

AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY

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Course Times and Location: M, W, F 10:00-10:50 a.m., Noyce Science Center 1245
Office Hours: Wednesday 2-4, Friday 2-3, and by appointment

PURPOSE

In this course, we will examine the history of African Americans from the colonial period to the present. Throughout the course, we will ask the following question: how did African Americans make and remake themselves and their communities? In pursuing that question, we will pay particular attention to time and place. We will examine the processes of enslavement, development of slave culture, formation of free communities, rise of abolitionism, life in the immediate post-Emancipation era, urban migration, and the civil rights movement.

FORMAT

With a few exceptions, we will follow roughly the same format each week. On Mondays, we will discuss primary documents related to the week's topic. On Wednesdays, we will discuss how a professional historian has grappled with the same topic. This discussion should help us answer questions raised by our initial reading of the primary documents. The lectures on Friday are meant not only to provide information that helps us to better understand the reading and discussions for the week, but to model how historians provide interpretations of the past.

EVALUATION

Class Participation

The success of the course and your individual grade depends **heavily** on your class participation. This course emphasizes student participation, so that it is essential--and assumed--that every student come to class not only having already done the assigned

reading, but also having thought about it. As a result, students should get in the habit of looking ahead at the course schedule, and, wherever possible, completing reading well ahead of time so as to allow some time for reflection before we discuss a given reading.

As part of your participation grade, at the beginning of each class, you must submit a question or comment that demonstrates your engagement with the assigned reading for the class. You will earn a plus, check, or minus for this assignment.

Papers

Two 5-7 page papers are due on the following dates:

PAPER #1, DUE TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 5 p.m.

PAPER #2, DUE TUESDAY, MAY 6, 5 p.m.

Website Evaluation

You will identify and provide a written recommendation of a website devoted to a topic in African American history that you are particularly interested in. We will create a public space for your recommendation to be placed on the internet. Each year, students from this course will review the sites that you have identified to make sure that they are still up and running. They will also add their evaluations of new sites. Think of this assignment as an opportunity for you to provide a service to other people interested in African American history. A topic of your choice is DUE FEB. 1, at the beginning of class. The final product is DUE APRIL 25. Details on the final product will follow.

Midterm Exam

Monday, March 10

Final Exam

Wednesday, May 14, 9 a.m.

Extra Credit

Each week, you will have an opportunity to boost your grade by explaining how someone in the present makes use of a particular interpretation of the African American past to influence our future. You must submit at least a full paragraph with a strong topic sentence. If your extra credit piece relates to the current week's topic, I may ask you to share your finding with our class. If you submit an extra credit paragraph for each week of the course, you can potentially boost your final grade by as much as 10%. In order to receive the full 10%, you must submit one paragraph a week. Even if you only miss one week and you hand in stellar paragraphs for every other week, you will not be able to boost your grade a full 10%. In this instance, you may bump your grade up 8 or 9 percentage points, but not a full 10. Extra credit assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class on Fridays.

Grading

Paper #1	20%
Paper #2	20%
Participation	20%
Website Evaluation	10%
Midterm Exam	15%
Final Exam	15%
Extra Credit	10%
Total	110%

Introduction

Monday, January 21

Africans and the Slave Trade

Wednesday, January 23

Reading: Olaudah Equiano, The Interesting Narrative, 38-69

Friday, January 25

Reading:

- 1) Equiano, The Interesting Narrative, 70-128
- 2) Franklin and Moss, From Slavery to Freedom, Chapters 1-2

Origins of North American Slavery, Racism, and Freedom

Monday, January 28

Reading:

- 1) John Rolfe Records the Arrival of African Slaves to Virginia, August 1619
- 2) Anthony Johnson, a Former Slave, Claims His Slave Property, 1655
- 3) Interracial Sexual Relations and Their Consequences: The Case of Elizabeth Key, 1655-1656
- 4) An Act to Discriminate Between Africans and Others in Maryland, 1664
- 5) Francis Payne, a Free Negro Property Owner in Colonial Virginia, Bequeaths His Property, 1673
- 6) Distinguishing Slaves from Indentured Servants in Virginia, 1705

Wednesday, January 30

Reading: Winthrop Jordan, "Modern Tensions and the Origins of American Slavery," Journal of Southern History, 28 (February 1962), 18-30. (JSTOR)

Friday, February 1

Reading:

- 1) Edmund Morgan, "Slavery and Freedom: The American Paradox," Journal of American History, 59 (1972), 5-29. (JSTOR)
- 2) Franklin and Moss, From Slavery to Freedom, Ch. 3

The Development of a Slave Society in Colonial North America

Monday, February 4

Reading:

- 1) The Story of Tom, an African Creole, 1727
- 2) Description of a Slave Rebellion in Stono, South Carolina, 1739
- 3) Lord Dunmore, a British General, Entices Slaves of Colonial Rebels to Flee, 1775
- 4) Saul, a Slave Revolutionary Veteran, Petitions for Freedom, 1792
- 5) Free Blacks in South Carolina Petition for Equal Rights, 1791
- 6) Hector St. John de Crevecoeur, a Traveler, Encounters the Continuing Horror of Slavery in the New Republic, 1782

Wednesday, February 6

Reading: Ira Berlin, "From Creole to African: Atlantic Creoles and the Origins of African-American Society in Mainland North America," William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd Series, 53 (April 1996), 251-288. (JSTOR)

Friday, February 8

Reading: Franklin, From Slavery to Freedom, chapters 4.

Origins of African America and the Continuity of African Culture

Monday, February 11

Reading:

- 1) Six Advertisements for Virginia Slave Runaways, 1736, 1767
- 2) Early Slave Conversion Attempts of Francis Le Jau, an Anglican Minister, 1706-1717
- 3) George Whitefield, a Religious Revivalist, Encourages Conversion and Education, 1740
- 4) Phyllis Wheatley's Homage to George Whitefield, 1770
- 5) The Conversion Experience of John Marrant, 1802
- 6) Landon Carter, a Slavemaster, Confronts the Problem of Slave Conversion, 1776
- 7) Two Letters from Savannah, Georgia, on the Progress of Baptist Churches, 1792, 1800

Tuesday, February 12

Paper #1 Due, 5 p.m., my office (312 Mears Cottage)

Wednesday, February 13

Reading: Margaret Washington, "Gullah Roots," from Washington, "A Peculiar People": Slave Religion and Community-Culture among the Gullahs, 29-44 (Handout)

Friday, February 15

Reading: Franklin and Moss, From Slavery to Freedom, Ch. 5-6

The Domestic Slave Trade

Monday, February 18

Reading:

- 1) J. W. C. Pennington, The Fugitive Blacksmith: Or Events in the Life of James W. C. Pennington, iv-vii
- 2) Walter Johnson, Soul by Soul, Introduction – Ch. 2

Wednesday, February 20

Reading: Walter Johnson, Soul by Soul, Ch. 3 - 5

Friday, February 22

Reading:

- 1) Walter Johnson, Soul by Soul, Ch. 6 - Epilogue
- 2) Franklin and Moss, From Slavery to Freedom, Ch. 7

Roots of Resistance: Slave Cultures, Gender, and Communities

Monday, February 25

Reading:

- 1) Margaret Garner, a Slave Mother, Kills Her Child_Prevent Reenslavement, 1856
- 2) Description of Two Women Outlaws, c. 1850s
- 3) Descriptions of Love and Courtship in Slavery
- 4) Letters Showing Relations Between Slave Husbands and Wives, 1840-1863
- 5) Martin Lee and Hawkins Wilson, Two Ex-Slaves Seek to Reunite with Their Children After Emancipation, 1866, 1867
- 6) Spotswood Rice, an Ex-Slave Soldier, Seeks to Protect His Children, 1864

Wednesday, February 27

Reading: Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, "African-American Women's History and the Metalanguage of Race," Signs, Vol. 17, No. 2 (Winter 1992), 251-274.

Friday, February 29

Reading:

- 1) Ira Berlin and Leslie S. Rowland, “Slave Communities Are Grounded in Family and Kinship” from Families and Freedom: A Documentary History of African-American Kinship in the Civil War
- 2) Franklin and Moss, From Slavery to Freedom, Ch. 8

Free Blacks Confront the “Slave Power”: The Meaning of Freedom in a Slave Society

Monday, March 3

Reading:

- 1) David Walker’s Appeal
- 2) Frederick Douglass, Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, 1-55

Wednesday, March 5

Reading: Frederick Douglass, Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, 55-106

Friday, March 7

Reading:

- 1) Frederick Douglass, Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, 106-171
- 2) Franklin and Moss, From Slavery to Freedom, Ch. 9

Civil War and Emancipation

Monday, March 10: Exam

Wednesday, March 12

Reading:

- 1) Captain C. B. Wilder, a Civil War Relief Worker, Describes Flight from Slavery, 1863
- 2) Corporal Octave Johnson, a Union Soldier, Describes His Escape from Slavery During the War, 1864
- 3) John C. P. Wederstrandt and I. N. Steele, Two Slaveholders, Lose Control of Their Slave Labor, 1862, 1865
- 4) Slave Fugitives Tell Their Stories to Charlotte Forten, 1863
- 5) Charlotte Forten Describes the Celebration of Emancipation in the Heart of the Confederacy, January 1, 1863

Friday, March 14

Reading:

- 1) Frederick Douglass, “The Civil Rights Case” (1883)
- 2) Eric Foner, “Rights and the Constitution in Black Life during the Civil War and Reconstruction” Journal of American History, Vol. 74, No. 3, (December 1987), 863-883.
- 3) Franklin and Moss, From Slavery to Freedom, Ch. 10-11

SPRING BREAK, MARCH 15-30

The Work of Reconstruction

Monday, March 31

Reading:

- 1) African Americans in Richmond, Virginia, Petition President Andrew Johnson, 1865
- 2) Freedmen of Edisto Island, South Carolina, Demand Land, 1865
- 3) Captain Charles Soule, Northern Army Officer, Lectures Ex-Slaves on the Responsibilities of Freedom, 1865
- 4) A Share-Wages Contract, 1865
- 5) Charles Raushenberg, a Freedmen's Bureau Agent, Reports from Georgia, 1867
- 6) Elizabeth Botume, a Northern Schoolteacher, Remembers a Husband and Wife Reunion, c. 1865
- 7) Harriet Hernandez, a South Carolina Woman, Testifies Against the Ku Klux Klan, 1871

Wednesday, April 2

Reading:

- 1) Julie Saville, "Defining Free Labor"
- 2) Elsa Barkley Brown, "The Labor of Politics"
- 3) Franklin and Moss, From Slavery to Freedom, Ch. 12

White Supremacy Triumphant

Friday, April 4

Reading: Theodore Rosengarten, All God's Dangers

Monday, April 7

Reading:

- 1) Theodore Rosengarten, All God's Dangers
- 2) Barbara Bair, "Though Justice Sleeps: 1880-1990," in Kelley and Lewis, To Make Our World Anew, 281-301.

Wednesday, April 9

Reading:

- 1) Theodore Rosengarten, All God's Dangers, finish.
- 2) Franklin and Moss, From Slavery to Freedom, Ch. 13-14

Defining a Race Politics

Friday, April 11

Reading:

- 1) Ida B. Wells Urges Self-Defense, 1892
- 2) Booker T. Washington Promotes Accommodationism, 1895
- 3) Resolutions of the National Association of Colored Women, 1904
- 4) The Niagra Men Pledge Themselves to Persistent Agitation, 1905
- 5) Maggie Lena Walker Talks to Black Men About Racial Responsibility
- 6) Ten Thousand Charlestonians Petition for Black Teachers in Black Schools, 1919
- 7) The Messenger Urges Black and White Workers to Organize, 1919
- 8) Marcus Garvey Assesses the Situation for Black People, 1922
- 9) James Weldon Johnson, The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man in Three Negro Classics 393-428

Monday, April 14

Reading: James Weldon Johnson, The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man, 428-511.

Wednesday, April 16

Reading:

- 1) Deborah Gray White, "Race and Feminism"
- 2) Winston James, "Race Consciousness and Radicalism"
- 3) Franklin and Moss, From Slavery to Freedom, Ch. 18

Opportunities Lost and Found

Friday, Monday, Wednesday, April 18, 21, 23

Anne Moody, Coming of Age in Mississippi

Franklin and Moss, From Slavery to Freedom, Ch. 19-20

Origins of the Civil Rights Movement

Friday, Monday, Wednesday, April 25, 28, 30

Finish Coming of Age in Mississippi

Begin Malcolm X's autobiography

(Eyes on the Prize)

Franklin and Moss, From Slavery to Freedom, Ch. 21-22

The Civil Rights Movement

May 2, 5, 7

Finish Malcolm X's autobiography

(Eyes on the Prize)

Franklin and Moss, From Slavery to Freedom, Ch. 23

African Americans at the Dawn of the Twenty-First Century

May 9

Roger Wilkins, Jefferson's Pillow

Franklin and Moss, From Slavery to Freedom, Ch. 24-25

Paper #2 Due, Tuesday, May 6, 5 p.m.

Wednesday, May 14, Final Exam, 9 a.m.