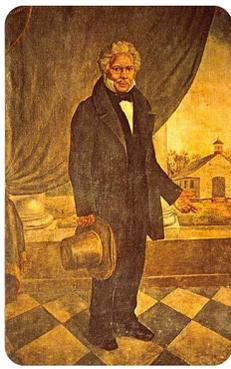
MW: 11:45-1:00pm

Required Texts:

Deborah Gray White, Mia Bay et al. *Freedom on My Mind: A History of African Americans: Vol. 1 to 1885* ISBN: 9780312648831

Deborah Gray White *Ar'n't I a Woman? Female Slaves in the Plantation South* ISBN: 9780393314816

Shane White *Stories of Freedom in Black New York* ISBN: 9780674025783



Painting of Nicholas Augustin Metoyer.
Louisiana slave holder. Ca. 1830s

Grading Scale

Grading in this course is based on the following raw points scale:

- Papers (25 points)
- Quizzes (20 points)
- Exams (35 points)
- Presentation (5 points)
- Individual Group performance (5 points)
- Group Project (5 points)
- Participation (5 points)
- Total points possible = 100.

A quick note on the meaning of grades

- A = 90-100 — work of superior quality and mastery of course material
- B+ = 86-89 — work of high quality, mastery of course material, with minimal errors
- B = 80-85 — see above
- C+ = 75-79 — work minimally meets course requirements
- C = 70-74 — see above
- D = 60-69 — work shows minimal clarity or comprehension of course material
- F = <59 — no satisfactory work provided during semester

Course Requirements

Short informal Paper Assignments:

You are responsible for two short reading response papers this semester. One will require you to analyze a primary source of your choosing within

the textbook, the other will require you to evaluate and analyze a given primary source reading provided on Blackboard. Due dates are listed in the course schedule.

Longer formal Paper Assignments:

This semester you will write one formal essay; this will be an essay response to a larger academic question. You will be responsible for finding the proper sources for this paper and will be graded according to the strength of your argument and the mastery of your sources. The guidelines for this assignment are available on blackboard, but we will discuss it in detail well in advance of its due date.

Quizzes: You will take four quizzes over the course of the semester. They will not all be announced in advance so please make sure you have read for each class to prepare. Quizzes will require you to demonstrate your understanding of the major trends and events that we discuss throughout the semester. **Note: If you miss a quiz for any reason, you must make it up within two class sessions. After this time, you will lose the opportunity — except in cases of proven medical emergency. You cannot re-take a missed pop quiz.**

Midterm Exam/ Final Exam (non-comprehensive): You will take two exams this semester. The first is scheduled for Oct. 14 during regular class time. The second exam is scheduled for Monday December 21st 11:45-2:45 pm.

Participation: Consistent participation in this course is vital to excelling in it, and thoughtful, open conversations are the only ways to keep it interesting and fun. To ensure this, we must each bring

ourselves to every conversation. Making an effort to question, challenge, critique and debate the points raised in class will allow you to walk away from this semester with a strong command of the major issues that shape African American Studies. Accomplishing this for all of us will mean active participation in class dialogue and spirited involvement in every activity.

Presentation and Project: Beginning in November, seven of our class meetings are reserved for project presentations. On your own, you will choose from a given selection of topics. Along with the students who select this topic, you will create **ONE OF TWO TYPES OF PROJECTS**. As a group, you will receive a grade from me based on the quality and effort of your project and presentation; this will total 10 points. You will also each take the time to evaluate each other, based on the level of effort and contribution you believe your group members devoted to the finished product. This will total 5 points.

PROJECT OPTIONS

Type A — begin a social media campaign that connects one specific trend of early African American life to contemporary realities. This campaign will entail several components and should be maintained throughout the semester so that students can see how the public responds to the issues you present.

Type B — create an online museum exhibit that explores a specific academic question/debate about early African American life.

On the day of your presentation, you will lead the class in an informed discussion about the work you have done and what it teaches us about early African American life. Details for both options are available on blackboard in the papers/assignments section.

Evaluation: A key element aspect of your experience in this class will involve the instructor's evaluation of your progress in the course, with the course materials. As part of each of the instructor's assessment of your coursework, the following elements will be considered where applicable with each of the course assignments noted above.

- How effectively you develop your arguments in clear and coherent texts, as well as in oral communication, to produce an informed analysis of the materials with which you have been presented.
- How effectively you grasp the differing ways to read a variety of texts and cultural artifacts, and then produce an informed analysis of them. The evaluation will also include assessing your understanding of the connections among texts within given disciplines, and the similarities and distinctions between texts from different disciplines.
- How successfully you discuss your ideas individually and collectively in class, informally address in writing the information which you are presented in your responses to readings, and how you more formally engage these ideas in longer written work, as well as the midterm and final examinations.
- How you creatively produce ideas and texts in response to each other through the debates and the one-on-one conversation sessions.
- How you employ basic methods and methodologies employed in the humanities and social sciences. How well you identify, discuss and analyze interactions between people from a range of political, social, cultural, racial, ethnic, and gendered groups.
- How well you understand and address the relationship between the course materials and the defining social, political, cultural, and intellectual questions of your own time, in both historical and historical perspectives.

Course policies, resources & notes on success

Attendance & punctuality: Besides active participation, being in class is a key component to excelling in this course. Understandably, there will be times when each of us may be late or absent. In this case, let's agree to keep each other posted at least 24 hours AHEAD of time when we can. If this is not possible, and your late attendance or absence is not due to an emergency, it will count against you. Three incidences of lateness will equal one absence; each unexcused absence after this will lower your final grade by one half grade. Any student who misses eight or more sessions through any combination of excused and unexcused absences will not earn credit in this class. Such students should withdraw to avoid getting an F.

Policy on Academic Integrity (Cheating and Plagiarism): Rutgers University treats cheating and plagiarism as serious offenses. The standard minimum penalties for students who cheat or plagiarize include failure of the course, disciplinary probation, and a formal warning that further cheating will be grounds for expulsion from the University. As per University policy, you are **REQUIRED** to insert an academic integrity pledge on ALL of your submitted work this semester. **THE PLEDGE SHOULD READ AS FOLLOWS: "ON MY HONOR I HAVE NEITHER RECEIVED NOR GIVEN ANY UNAUTHORIZED ASSISTANCE ON THIS ASSIGNMENT."**

Accommodations: For any student who has been deemed eligible for special services, Rutgers provides accommodations and/or modifications in order to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to participate in all Rutgers programs, services, and activities. Students with disabilities, including learning disabilities, requiring assistance and/or accommodation should speak with Disability Services in a timely manner.

Additional notes: Writing is critical in this course and much of what you will be writing about will require you to engage issues of race, gender, class, sexuality, and morality in a sophisticated way. In light of this, I encourage you to utilize me as a resource and a sounding board in addition to any online resources, the library and the writing center. Additionally, feel free to send me drafts of assignments and ask me questions via email.

PLEASE NOTE SCHEDULE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Week	Dates	Topic	What to Read	What's Due
1	Sept. 2	Introductions, Definitions & Relevance		
2	Sept. 8	Debates & Beginnings	Blackboard Readings: Joseph E. Peniel "Dashiki's & Democracy"	
	Sept. 9		Blackboard Reading: Excerpts from Martin Bernal's <i>Black Athena</i> & Mary Lefkowitz's "Willful distortions of History"	Please complete the precourse survey and submit your email address by the end of this week.
3	Sept. 14	Africa before & after European expansion 1441-1808	Begin reading: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 1 pp. 2-31 & Blackboard Reading: Paul Lovejoy & David Richardson "The Business of Slaving"	
	Sept. 16	The Middle Passage, the Americas & the African 1619-1739	Continue Reading Ch. 1 in <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> pp. 2-31 Blackboard Reading: Excerpts from <i>Transformations in Slavery</i>	
4	Sept. 21	Blurred lines: colonial development & racial boundaries 1650-1783	Blackboard Readings: Excerpts from Sharon Salinger's <i>To Serve Well and Faithfully</i> & A. Roger Ekirch's <i>Bound for America</i>	
	Sept. 23		Begin Reading: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 2 pp. 54-71 Excerpts from <i>White Cargo</i>	
5	Sept. 28		Read: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 2 pp. 71-82 Document: "An Act for Regulating Slaves in New Jersey" & South Carolina Slave Codes pp.86-89	Reading reaction 1
	Sept. 30	Revolution & African Americans	Begin Reading: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch.3 pp. 110-138 Textbook Documents: pp. 147-148 Midterm review sheets available on blackboard	
6	Oct. 5		Continue Reading: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch.3 pp. 110-138 Blackboard Readings: Sylvia Frey "The British and the Black: A New Perspective"	
	Oct. 7	Race & Slavery in a post-Revolutionary World	Complete <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 3 Blackboard Readings: Cynthia King "Representing Revolution in Black History"	
7	Oct. 12			MIDTERM REVIEW
	Oct. 14			MIDTERM EXAM
8	Oct. 19	Race & Slavery in a post-Revolutionary World	Begin reading: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 4 pp. 160-176 Blackboard Readings: Excerpts from Jefferson's Notes on Virginia	
	Oct. 21		Complete: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 4 pp.176-189 Blackboard Reading: Robert Forbes "The Cause of this Blackness"	
9	Oct. 26	Free African Americans & Civil	Read: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 5 Blackboard Reading: Excerpts from James Horton's <i>Free</i>	Reading reaction 2

		Rights	People of Color	
	Oct. 28		Read: <i>Stories of Freedom</i> Ch. 1 pp. 7-38	
10	Nov. 2	Progress & the Antebellum Period	Complete: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 5 & <i>Stories of Freedom</i> Ch. 1 pp. 38-67	
	Nov. 4		Read: <i>Ar'n't I A Woman?</i> Ch. 2 Blackboard Reading: Thomas Foster "The Sexual Abuse of Black Men Under Slavery"	Presentation 1
11	Nov. 9	Slavery, Race, Rights & The American Civil War	Complete: <i>Stories of Freedom</i> Ch. 2 Begin Reading: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 6 pp. 264-282	Presentation 2
	Nov. 11		Complete: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 6 Read: <i>Ar'n't I A Woman?</i> Ch. 3 & 5	Presentation 3
12	Nov. 16		Begin Reading: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 7 pp.322-350 Read: <i>Stories of Freedom</i> Ch. 4	Presentation 4
	Nov. 18		Complete: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 7 & Begin reading <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 8	Formal Essay 1
13	Nov. 23	Reconstruction: A New Beginning?	Complete: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 8 pp.400-407	Presentation 5
	Nov. 25	-----	Final exam review sheets available on blackboard	NO CLASS
14	Nov. 30		Blackboard Readings: Excerpts from W.E.B. DuBois <i>Souls of Black Folk</i>	Presentation 6
	Dec. 2		Joy DeGruy's <i>Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome</i> (part 1)	Presentation 7
15	Dec. 7		Continue Reading: Joy DeGruy's <i>Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome</i> (part 2)	
	Dec. 9	FINAL EXAM REVIEW	-----	FINAL EXAM REVIEW
16	Dec. 14-16	READING DAYS	-----	NO CLASS
	Dec. 21	FINAL EXAM 11:45-2:45pm	-----	FINAL EXAM