Readings in African American History: 1863 to the Present

This course has two objectives. First, we will explore the major historical issues and methods in post-emancipation African-American history. We will examine the recent literature on the following topics: origins of Jim Crow, migration from South to North, class structure and ideology, the labor movement, nationalism, the New Deal, civil rights movement, "black power," and what is often called the "post-civil rights" world. Second, we will analyze the assumptions and methods underlying such work. How do historians handle problems of agency and periodization? What factors shape the agenda of African-American history? How do historians integrate the history of African-Americans with that of the United States? What assumptions shape judgments about change and continuity, which have been central in some of the historical literature? Has "postmodernism" affected the writing of African-American history?

All students will be responsible for the "core assignment," which will be the subject of class discussions. Most of the supplementary materials is not on reserve, but it is readily available. Each student will be responsible, in addition, to present questions in advance for one session of the colloquium. Students will also write a short historiographical essay of 6-8 pages on one of the other topics, due May 1. This essay should use at least 2 other books. All students should see me early in the semester to speak about this essay. Please submit a brief statement about your plans by Feb. 26 or before. There will be a written exercise at the end of the term involving major issues in African-American history or a paper based upon primary sources.

January 29 Introduction

February 5 Reconstruction

Core:
Eric Foner, Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877
Steven Hahn, A Nation Under Our Feet, 163-313

Supplementary:
James Oakes, Freedom National: The Destruction of Slavery in the United States, 1861-1865
Barbara J. Fields, "Ideology and Race in America History, in Region, Race, and Reconstruction, J. Morgan Kousser and James M. McPherson eds., 143-77.
Leslie A. Schwalm, A Hard Fight for We: Women's Transition from Slavery to Freedom in South Carolina
Richard Zuczek, *State of Rebellion: Reconstruction in South Carolina*
Julie Saville, *The Work of Reconstruction: From Slave to Wage Labor in South Carolina*
David Montgomery, *Beyond Equality: Labor and the Radical Republicans, 1862-1872*
Iver Bernstein, *The New York City Draft Riots: Their Significance for American Society and Politics in the Age of the Civil War*
Leon Litwack, *Been in the Storm So Long: The Aftermath of Slavery*
Steven Hahn, "Class and State in Postemancipation Societies: Southern Planters in Comparative Perspective," *American Historical Review*, 95 (Sept. 1990), 75-98
Michael Fitzgerald, *Splendid Failure: Postwar Reconstruction in the American South*

Feb. 12  Black Farmers (GC closed; in my apartment)

Theodore Rosengarten, *All God’s Dangers: The Life of Nate Shaw*

Supplementary
Gavin Wright, *Old South, New South: Revolutions in the Southern Economy Since the Civil War*

February 19 The Origins of Segregation and Disfranchisement
Core: (Books on Reserve; articles JSTOR or equivalent)
John Cell, *The Highest Stage of White Supremacy: The Origins of Segregation in South Africa and the American South,* pp. 82-170;

Supplementary:
Edward Ayres, *The Promise of the New South*, Ch. 6, 10
C. Vann Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*
Stanley Greenberg, *Race and State in Capitalist Development*
Howard N. Rabinowitz, *Race Relations in the Urban South, 1865-1890.*
Joel Williamson, *The Crucible of Race*
Gregory Mixon. *The Atlanta Riot: Race, Class, and Violence in a New South City*
February 26 Black Workers in Age of Jim Crow

Core:
Brian Kelly, Race, Class, and Power in the Alabama Coalfields, 1908-21

Supplementary:
Eric Arnesen, Waterfront Workers in New Orleans
Peter Rachleff, Black Labor in Richmond, 1865-1890
Dan Letwin, The Challenge of Interracial Unionism: Alabama Coal Miners, 1878-1923
Tera Hunter, To 'Joy My Freedom: Southern Black Women's Lives and Labors after the Civil War

Mar. 5 Black Intellectuals

Core:
Adolph Reed, Jr. W. E. B. Du Bois and the American Political Thought: Fabianism and the Color Line, 3-125
Kevin Gaines, Uplifting the Race: Black Leadership, Politics, and Culture in the Twentieth Century, 1-99

Supplementary:
August Meier, Negro Thought in America, 1877-1915
Alfred A. Moss, Jr. The American Negro Academy: Voice of the Talented Tenth
James Anderson, The Education of Blacks in the South

Mar. 12 African-American Social Movements and the Great Migration

Core:
Judith Stein, *The World of Marcus Garvey*

Supplementary;
Winston James, *Holding Aloft the Banner of Ethiopia*
Joe Trotter, *Migration in Historical Perspective*
Peter Gottlieb, *Making Their Own Way*, pp. 1-62
Elliot Rudwick, *Race Riot at East St. Louis, July 2, 1917*.
George Hutchinson, *Harlem Renaissance in Black and White*
Wayne F. Cooper, *Claude McKay, Rebel Sojourner in the Harlem Renaissance*

Mar 19 New Deal

Core:
Harvard Sitkoff, *A New Deal for Blacks*

Supplementary:
Jonathan Scott Holloway, *Confronting the Veil: Abram Harris Jr., E. Franklin Frazier, and Ralph Bunche, 1919-1941*
Rayford W. Logan, ed., *What the Negro Wants* (1944)
Walter Jackson, Gunnar Myrdal and America’s Conscience: Social Engineering and Racial Liberalism, 1938-1987
William H. Harris, Keeping the Faith: A. Philip Randolph, Milton P. Webster, and the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, 1925-37
Nancy J. Weiss, Farewell to the Party of Lincoln: Black Politics in the Age of FDR
August Meier and Elliot Rudwick, Black Detroit and the Rise of the UAW
Mark Naison, Communists in Harlem During the Great Depression
Robin Kelley, Hammer and Hoe: Alabama Communists During the Great Depression
Mark Solomon, The Cry was Unity: Communists and African Americans, 1917-1936
Cheryl Greenberg, “Or Does it Explode?”: Black Harlem in the Great Depression
Articles by Honey, Halperin, Stein in Organized Labor in the Twentieth-Century South, Robert Zieger, ed.
John Kirby, Black Americans and the Roosevelt Era: Liberalism and Race
Ralph Bunche, The Political Status of the Negro in the Age of FDR
Beth Bates, Pullman Porters and the Rise of Protest Politics in Black America, 1925-1945
Barbara Dianne Savage, Broadcasting Freedom: Radio, War, and the Politics of Race, 1938-1948

Apr. 9 Political Economy of Civil Rights Movement

Core:

Supplementary:
James C. Cobb, The Selling of the South

Apr. 16 Racial Politics and the Brown Decision

Core
Michael J. Klarman, Brown v. Board of Education and the Civil Rights Movement
Supp.
Steve Lawson, ed., To Secure These Rights: The Report of President Harry S. Truman’s Committee on Civil Rights
James T. Patterson, Brown v. Board of Education: A Civil Rights Milestone and Its Troubled Legacy
Risa Goluboff, The Lost Promise of Civil Rights
Genna Rae McNeil, Groundwork: Charles Hamilton Houston and the Struggle for Civil Rights

Apr 23 Civil Rights Movement

Core:
John Dittmer, Local People: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi

Supplementary:
Jack Bloom, Intro Class, Race, and the Civil Rights Movement
Clayborne Carson, In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening in the 1960s
Adam Fairclough, To Redeem the Soul of America: The Southern Christian Leadership Conference and Martin Luther King, Jr.
David Garrow, Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference
David Garrow, Protest at Selma
Taylor Branch, Parting the Waters: America in the King Years, 1954-1963
Taylor Branch, Pillar in the Fires: America in the Kings Years, 1963-1965
Charles M. Payne, I’ve Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle.
August Meier and Elliot Rudwick, CORE: A Study of Civil Rights Movement
Charles W. Eagles, ed., The Civil Rights Movement in America
J. Mills Thornton, II, Dividing Lines: Municipal Politics and the Struggle for Civil Rights in Montgomery, Birmingham, and Selma
Glenn Eskew, But for Birmingham
Elizabeth Jacoway and David R. Colburn, eds, Southern Businessmen and Desegregation.
William Chafe, Civility and Civil Rights (Study of Greensboro, NC)
Robert Norrell, Reaping the Whirlwind (Tuskegee, Ala.)
Robert Colburn, Racial Change and Continuity (St. Augustine, Flor.)

April 30 The State Responds
Core:
Hugh Graham, The Civil Rights Era, 1960-72

Supplementary:
John F. Brauer, John F. Kennedy and the Second Reconstruction
Ronald P. Formisano, Boston Against Busing: Race, Class, and Ethnicity in the 1960s and 1970s.
John David Skrentny, The Ironies of Affirmative Action: Politics, Culture, and Justice in America
Thomas and Mary Edsall, Chain Reaction
Hugh Davis Graham, Collision Course: the Strange Convergence of Affirmative Action and Immigration Policy in America
John D. Skrentny, The Ironies of Affirmative Action: Politics Culture and Justice in America
Paul D. Moreno, From Direct Action to Affirmative Action: Fair Employment Law and Policy in America 1933-1972

May 7 War on Poverty, Great Society and Blacks

Core: Kent Germany, New Orleans after the Promises: Poverty, Citizenship, and the Search for the Great Society
Margaret Weir, Politics and Jobs, Ch. 3

Supplementary:
Clarence Lang, Grassroots at the Gateway: Class Politics and the Black Freedom Struggle in St. Louis, 1936-75
Guian A. McKee, The Problem of Jobs: Liberalism, Race and Deindustrialization in Philadelphia
Trace K. Meyer, Civil Rights in the Gateway to the South: Louisville, Kentucky, 1945-1980
Kenneth Jolly, Black Liberation in the Midwest: The Struggle in St. Louis, Missouri, 1964-1970
May14  Black Power

Core:

Dean W. Robinson, Black Nationalism in American Politics and Thought, ch 4-6
Chris Rhomburg, No There, There: Race, Class, and Political Community in Oakland, chs 6-8

Supp.
Robert Allen, Black Awakening in Capitalist America
Stokley Carmichael and Charles Hamilton, Black Power: The Politics of Liberation
Harold Cruse, The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual
James Forman, The Making of Black Revolutionaries
Julius Lester, Look Out Whitey! Black Power’s Gon’ Get Your Mama
Eldridge Cleaver, Soul on Ice
Bruce Perry, Malcolm X: The Life of a Man who Changed Black America
Peter Goldman, The Death and Life of Malcolm X
Timothy Tyson, Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Riots of Black Power
Robert O. Self, American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland
Adolph Reed, The Jesse Jackson Phenomenon
Matthew Countrymen, Up South: Civil Rights and Black Power in Philadelphia
Manning Marable, Malcolm X: A Life of Reinvention