

Fall 2020
Course Title: Introduction to African-American History (History BC2440)
Class Days/Times: MW, 2:40-3:55 p.m.
Venue: TBD

Instructor: Professor Celia E. Naylor
Office: 817 Milstein Center
Office Hours: TBD
Office Tele: 854-4876
E-mail: cnaylor@barnard.edu

COURSE OVERVIEW:

In this course we will examine major topics and themes in African-American history from the colonial era to the present day. Topics include the Middle Passage and the transatlantic slave trade; African-American slave culture(s) and communities; slave resistance; freedom struggles/movements during slavery; Jim Crowism; mass migrations and the "New Negro"; participation in international wars; Civil Rights, Black Power, and Black Feminist Movement(s); and challenges and manifestations of the contemporary "color line" in the United States. We will approach the subject matter utilizing a variety of primary and secondary sources (e.g., slave narratives, slave ships' logs, ex-slave interviews, oral histories, speeches, essays, documentaries, and an autobiography). For this course, in addition to the midterm and final exam, students will write 2 (4-5 page) response papers during the course of the semester. Throughout the course, small groups of students will co-lead some sections of class discussions on selected reading assignments. Every student will also attend 2 academic public lectures/panels focused on African-American history. I will circulate information on possible events in the Barnard-CU community, as well as in New York City generally (e.g., at the African Burial Ground, Schomburg Center, etc.).

BARNARD HONOR CODE

"We, the students of Barnard College, resolve to uphold the honor of the College by engaging with integrity in all of our academic pursuits. We affirm that academic integrity is the honorable creation and presentation of our own work. We acknowledge that it is our responsibility to seek clarification of proper forms of collaboration and use of academic resources in all assignments or exams. We consider academic integrity to include the proper use and care for all print, electronic, or other academic resources. We will respect the rights of others to engage in pursuit of learning in order to uphold our commitment to honor. We pledge to do all that is in our power to create a spirit of honesty and honor for its own sake."

You are expected to observe all aspects of the Barnard Honor Code. All work submitted for this course must be your own. Although you may discuss the assignments with your classmates, your short response papers must reflect your own ideas and arguments. If you include information from books, articles, and internet websites, such sources must be clearly identified in your footnotes/end notes and bibliography. Please let me know if you have any questions about the honor code as it relates to this course.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS:

If you are a student with a documented disability and require academic accommodations, you must visit the Office of Disability Services (ODS) for assistance. Students requesting eligible accommodations in their courses will need to first meet with an ODS staff member for an intake meeting. Once registered, students are required to visit ODS each semester to set up new accommodations. Accommodations are not retroactive, so it is best to register with ODS early each semester to access your accommodations. If you are registered with ODS, please schedule a meeting to see me to discuss your accommodations for this course; and remember to bring your faculty notification letter. Barnard College's ODS is located in Milbank Hall, Room 008, and Columbia University's Disability Services is on the 7th Floor of Alfred Lerner Hall.

WELLNESS

It is important for undergraduates to recognize and identify the different pressures, burdens, and stressors you may be facing, whether personal, emotional, physical, financial, mental, or academic. We, as a community, urge you to make yourself—your own health, sanity, and wellness—your priority throughout this term, your career here, and beyond Barnard. Sleep, exercise, and eating well can all be a part of a healthy regimen to cope with stress. Resources exist to support you in several sectors of your life, and we encourage you to make use of them. Should you have any questions about navigating these resources, please visit these sites:

- <http://barnard.edu/primarycare>
- <http://barnard.edu/counseling>
- <http://barnard.edu/wellwoman/about>
- [Stressbusters Support Network <pdf>](#)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Class participation (15% of final grade): Attendance as well as **active, engaged** class participation are crucial to the course experience. Every student will also be responsible for co-leading (with one or two other students) a section of a class discussion of selected assigned readings. Students will sign up for co-leading specific discussion sessions by the end of the third week of class. These discussion sessions are required for all students. The final class participation grades of students who miss more than 2 classes will be docked for each additional absence (e.g., from a B+→B).

2 (4-5 page) response papers (each paper is worth 15% of final grade): Response papers should analyze specific issues regarding the required readings (with a focus on **primary sources**). Use these response papers as a tool for exploring your own questions and interpretations that have emerged as a result of the readings and class discussions. Students should submit 1 response paper before the midterm and 1 after the midterm.

Midterm (25% of final grade)

Take Home Final Exam (30% of final grade)

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- * Critically examine historical documents (primary sources) and scholarly interpretations (secondary sources) concerning key elements of African-American history
- * Explore different methods and theories of historical analysis related to African-American historiography
- * Analyze the impact of enslavement and discrimination, as well as ideologies of race, gender, sexuality, status, and domination, on the experiences of African-Americans
- * Explain the causes and ramifications of mass migrations of African-Americans from rural to urban areas, as well as from southern to northern and western sites
- * Analyze the effects of significant events on African-Americans (e.g., the Great Depression and world wars)
- * Identify and compare strategies of organizations and movements focused on the human and civil rights of African-Americans
- * Examine the “place” of race and the presence of the “color line” in the twenty-first century
- * Hone and demonstrate critical analytical and writing skills in exams and two response papers

REQUIRED TEXTS:

NOTE: ALL REQUIRED TEXTS ARE ON RESERVE AT BARNARD’S LIBRARY

- * Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (New York: The New Press, 2010).
- * LeAlan Jones, Lloyd Newman and David Isay, *Our America: Life and Death on the South Side of Chicago* (New York: Scribner, 1997).
- * Anne Moody, *Coming of Age in Mississippi* (New York: Dell, 1997, c1968).
- * Wallace Terry, *Bloods: An Oral History of the Vietnam War by Black Veterans* (New York: Ballantine Books--Reissue edition, 1989, c1984).
- * David Walker, *David Walker’s Appeal: To the Coloured Citizens of the World*, ed., Peter P. Hinks (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000, c1829).
- * Deborah Gray White, Mia Bay, and Waldo E. Martin, Jr., *Freedom on my Mind: A History of African Americans with Documents*, Second Edition (New York: Bedford/St Martin’s, 2017).

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED TEXTS (AVAILABLE IN THE BARNARD COLLEGE-COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARY SYSTEM):

- * Ira Berlin, *Generations of Captivity: A History of African-American Slaves* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003).
- * Ira Berlin and Leslie M. Harris, *Slavery in New York* (New York: The New Press in conjunction with the New York Historical Society, 2005).
- * Stephanie M. H. Camp, *Closer to Freedom: Enslaved Women and Everyday Resistance in the Plantation South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).
- * Elizabeth Donnan, *Documents Illustrative of the History of the Slave Trade to America*, 4 volumes (Washington, D. C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1930-1935).
- * W.E.B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York, Norton, 1996, c1903).
- * Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*, ed., W. Sollors (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2000, c1789).
- * John Hope Franklin and Loren Schweninger, *Runaway Slaves: Rebels on the Plantation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).
- * Michael A. Gomez, *Exchanging Our Country Marks: The Transformation of African Identities in the Colonial and Antebellum South* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998).
- * Harriet A. Jacobs. *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, Written by Herself* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2000, c1861).
- * Robin D.G. Kelley, *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2002).
- * Maggi M. Morehouse, *Fighting in the Jim Crow Army: Black Men and Women Remember World War II* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2000).
- * Jennifer L. Morgan, *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in New World Slavery* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).
- * Marilyn Richardson, ed., *Maria W. Stewart, America's First Black Woman Political Writer: Essays and Speeches* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987).
- * Stephanie E. Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from Africa to American Diaspora* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007).
- * Booker T. Washington, *Up From Slavery* (New York: Norton, 1996, c1900).
- * Deborah Gray White, *Ar'n't I a Woman?: Female Slaves in the Plantation South* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1999, c1985).
- * Peter H. Wood, *Black Majority* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc. 1975).

REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED FILMS (MOST OF THESE FILMS ARE AVAILABLE IN THE BARNARD COLLEGE-COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARY SYSTEM):

- * *Africans in America*, Part 1: The Terrible Transformation—America’s Journey Through Slavery, WGBH Boston Video, 2000, PBS Video, c1998, 90 minutes.
- * *Caravans of Gold*, Part 3 of *Africa* (8-part) Series, Home Vision, 1997, c1984, 60 minutes.
- * *Digging for Slaves*, Films for the Humanities and Sciences, 1989, 50 minutes.
- * *Ethnic Notions*, California Newsreel and Signifying’ Works, 2004, c1986, 57 minutes.
- * *Eyes on the Prize*, Part # 4: “No Easy Walk, 1962-1966,” PBS Video, 1986, 60 minutes.
- * *I am Not Your Negro*, Magnolia Home Entertainment, 2017, 94 minutes.
- * *Ida B. Wells: A Passion for Justice*, William Greaves Production, 1989, 58 minutes.
- * *Marcus Garvey: Look for Me in the Whirlwind*, PBS Video, 2002, 90 minutes.
- * *The Negro Soldier*, Mad Phat Enterprises, 2009, c1944, 50 minutes.
- * *No Vietnamese Ever Called Me Nigger*, Cinema Guild, 1968, 68 minutes.
- * *Unearthing Secret America*, PBS Video, 2002, 60 minutes.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Week 1: Introduction

September 9

* Thomas C. Holt and Elsa Barkley Brown, eds., *Major Problems in African-American History*, Volume 1, Chapter 1 —“Interpreting African-American History” (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2000). **(AVAILABLE ON COURSEWORKS)**

* “The National Museum of African American History and Culture: I, Too, Sing America,” *New York Times*, September 15, 2016. **(AVAILABLE ON COURSEWORKS)**

* *Caravans of Gold*, Part 3 of *Africa Series* (1997, c1984). **(RECOMMENDED)**

Week 2: African Identities and (Re)Constructing Ethnicity, Gender, Nation, and Race in the Atlantic World during the Transatlantic Slave Trade

September 14: “Old World” Conceptions of “Race,” Femaleness/Womanhood, and Blackness

* David Brion Davis, “Constructing Race: A Reflection,” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Ser., Vol. 54, No. 1. (Jan., 1997), pp. 7-18. **(AVAILABLE ON COURSEWORKS)**

* Robin Blackburn, “The Old World Background to European Colonial Slavery,” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Ser., Vol. 54, No. 1. (Jan., 1997), pp. 65-102. **(AVAILABLE ON COURSEWORKS)**

* Jennifer L. Morgan, “‘Some Could Suckle over Their Shoulder’: Male Travelers, Female Bodies, and the Gendering of Racial Ideology, 1500-1770,” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Ser., Vol. 54, No. 1. (Jan., 1997), pp. 167-192. **(AVAILABLE ON COURSEWORKS)**

September 16: “Crossing the Danger Water”: The Transatlantic Slave Trade and the Middle Passage

* White, Bay, and Martin, *Freedom on My Mind*, Chapter 1—“From Africa to America, 1441-1808.”

* Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*: Introduction and Chapters 1-2. **(THE ENTIRE NARRATIVE IS AVAILABLE ONLINE)**

* Selections from Elizabeth Donnan, *Documents Illustrative of the History of the Slave Trade to America*, 4 volumes (Washington, D. C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1930-1935). **(AVAILABLE ON COURSEWORKS)**

* Stephanie E. Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from Africa to American Diaspora* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007). **(RECOMMENDED)**

* Michael A. Gomez, *Exchanging Our Country Marks: The Transformation of African Identities in the Colonial and Antebellum South* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998). **(RECOMMENDED)**

Week 3: Race and Power in the “Strange New Land”: Africans in Colonial America

September 21

* White, Bay, and Martin, *Freedom on My Mind*, Chapter 2—“African Slavery in North America, 1619-1740.”

September 23

* Ira Berlin and Leslie M. Harris, *Slavery in New York* (New York: The New Press in conjunction with the New York Historical Society, 2005): Introduction—Ira Berlin and Leslie M. Harris’ “Uncovering, Discovering and Recovering: Digging in New York’s Slave Past Beyond the African Burial Ground.” **(ON RESERVE)**

* *Africans in America*, Part 1: The Terrible Transformation—America’s Journey Through Slavery, WGBH Boston Video, 2000, PBS Video, c1998). **(RECOMMENDED)**

Week 4: Race and National Identities in the Revolutionary Era

September 28

* White, Bay, and Martin, *Freedom on My Mind*, Chapter 3—“African Americans in the Age of Revolution, 1741-1783.”

* Ira Berlin and Leslie M. Harris, *Slavery in New York* (New York: The New Press in conjunction with the New York Historical Society, 2005), Chapter 3—Graham Russell Gao Hodges’ “Liberty and Constraint: The Limits of Revolution.” **(ON RESERVE)**

* Sylvia Frey, “Between Slavery and Freedom: Virginia Blacks in the American Revolution,” *The Journal of Southern History*, Vol. 49, No. 3. (Aug., 1983), pp. 375-398. **(AVAILABLE ON COURSEWORKS)**

* Peter H. Wood, “‘The Dream Deferred’: Black Freedom Struggles on the Eve of White Independence” in *In Resistance: Studies in African, Caribbean and Afro-American History*, ed. Gary Y. Okihiro (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1986), pp. 166-187. **(AVAILABLE ON COURSEWORKS)**

September 30

* White, Bay, and Martin, *Freedom on My Mind*, Chapter 4—“Slavery and Freedom in the New Republic in North America, 1775-1820.”

* In class viewing and discussion of parts of *Unearthing Secret America* (PBS Video, 2002).

* *Digging for Slaves* (1989). **(RECOMMENDED)**

Week 5: Enslaver-Enslaved Relations, Slave Resistance, and “The World the Slaves Made”

October 5

* White, Bay, and Martin, *Freedom on My Mind*, Chapter 5—“Black Life in the Slave South, 1820-1860.”

* Selections from Charles L. Perdue, Jr., Thomas E. Barden, and Robert K. Phillips, eds., *Weevils in the Wheat: Interviews with Virginia Ex-Slaves* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980). **(AVAILABLE ON COURSEWORKS)**

* Norman R. Yetman, “Ex-Slave Interviews and the Historiography of Slavery,” *American Quarterly* 36: 2 (summer 1984): 181-210. **(AVAILABLE ON COURSEWORKS)**

* *Remembering Slavery: African Americans Talk about their Personal Experiences of Slavery and Emancipation* (New York: New Press in conjunction with the Library of Congress and the Smithsonian Institution, 1998).

(RECOMMENDED: PARTS OF CD WILL BE PLAYED IN CLASS)

October 7

* Stephanie M. H. Camp, “The Pleasures of Resistance: Enslaved Women and Body Politics in the Plantation South, 1830-1861,” *The Journal of Southern History*, Vol. 68, No. 3 (Aug., 2002), pp. 533-572. **(AVAILABLE ON COURSEWORKS)**

* Hugh P. Williamson, “Document: The State Against Celia, a Slave,” *Midwest Journal* Vol. 8 (spring / fall 1956): 408-420. **(AVAILABLE ON COURSEWORKS)**

* Annette Gordon-Reed, ed., *Race on Trial: Law and Justice in American History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), Chapter 3—“Celia’s Case (1857),” 48-60. **(AVAILABLE ONLINE VIA CLIO AS AN E-BOOK)**

* Harriet A. Jacobs. *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, Written by Herself* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2000, c1861). **(RECOMMENDED)**

Week 6: “Let Your Motto Be Resistance! Resistance! Resistance!”

October 12

* White, Bay, and Martin, *Freedom on My Mind*, Chapter 6—“The Northern Black Freedom Struggle and the Coming of the Civil War, 1830-1860.”

October 14

* Walker, *David Walker’s Appeal* (1829).

* Marilyn Richardson, ed., *Maria W. Stewart, America’s First Black Woman Political Writer: Essays and Speeches* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), Introduction, “Lecture Delivered at the Franklin Hall” (1832) and “An Address Delivered Before the Afric-American Female Intelligence Society of America” (1832). **(AVAILABLE ON COURSEWORKS)**

Week 7: Free at Last?

October 19

* White, Bay, and Martin, *Freedom on My Mind*, Chapter 7—"Freedom Rising: The Civil War, 1861-1865."

* Michael Perman, ed., *Major Problems in the Civil War and Reconstruction: Documents and Essays* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2nd edition, 1998), 277-310.

NOTE: Chapter 10—"Emancipation" (**AVAILABLE ON COURSEWORKS**)

* White, *Ar'n't I a Woman?*, Chapter 6—"From Slavery to Freedom."
(**RECOMMENDED**)

October 21: MIDTERM

Week 8: The Color Line and Jim Crowism

October 26

* White, Bay, and Martin, *Freedom on My Mind*, Chapter 8—"Reconstruction: The Making and Unmaking of a Revolution, 1865-1885."

* Leon F. Litwack, "'Blues Falling Down Like Hail': The Ordeal of Black Freedom" in *New Perspectives on Race and Slavery in America*, eds., Robert H. Abzug and Stephen E. Maizlish (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1986), 109-127.
(**AVAILABLE ON COURSEWORKS**)

October 28

* White, Bay, and Martin, *Freedom on My Mind*, Chapter 9—"Black Life and Culture during the Nadir, 1880-1915."

* W.E.B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk*—"The Forethought," and "Of Mr. Booker T. Washington and Others." (**AVAILABLE ON COURSEWORKS**)

* Booker T. Washington, *Up From Slavery*, "Two Thousand Miles for a Five-Minute Speech" and "The Atlanta Exposition Address." (**AVAILABLE ON COURSEWORKS**)

* Ida B. Wells-Barnett, "Booker T. Washington and His Critics," reprinted from *World Today*, Vol. 6 (1904): 518-521. (**AVAILABLE ON COURSEWORKS**)

* Before this class session, view *Ida B. Wells: A Passion for Justice* (1989).
(**ON RESERVE AT BARNARD'S LIBRARY**)

Week 9: The Great Migration, World War I, the “New Negro” and the Great Depression

November 2: NO CLASS—ACADEMIC HOLIDAY

November 4

* White, Bay, and Martin, *Freedom on My Mind*, Chapter 10—“The New Negro Comes of Age, 1915-1940.”

* Before this class session, view *Marcus Garvey: Look for Me in the Whirlwind* (2002).
(ON RESERVE AT BARNARD’S LIBRARY AND ALSO AVAILABLE ON YOUTUBE)

Week 10

November 9: World War II

* White, Bay, and Martin, *Freedom on My Mind*, Chapter 11—“Fighting for a Double Victory in the World War II Era, 1939-1945.”

* Maggi M. Morehouse, *Fighting in the Jim Crow Army: Black Men and Women Remember World War II* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2000), Chapter 1—“We’re in the Army Now,” Chapter 4—“The ‘Good Fight’” and Chapter 5—“Coming Home.”
(ON RESERVE)

* Before this class session, view *The Negro Soldier*, Mad Phat Enterprises, 2009. Issued in 1944 by the War Department as a 16-mm. motion picture.
(ON RESERVE AT BARNARD’S LIBRARY AND ALSO AVAILABLE ON ARCHIVE.ORG)

November 11: The Civil Rights Movement(s)

* White, Bay, and Martin, *Freedom on My Mind*, Chapter 12—“The Early Civil Rights Movement, 1945-1963.”

* Before this class session, view *I am Not Your Negro*, Magnolia Home Entertainment, 2017, 94 minutes.

Week 11: Cont. The Civil Rights Movement(s)

November 16: “Catch-up/Catch our Breath” Day

November 18

* Moody, *Coming of Age in Mississippi*.

* *Eyes on the Prize*, Part 4 “No Easy Walk.”
(RECOMMENDED—ON RESERVE AT BARNARD’S LIBRARY AND ALSO AVAILABLE ON YOUTUBE)

Week 12: Black Power, Black Panthers, and Black Feminism(s)

November 23

* White, Bay, and Martin, *Freedom on My Mind*, Chapter 13—"Multiple Meanings of Freedom: The Movement Broadens, 1961-1976."

* Beverly Guy-Sheftall, ed., *Words of Fire: An Anthology of African-American Feminist Thought* (New York: New Press, 1995), Chapter 4—"Beyond the Margins: Black Women Claiming Feminism," 229-357. **(ON RESERVE)**

* Robin D.G. Kelley, *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2002), Chapter 5—"‘This Battlefield Called Life’: Black Feminist Dreams," 135-156. **(ON RESERVE)**

* Selections regarding the Black Power Movement, Black Panthers, and Combahee River Collective **(AVAILABLE ON COURSEWORKS)**

November 25: NO CLASS—THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY BREAK

Week 13:

November 30: The Vietnam War—On the Homefront and on the Front Lines

* Terry, *Bloods: An Oral History of the Vietnam War by Black Veterans*.

* Before this class session, view *No Vietnamese Ever Called Me Nigger*, Cinema Guild, 1968. **(AVAILABLE ON YOUTUBE)**

December 2: The Politics of Progress and Poverty at the End of the Twentieth Century

* White, Bay, and Martin, *Freedom on My Mind*, Chapter 14—"Racial Progress in the Era of Backlash and Change, 1967-2000."

* Jones and Newman, *Our America: Life and Death on the South Side of Chicago*.

Week 14: The Twenty-First-Century "Color Line" in the Age of Obama and Trump

December 7

* White, Bay, and Martin, *Freedom on My Mind*, Chapter 15—"African Americans and the New Century, 2000-Present."

* Selected articles regarding recent shootings, #Black Lives Matter Movement and #Say Her Name Movement. **(AVAILABLE ON COURSEWORKS)**

December 9

* Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*.

Week 15:

December 14

“Show and Tell” Class Discussion

Each student will bring to class one document (poem, cartoon, photograph, song, etc.) and briefly discuss (3 minutes maximum) why they believe the item reflects this moment in the history of African-Americans in the United States.