HIST/AMST 1595 African-American History Since 1865
Cornell University Fall 2015
TR 1:25-2:40 URIS Hall 202
Prof. Russell Rickford rr447@cornell.edu
364 McGraw
Office Hours: Tue 3-4:30

OVERVIEW
Focusing on political and social history, this course surveys African-American history from Emancipation to the present. The class examines the post-Reconstruction “Nadir” of black life; the mass black insurgency against structural racism before and after World War II; and the Post-Reform Age that arose in the wake of the dismantling of legal segregation. The course will familiarize students with the basic themes of African-American life and experience and equip them to grasp concepts of political economy; class formation; and the intersection of race, class and gender.

ACCOMMODATIONS
In compliance with the Cornell University policy and equal access laws, I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that may be required for student with disabilities. Requests for academic accommodations are to be made during the first three weeks of the semester, except for unusual circumstances, so arrangements can be made. Students are encouraged to register with Student Disability Services to verify their eligibility for appropriate accommodations.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
Each student in this course is expected to abide by the Cornell University Code of Academic Integrity. Any work submitted by a student in this course for academic credit will be the student's own work.

The most common academic problem at Cornell is plagiarism. Please make sure that you are well informed on this issue. Use citations whenever necessary; follow an established citation format; and be consistent in the format you choose. Always leave yourself plenty of time to complete assignments. And don't rely heavily on the internet. Wikipedia is generally not an acceptable resource for the purposes of this class. If you ever have any questions about citations, talk to me or a librarian, or visit the library’s webpage and check out the link to “citation management,” which will also give you the university’s full academic integrity policy.

Out of fairness to everyone in the class, you must complete all the papers (even if they're late), or you will receive a failing grade for the semester. Also, any case of plagiarism will automatically receive a failing grade and may result in a failing grade for the entire semester.
ATTENDANCE
You are expected to attend every class and to arrive promptly. Each unexcused absence will result in a penalty of one-third of a grade. (For example, B to B-.) Upon returning to class, students with excused absences will submit a three-page response paper on the readings assigned while they were away.

PARTICIPATION AND CLASS ETIQUETTE
This class relies heavily on in-class discussion. Complete all readings prior to class and come ready to contribute to discussion. Your participation grade and the success of this course will depend on your willingness to express yourself in class and on Blackboard. Learning to articulate your ideas is a crucial part of becoming a better scholar/critical thinker. Please, speak up! You are welcome and encouraged (indeed expected) to interrupt lectures with questions/comments. We will cultivate an environment of open exchange and impassioned, civil debate. Please respect and challenge each other and yourselves.

LAPTOPS AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES
Please do not use laptops or other electronic devices in class! NO EXCEPTIONS!!! Please refrain from bringing distracting materials into the classroom. Taking notes by hand is a critical skill that you must develop.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Reading Journal
Students will maintain a journal in which they log short responses to each reading assignment. Responses will usually be 2 paragraphs in length and will critically engage the author’s Thesis, Argument, Perspective/Purpose and Evidence (the acronym “TAPE” is useful to remember). The “journal” will be formatted as dated entries in a single Word document and submitted on October 27 and December 3. I will not be grading your individual entries but rather the completeness and thoroughness of the entire journal.

2. Group Presentations
   a. Each student will present an in-class analysis of ONE of the readings along with members of his or her group. Group presentations will occur on Thursdays (beginning in week 2) after short lectures. Group members will present on readings due that day. Presentations will last approximately 15 minutes, at least 10 minutes of which will consist of discussion and exchange with classmates. Presenters are to focus on relating the reading to the larger questions of citizenship and freedom that we have examined over the course of the term, rather than merely summarizing the reading. Presenters are strongly encouraged to keep presentations simple and short, and to try to spark class discussion as quickly as possible by asking provocative, open-ended questions.
b. In addition to their in-class duties, **group members will collectively post 2 or 3 questions on Blackboard by 8pm on the evening before class.** EVERY student is responsible for posting a brief response to at least one of the questions no later than three hours prior to class.

c. **Within a week of the presentation, each group member will submit a short (5 pp) essay based on the readings.** Using the readings, notes from class discussion, and Blackboard postings, each group member will individually analyze the historical vision of freedom and/or citizenship presented in the readings and identify its significance/relationship with other materials we have covered in class and/or its relationship to the conventional wisdoms of our own time.

3. **Midterm Exam**
The midterm take-home exam, based upon the assigned readings, will be distributed on **October 6** and collected at the beginning of class on **October 8**.

4. **Final Essay**
The final essay of **10 to 12 pages** will explore a particular African-American vision of freedom. **Please cite at least three of the assigned readings.** Please do not cite sources from the Internet. The paper is due by **noon on Thursday December 10**.

5. **Final Exam**
The final exam, based upon the assigned readings since the previous exam, will be held in class on **TBD**.

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**GRADE BREAKDOWN**
Group Presentation, Blackboard Postings, Presentation Essay and Reading Journal: 25%
Midterm Exam: 25%
Final Essay: 25%
Final Exam: 25%

**Books**
(All non-boldface titles, including articles, are available through Blackboard. Please visit the Cornell Store or Kraftees to acquire titles in boldface, which are also available on library reserve on a limited basis.)

**Alexander, The New Jim Crow**
Bonilla-Silva, *Racism Without Racists*
Bogues, *Black Heretics, Black Prophets*
Cohen, *The Boundaries of Blackness*
Foner, *A Short History of Reconstruction*
**Hahn, A Nation Under Our Feet**
Hunter, *To Joy My Freedom*
Johnson, ed., *The Neoliberal Deluge: Hurricane Katrina*
Kelley, *Race Rebels*
Marable, *Race, Reform and Rebellion*
Marable and Mullings, eds., *Let Nobody Turn Us Around*
McGuire, *At the Dark End of the Street*
Murch, *Living For the City*
Smith, *We Have No Leaders*
Umoja, *We Will Shoot Back*
Ward, *Just My Soul Responding*

**Articles (Available through Blackboard)**
Marable, “Mass Incarceration, Civil Death and the New Racial Domain”
__________, “Structural Racism”
Theoharis, “Black Freedom Studies”
Korstad and Lichtenstein, “Opportunities Found and Lost”

**READING ASSIGNMENTS**

**WEEK 1**
**Aug 25**
Introduction to class

**Aug 27**
Marable and Mullings, eds., *Let Nobody Turn Us Around*, Intro
Marable, “Structural Racism: A Short History”
Bonilla-Silva: Ch. 1 (to p. 12)

**WEEK 2**
**Sep 1**
Foner, Chs. 8, 12

**Sep 3**
Hahn, Chs. 3-4

**WEEK 3**
**Sep 8**
Hahn, Chs. 6-7

**Sep 10**
Bogues, Ch. 2
Hahn, Epilogue
**WEEK 4**

**Sep 15**  
Hunter, Chs. 3-4

**Sep 17**  
Hunter, Chs. 5, 9

**WEEK 5**

**Sep 22**  
Grossman, Chs. 1, 4

**Sep 24**  
Lewis, Chs. 1-2

**WEEK 6**

**Sep 29**  
Kelley, Chs. 5-6

**Oct 1**  
Kelley, Ch. 7  
Marable, Ch. 2

**WEEK 7**

**Oct 6**  
Korstad and Lichtenstein, “Opportunities Found and Lost”  
Theoharis, “Black Freedom Studies”  
*Midterm Exam Distributed*

**Oct 8**  
Marable, Chs. 3-4  
*Midterm Exam Due*

**WEEK 8**

**Oct 13**  
FALL BREAK

**Oct 15**  
Kelley, Chs. 3-4
WEEK 9
Oct 20
Umoja, Intro and Ch. 1

Oct 22
Umoja, Chs. 2-3

WEEK 10
Oct 27
Murch, Chs. 1-2
Journal Check Number One

Oct 29
Murch, Chs. 3, 5

WEEK 11
Nov 3
Marable, Chs. 5-6

Nov 5
Ward, Ch. 9
Marable, Ch. 7

WEEK 12
Nov 10
McGuire, Ch. 8
Marable, Ch. 8

Nov 12
Cohen, Ch. 2
Smith, Ch. 9

WEEK 13
Nov 17
Cohen, Ch. 3
Kelley, Ch. 8

Nov 19
Johnson, Intro and Ch. 3
Marable, Ch. 10
WEEK 14
Nov 24
Johnson, Chs. 4, 10

Nov 26
THANKSGIVING BREAK

WEEK 15
Dec 1
Marable, “Mass Incarceration”
Alexander, Intro and Ch. 1

Dec 3
Alexander, Chs. 5-6 and Conclusion
Journal Check Number Two

Dec 10
Final Essay Due