HILD 7A: Race and Ethnicity in the United States

Fall 2007
MWF 3-3:50, Peterson 108

Professor Daniel Widener email: professorwidener@yahoo.com
Office: HSS 4063 Office Hrs: WF 11-12, apt.

Office Hours Note: you must sign up for an appointment slot. Open times will be listed on my door. Drop-in appointments will be difficult to discourage owing to high enrollment.

Teaching Assistants:

Jed Mularski Gloria Kim Liz Mikos
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Course Overview
This course concerns the history of the United States, with a focus on the historical experiences of peoples of African descent. Our aim should be threefold. First, it is our hope that you will gain a broader understanding of the general sweep of American history through your participation in the course. Additionally, we will seek to understand the particular history of African Americans, most notably by seeking to place the black experience in a hemispheric context. Finally, we will try to gain an understanding of how issues of race and ethnicity became central to life in the United States.

Course Assignments
1. Attendance at section is required (20% of grade)
2. In-class midterms (2) (40% of grade)
3. Review essay (20% of grade)
4. Final (20% of grade)

Please note: There will be three special film screenings that will involve out of class time commitments. Dates are marked on the syllabus.
Course Readings

1. Nell Painter, Creating Black Americans: African American History and its Meanings, 1619 to the Present
2. Eric Mann, Katrina’s Legacy: White Racism and Black Reconstruction in New Orleans and the Gulf Coast
3. Electronic Reserves: Additional materials will be placed on electronic reserve. These are marked with an * on the syllabus.

All course texts are available for purchase at Groundwork Books.

Course Policies

Your attendance is expected at lecture. Students should expect to spend at least as much time completing assigned readings as they spend in class. Weekly readings are to be completed as of the first day of lecture that week. Please note that readings will average between 100 and 150 pages a week. Plagiarism is prohibited, embarrassing for everyone, and generally a bad idea. Students are encouraged, however, to work collectively, particularly in section. If you have any questions about how to accomplish both these expectations, please ask.

Course Lectures and Themes

Week 0  9/27  Fri.  *course intro and themes*

Week 1  10/1  *Routes and Roots*
Mon.  The World in 1400
Wed.  Precolonial West Africa
Fri.  The Middle Passage and the Atlantic Slave Trade

Reading:  Painter, Chapter 1 and 2
* Smallwood, from *Saltwater Slavery*.

Week 2  10/8  *England’s Shadow*
Mon.  Virginia and the Birth of Race
Wed.  *Africans in the Americas*
Fri.  Retention and Syncretism in the African Diaspora

Reading:  *Gomez, From Black Crescent*
*Thompson, from *Flash of the Spirit*
*Richard Price, from *Maroon Societies*
| Week 3  | 10/15 | **Black Freedom in the Age of Revolution**  
| Mon.  | Black Culture and Black Consciousness  
| Wed. | The American Revolution  
| Fri. | The Haitian Revolution  
| Reading:  | Painter, Chapter 3, 4  
|  | *Genovese, from *From Rebellion to Revolution*  
|  | *Gary Nash, from *Race and Revolution*  
|  | *James, from *Black Jacobins*  
| **Film:**  | *Sankofa*  |
| Week 4  | 10/22 | **A White Republic?**  
| Mon. | The Peculiar Institution  
| Wed. | Andrew Jackson’s America  
| Fri. | The Civil War  
| Reading:  | Painter, Chapter 5 and 6  |
| Week 5  | 10/29 | **Things Fall Apart**  
| Mon. | Black Reconstruction in America  
| Wed. | Reconstruction  
| Fri. | **Exam #1**  
| Reading:  | Painter, Chapter 7 and 8  
|  | *Rebecca Scott, “Defining the Boundaries of Freedom”*  
|  | *Eric Foner, from *Nothing But Freedom*  
| **Film:**  | *Rosewood*  |
| Week 6  | 11/5 | **Iron Cages and Color Lines**  
| Mon. | Empire abroad  
| Wed. | The Science of Racism and the Racism of Science  
| Fri. | Blues People  
| Reading:  | Painter, Chapter 8  
|  | *Washington, from *Medical Apartheid*  |
| Week 7 |  | **The Dirty South**  
| Mon. |  
| Wed. | *no class*  
| Fri. | Gone to Chicago  |
Week 8

New Negroes
Mon. Renaissance at Home and Abroad
Wed. Up Ye Mighty Race
Fri. Toward Double Victory

Reading:
Painter, Chapter 9, 10, 11
*Eric Lott, “Double V, Double Time”
*George Lipsitz, “Frantic to Join…”
*Patterson (ed.), from We Charge Genocide

Week 9

Race for Democracy
Mon. A Worldwide Problem
Wed. The Second Civil War.
Fri. no class-in celebration of the power of myth, or,
how I learned to stop worrying about the destruction of my
great Grandparents in order to concentrate on eating.

Reading:
Painter, Chapter 12, 13, 14
Mann, Katrina (all)

Film: The Spook Who Sat by the Door

Week 10

Into the Fire
Mon. Black Politics in the Age of the Right
Wed. Cultures of Dissolution
Fri. Exam #2

Reading:
Painter, Chapter 15
*Ronald Wilson Reagan, campaign speech, 1980
*Robin Kelley, from Race Rebels
*Mike Davis, from City of Quartz

Film: Killer of Sheep

Essays due on Monday, December 10, @ 1 PM in Department of History, 5th floor, HSS building

Course Final: Friday, December 14, 3-6 PM, location TBA