

History 124B  
**African American History from 1877-Present**

Fall 2016 – UC Merced  
TuThur 3:00-4:15 p.m. – Classroom Building (COB) 276

Instructor: Professor Sean Malloy (smalloy@ucmerced.edu)  
Teaching Assistant: Daniel Rios (drios5@ucmerced.edu)  
Malloy Office Hours: TuThur 4:20-5:30 and by appointment in COB2 273  
Course Website: Available via CatCourses

“[T]he problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color-line. . . .”  
-- W.E.B. Du Bois

“Nobody in the world, nobody in history, has ever gotten their freedom by appealing to the moral sense of the people who were oppressing them.”  
-- Assata Shakur

“The well-intended say: ‘We’re all human, everybody is really decent, we must forget color.’ But color cannot be ‘forgotten’ until its weight is recognized and dealt with.”  
-- Stokely Carmichael

“We have to talk about liberating minds as well as liberating society.”  
-- Angela Davis

“When I say motherfucker everybody in here recognizes that it’s legitimate. The only motherfuckers that don’t recognize it and don’t like it are the motherfuckers that’s in behalf of fucking up the people’s freedom. . . . So fuck them, fuck them, fuck them.”  
-- David Hilliard

“Our demand is simple: Stop killing us.”  
-- Johnnetta Elzie

### **Course Description and Goals**

This course will explore the African American experience from Emancipation through the present day. Rather than a comprehensive survey of this rich historical area, we will focus on a series of voices, topics, and approaches that offer different perspectives on the Black experience. Some of the people we will hear from in this class are well known historical icons, such as Ida B. Wells, Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, Angela Davis, and Assata Shakur. We will also, however, explore the perspectives of people ranging from sharecroppers in the rural South to gang members in 1990s LA, students at the University of Missouri, and the activists of the emerging #BlackLivesMatter movement.

By the end of the course, you should have an understanding of the historical construction of race in the United States, the way in which white supremacy has been institutionalized and challenged over time, and the extent to which cultural forms such as the zoot suit and hip hop might constitute a form of resistance.

## Course Materials

### Required books:

Lawrence Levine, *Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Thought from Slavery to Freedom*

Ida B. Wells, *Southern Horrors and Other Writings*

William H. Chafe et. al., *Remembering Jim Crow: African Americans Tell About Life in the Segregated South*

Clayborne Carson, ed. *The Autobiography of Martin Luther King Jr.*

Attallah Shabazz et. al., *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*

Robin D. G. Kelley, *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics, and the Black Working Class*

Assata Shakur, *Assata: An Autobiography*

Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*

Online reader: Some readings have been placed online and are available at our CatCourses website in the “Files” folder grouped by week. Please bring these readings class for easy reference during the relevant discussion.

## Course Requirements and Grading

This class is a seminar. That means that much of the learning takes place through the medium of conversation. The classroom is our shared space where we will collectively work through the issues raised by both the readings and our own experiences. The success of the class depends on our ability to facilitate a conversation that is informed, respectful, challenging, and hopefully fun and exciting.

To help make this class work both individually and collectively, you must be prepared to do two things. First, you must come to class having done the assigned reading for that day. Second, I expect you to come prepared to engage in an informed and respectful discussion with your classmates about the issues, questions, and challenges raised by the readings. My job is not to give you the answers to the many challenging questions posed by African American history, but rather to help facilitate our collective exploration of the issues involved. I do not expect you to come to class having mastered the readings, some of which are quite challenging. Coming to class with a question or a puzzle raised by the readings is as good as coming with a well-formed opinion. We will almost certainly disagree amongst ourselves on many of the issues raised in this class. Disagreement is a sign of a healthy and informed discussion so long as you are respectful and collegial to your fellow students.

To help prepare you for the discussion, I ask that for every class meeting for which readings are assigned (via CatCourses or required books) students arrive having written a response of roughly one or two paragraphs (no more than one page double-spaced). A response is not a summary of the reading. Nor does it have to be particularly formal, though I do ask that you print it out before class rather than write it by hand. Rather, I want you to give your own personal reflection on an issue or question raised by at least one of the readings for that day. If there is something about the reading that puzzles you, your response is a good place to start addressing it. Your response serves two purposes: it helps prepare you for discussion and it counts directly toward your participation grade.

Your responses must be submitted in person; they will NOT be accepted by email. If you miss a class due to illness or emergency, please bring the response for that class to the next class meeting.

To reflect the importance that I place on our conversation to the learning process, 40% of your grade will be based on class participation. This part of your grade will be determined by the degree to which you attend the class and contribute to the discussion as well as by your response papers. If you do the readings, attend class regularly, participate in our discussions, and submit your response papers then you will receive a good participation grade. If you have any question about your participation grade at any point in the semester, please come and see me.

There will also be four written assignments for this class. Each of these will be between 4-6 pages in length and based on your reading of class materials. You will receive a prompt for these essays at least one week before they are due, but the best way to prepare for them is to do the reading and come to class prepared to discuss it.

Grading breakdown:

Participation	40%	
Paper #1	10%	September 20
Paper #2	20%	October 25
Paper #3	20%	November 17
Paper #4	10%	December 8

Written assignments turned in up to 24 hours late will receive a 1/3 grade reduction (*e.g.* an A would become an A-). Work turned in between 24-72 hours late will be lowered a full grade except in cases of serious illness or emergency. Any work turned in after 72 hours late will not be accepted and will count as an F.

Please note you are not permitted to use laptops, cell phones, or other electronic devices in class unless you have a note from the Disability Services Center. In a seminar, being attentive to the discussion and your fellow students is one of the most important components of a successful class. The only exception to this is if you are using the course readings as a PDF or Ebook, in which case you may use whatever device is necessary to access them.

### **Academic Honesty**

Each student in this course is expected to abide by the University of California, Merced's Academic Honesty Policy. The relevant section on plagiarism states that:

Plagiarism refers to the use of another's ideas or words without proper attribution or credit. This includes, but is not limited to: copying from the writings or works of others into one's academic assignment without attribution, or submitting such work as if it were one's own; using the views, opinions, or insights of another without acknowledgment; or paraphrasing the ideas of another without proper attribution. Credit must be given: for every direct quotation; when a work is paraphrased or summarized, in whole or in part (even if only brief passages), in your own words; and for information which is not common knowledge. The requirement to give credit applies to published sources, information obtained from electronic searches, and unpublished sources.

Penalty for violation of this Policy may include failure of the course and University disciplinary action. Please see the entire policy <http://studentlife.ucmerced.edu>.

### **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

The University of California Merced is committed to ensuring equal academic opportunities and inclusion for students with disabilities based on the principles of independent living, accessible universal design and diversity. Any student who feels he or she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss his or her specific needs. Also contact Disability Services at (209) 228-7884 as soon as possible to become registered and thereby ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

# Course Schedule

## Week 1: Introduction

**August 25: Introductions; Course Mechanics**

## Week 2: Slavery, Resistance, and Culture

**August 30: Constructing Race, Culture, and Resistance**

CatCourses:

Barbara J. Fields, "Slavery, Race and Ideology in the United States of America," *New Left Review* (1990), 95-118.

**September 1: Songs, Stories, and Resistance in the Slave Quarters**

Books:

Kelley, pp. 1-13.  
Levine, pp. 1-135.

## Week 3: W.E.B. Du Bois and Agony of Race

**September 6: African American Culture and the Meaning of Freedom**

Books:

Levine, pp. 298-440.

**September 8: *The Souls of Black Folk***

Books:

Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, The Forethought, Chapters I, III, IV, VI, XI, XIII.

CatCourses:

Precious Rasheeda Muhammad, "Black Protest Writing from W. E. B. Du Bois to Kendrick Lamar."

## **Week 4: Early Struggles for Civil Rights**

### **September 13: Washington, Du Bois, and Garvey**

#### CatCourses:

Booker T. Washington, "Atlanta Exposition Address," September 18, 1895, *Up From Slavery* (1901), 218-225.

W.E.B. Du Bois, "The Talented Tenth," *The Negro Problem: A Series of Articles by Representative American Negroes of Today* (1903), 1903, 33-35, 43-48, 54-63, 74-75.

Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), "Declaration of the Rights of the Negro Peoples of the World," 1920.

Marcus Garvey on the objectives of the UNIA, 1921 [AUDIO]

Lawrence Levine, "Marcus Garvey and the Politics of Revitalization," *The Unpredictable Past* (1993), 107-136.

### **September 15: NO CLASS; INSTRUCTOR APPEARING IN HIST 100**

## **Week 5: The Strange Career of Jim Crow**

### **September 20: Ida B. Wells and the Crusade Against Lynching**

#### *Paper #1 Due In Class*

#### Book:

Ida B. Wells, *Southern Horrors*, 1-41, 50-72, 75-82, 91-98, 153-157

### **September 22: Living Jim Crow (I); *Ethnic Notions***

#### Book:

Chafe et. al. eds., pp. 1-151

## **Week 6: The Civil Rights Struggle in Postwar America**

### **September 27: Living Jim Crow (II)**

#### Books:

Chafe et. al. eds., pp. 152-303

### **September 29: MLK and the Origins of the Liberal Civil Rights Movement**

#### Books:

Carson, ed., pp. 1-204

## **Week 7: Civil Rights at the Grassroots**

### **October 4: To the Mountaintop**

Books:

Carson, ed., pp. 205-264, 333-355

CatCourses:

“Dr. King’s Dream for the Global Strike Team,” 2013.

### **October 6: From the Grass Roots**

Books:

Kelley, pp. 17-102

CatCourses:

Gwendolyn Zoharah Simmons, “Mama Told Me Not to Go.”

## **Week 8: Malcolm X**

### **October 11: The Riddle of the Zoot Suit**

Books:

Shabazz et. al., pp. 1-153

Kelley, pp. 161-181

### **October 13: From Malcolm X to El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz**

Books:

Shabazz et. al., finish the book.

## **Week 9: “What We Gonna Start Saying Now is Black Power!”**

### **October 18: The Black Power Movement**

CatCourses:

Judson L. Jefferies, “A Retrospective Look at the Black Power Movement.”

Stokely Carmichael, “Toward Black Liberation,” 1966.

SNCC, “Position Paper on Black Power,” 1966.

Nathan Hare, “Questions and Answers about Black Studies,” 1969.

James Forman, “Black Manifesto,” 1969.

Amiri Baraka, “Speech to the Congress of African Peoples,” 1970.

### **October 20: NO CLASS; INSTRUCTOR AT CONFERENCE**

## **Week 10: Defining the Black Revolution**

### **October 25: The Black Panther Party**

*Paper #2 Due in Class*

CatCourses:

Clayborne Carson, "Forward," *The Black Panthers Speak*  
Excerpts from Bobby Seale, *Seize the Time* (1970).  
Eldridge Cleaver, "Domestic Law and International Order," 1968.  
Collection of illustrations by Tarika Lewis and Emory Douglas

### **October 27: Double Jeopardy: To Be Black and Female**

CatCourses:

Frances Beale, "Double Jeopardy: To Be Black and Female," 1970.  
Audre Lorde, "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House," 1979.  
Paula Giddings, "The Women's Movement and Black Discontent."

## **Week 11: Angela Davis and Assata Shakur**

### **November 1: *Free Angela Davis and All Political Prisoners!* (film)**

Books:

Shakur, *vii-160*.

### **November 3: Assata Shakur's Journey**

Books:

Shakur, 161-274.

## **Week 12: To Live and Die in (Postindustrial) LA**

### **November 8: *Bastards of the Party* (Film)**

CatCourses:

Mike Davis, "The Hammer and the Rock," *City of Quartz* (1990), 265-322.

### **November 10: "They Ain't Scared of Rap Music, They Scared of Us."**

Books:

Kelley, pp. 183-277.

CatCourses:

George Lipsitz, "The Hip Hop Hearings: The Hidden History of Deindustrialization,"  
*Footsteps in the Dark: The Hidden Histories of Popular Music* (2007).  
Excerpts from Ice-T, "The Ice Opinion." [Audio]



Selection of relevant rap/hip hop videos via YouTube

## **Week 13: The New Jim Crow**

### **November 15: “Is It a War on Drugs, or Just My Community?”**

CatCourses:

Excerpts from Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow* (2011), 1-19, 59-139.

### **November 17: #Ferguson and Beyond**

*Paper #3 Due in Class*

CatCourses:

Richard Rothstein, “The Making of Ferguson: Public Policies at the Roots of its Troubles.”

Nikole Hannah-Jones, “Yes, Black America Fears the Police. Here’s Why,” March 4, 2015.

Robin D. G. Kelley, “Thug Nation: On State Violence and Disposability,” 2016.

Robert Stephens II, “In Defense of the Ferguson Riots,” *Jacobin*, August 14, 2014.

Excerpts from Claudia Rankin, *Citizen: An American Lyric* (2014).

## **Week 14: Race and Sports**

### **November 22: The New Plantation?**

CatCourses:

Excerpts from Billy Hawkins, *The New Plantation*.

Taylor Branch, “The Shame of College Sports.”

### **November 24: THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY; NO CLASS**

## **Week 15: From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation**

### **November 29: *Stay Woke/Concerned Student 1950* (films)**

Books:

Taylor, 1-106.

### **December 1: Civil Rights or Black Liberation?**

Books:

Taylor, 107-220.

CatCourses:

The Movement for Black Lives, “A Vision for Black Lives: Policy Demands for Black Power, Freedom, and Justice,” 2016.

## **Week 16: Conclusion**

### **December 6: Looking to the Future, Learning From the Past**

#### CatCourses:

Excerpts from Angela Davis, *Freedom is a Constant Struggle* (2016)

Cedric Johnson, "Ending the Violence," *Jacobin*, July 20, 2016

Robin D. Kelley, "Black Study, Black Struggle," *Boston Review*, March 7, 2016

Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, "Reply to Black Study, Black Struggle," *Boston Review*, March 7, 2016.

Michelle Alexander, "Something More is Required of us Now. What?," July 9, 2016.

Jesse Williams, "BET Awards Speech," June 27, 2016.

### **December 8: Conclusion**

*Paper #4 Due in Class*