

INTRODUCTION TO AFRICAN AMERICAN & AFRICAN STUDIES

CONKLIN HALL RM. 346 MW – 10:00 – 11:20 AM

FALL 2016



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.

"...though we are not white, we have accomplished much...we have pioneered civilization here... built up your country... worked in your fields and garnered your harvests for two hundred and fifty years! And what do we ask of you in return? ...we ask you, now for our rights."

Bis. Henry M. Turner (1868)

Course description

A decade ago few people believed it was possible for an African American to govern the United States. For many, the eight-year presidency of Barack Obama is a sure sign of racial and political progress in our nation. Yet, the last eight years are also marked by some of the most incendiary racial and ethnic antagonism and violence since the early twentieth century. Despite Americans' hope for and progress towards cultural inclusiveness, we still struggle to have an honest dialogue about our past. Indeed, it is our failure to openly discuss America's narratives and counter-narratives that stifles the nation's democratic ideals. In the coming weeks, we will look back at one of this country's longest running counter-narratives, putting it in conversation with the larger story of early American life. That is, we will re-chart the journey of African people in the Americas, listening to their voices as we consider the ways they wove themselves into the fabric of the nation by fighting to realize a more inclusive definition of freedom and democracy. As we retrace their steps from colonial times to the Reconstruction Era, we will also think critically about the identity construction of early African people in the United States. That is, we will think about their transition from African to African American, noting the changing meanings of both over time. Please note that the scope of this course will not allow us to discuss every detail of the early African American experience in the United States, so I do not expect you to remember an extensive list of dates, names and places. I will however, expect that you work to gain insight on the larger national trends, ideologies, and events that make the major figures and moments in early African American life important.

INSTRUCTOR: L. HUNTER

HOW TO CONTACT ME

EMAIL:

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OFFICE & HOURS:

Conklin rm. 326

MW: 11:45 – 12:45 pm

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 *A'r'n't I A Woman? Female Slaves in the Plantation South* ISBN:
9780393314816

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

COURSE REQUIREMENTS



Mauresque Noire (Black Moorish Woman)
Sculpture by Charles Cordier,

GRADING SCALE

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

Papers (25 points)

Quizzes (20 points)

Exams (35 points)

Presentation (10 points)

Individual Group performance (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

Short informal Paper Assignments:

You are responsible for one short reading response paper this semester, that will require you to analyze a primary source of your choosing within the textbook. A detailed guide is provided on blackboard and the due dates is listed in the course schedule.

Longer formal Paper Assignments:

This semester you will write one formal essay in 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 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 early 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 – create a short oral history project that connects one specific trend of early African American life to contemporary realities. This project will entail several components and will require you and your team to interview four people.

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 and sign this academic integrity pledge on ALL of your submitted work this semester:

“ON MY HONOR I, (signature here), HAVE NEITHER RECEIVED NOR GIVEN ANY UNAUTHORIZED ASSISTANCE ON THIS ASSIGNMENT.”

Extra Credit: This semester you will have three extra credit opportunities, of which you may choose one to attend. The first is scheduled for September 26th, the second is October 13th, and the last is November 7th. Each event is slated for a different time, and all information will be posted in the extra credit section of our blackboard page. After attending your chosen event, you will then write a short 500-word reflection in response to what you experienced at the event. Specifically, you should be writing about how the content of the event relates to our course material. The connections will not always be obvious, so you will have to think about the larger concepts and themes that connect the content of your event and our course material.

Accommodations: 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.

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. 7	Course Introduction		Please confirm your email and complete the pre-course survey on Blackboard
2	Sept. 12	Foundations & Critical Debates	Blackboard Readings: Darlene Clark Hine "A Black Studies Manifesto" & "Black Studies: An Overview"	
	Sept. 14		Blackboard Reading: Excerpts from Martin Bernal's <i>Black Athena</i> & Mary Lefkowitz's "Willful distortions of History"	
3	Sept. 19	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. 21		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. 26	Rethinking the Middle Passage 1619-1739	Blackboard Readings: Excerpts from Sharon Salinger's <i>to Serve Well and Faithfully</i> & A. Roger Ekirch's <i>Bound for America</i>	
	Sept. 28		Begin Reading: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 2 pp. 54-71 Excerpts from <i>White Cargo</i>	Document Analysis Essay due
5	Oct. 3	Blurred lines: colonial development & racial boundaries 1650-1783	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	
	Oct. 5	Revolution & African Americans	Begin Reading: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch.3 pp. 110-138 Blackboard Reading: Excerpts from <i>The Colored Patriots</i> Midterm review sheets available on blackboard	
6	Oct. 10		Continue Reading: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch.3 pp. 110-138 Blackboard Readings: Excerpts from Gary B. Nash's <i>The Forgotten Fifth</i>	
	Oct. 12	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. 17		-----	MIDTERM REVIEW
	Oct. 19	MIDTERM EXAM		MIDTERM EXAM
8	Oct. 24	Race, Nation & Slavery in the Age of the New Republic	Begin reading: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 4 pp. 160-176 Blackboard Readings: Excerpts from Jefferson's Notes on Virginia & James McCune Smith's "On the Fourteenth Query of Thomas Jefferson's Notes on Virginia"	
	Oct. 26		Complete: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 4 pp.176-189	
9	Oct. 31	Free African Americans & Civil Rights	Begin reading: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 5 Blackboard Reading: Excerpts from James Horton's <i>Free People of Color</i> & contents of Antebellum Folk culture folder	
	Nov. 2		Read: <i>Stories of Freedom</i> Ch. 1 pp. 7-38	
10	Nov.7	Progress & the Antebellum Period	Complete: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 5 & <i>Stories of Freedom</i> Ch. 1 pp. 38-67	
	Nov. 9		Read: <i>Ar'n't I A Woman?</i> Ch. 2 Blackboard Reading: Thomas Foster "The Sexual Abuse of Black Men Under Slavery"	

11	Nov. 14	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 1
	Nov.16		Complete: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 6 Read: <i>Ar'n't IA Woman?</i> Ch. 3 & 5	Presentation 2
12	Nov. 21		Begin Reading: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 7 pp.322-350 Read: <i>Stories of Freedom</i> Ch. 4	Formal Essay 1 Presentation 3
	Nov. 23		THANKSGIVING BREAK Final exam review sheets available on blackboard	NO CLASS
13	Nov. 28		Complete: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 7	Presentation 4
	Nov. 30		Begin reading <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 8	Presentation 5
14	Dec. 5	African American Women, Reconstruction & Racial destiny	Complete: <i>Freedom on My Mind</i> Ch. 8 pp.400-407 Blackboard Readings: Victoria Matthews "Aunt Lindy"	Presentation 6
	Dec. 7		Blackboard Reading: See Pauline Hopkins folder	Presentation 7
15	Dec. 12	FINAL EXAM REVIEW	-----	FINAL EXAM
	Dec. 22	FINAL EXAM DAY	December 19, 2016 @ 11:45-2:45 pm	