

History/AAAS 755.04: African American Historiography

5 Credit Hours

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Course Description

This course is designed to acquaint students with the origins and evolution of African American history from the late-eighteenth century up to the present. In addition to interrogating the basic questions of the field's origins, we will also chart its theoretical, interpretative and methodological trajectory and its relationship to American history and other minority histories. A substantial amount of the course will examine the traditional literature on black historiography as well as newer work in literary and cultural studies. Significant attention will be given to oral and textual constructions of history and the burgeoning literature in memory studies and commemorative culture and its relationship to reconstructing the black past. We will also explore the transnational implications as well as the centrality of race, class and gender in discussions of African American history. Through the exploration of this historiographic terrain, students will be given the opportunity to examine how the particular approaches described above have influenced their specific area of interest in African American history.

Required Texts

John Ernest, *Liberation Historiography: African American Writers and the Challenge of History, 1795-1861* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003)

Mitch Kachun, *Festivals of Freedom: Memory and Meaning in African American Emancipation Day Celebrations, 1808-1915* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003)

Elizabeth Raul Bethel, *The Roots of African American Identity: Memory and History in Antebellum Free Communities* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1999)

Kirk Savage, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War and Monument in Nineteenth Century America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997)

Wilson Jeremiah Moses, *Afrotopia: The Roots of African American Popular History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998)

Benjamin Quarles, *Black Mosaic: Essays in Afro-American History and Historiography* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988)

Jacqueline Goggin, *Carter G. Woodson: A Life in Black History* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1993)

Paul Cimbala and Robert Himmelberg, *Historians and Race: Autobiography and the Writing of History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996)

Julie Des Jardins, *Women and the Historical Enterprise in America: Gender, Race and the Politics of Memory, 1880-1945* (Chapel Hill: University of north Carolina Press, 2003)

Maghan Keita, *Race and the Writing of History: Riddling the Sphinx* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000)

Course Requirements

1. Attendance and Participation: Attendance is required at all sessions. Students must submit documentation in order to make up missed assignments. Each student is responsible for leading the discussion on one article during the quarter. The discussion should focus on the importance and relevance of the material to the larger historiographic thrust of African American history as well as important theoretical and methodological approaches of the material.

2. Article Discussion (précis): All discussants must select one article during the quarter, and will be required to submit a 2-3 page précis of the article. The précis should not be solely a summary of the readings, but rather, an analysis of the materials, and a reflection upon the historiographic methods the author(s) employed. Think of these papers as the opportunity to express your intellectual voice: What was the author attempting to do? Was s/he successful or convincing? What methods or sources did s/he utilize? What were the strengths and weaknesses in the author's approach?

3. Book Review Essay: Students are also required to write one 7-9 page book review on a book chosen from the list located at the end of the syllabus. Rather than a traditional summary, the book review should focus mainly on historiographic analysis, and should be patterned on those that appear in *American Quarterly*, *Reviews in American History* and the *American Historical Review*. The book review essay is due in the eighth week of class.

4. Historiographic Essay: All students will be required to write a 15-20 page essay on a topic related to African American historiography. You should develop this topic in consultation with the instructor. Topics should be identified no later than the 7th week of class. The essays should focus upon a particular historiographic trend and discuss that issue using 3-5 books from the course. Be sure to examine how the books interact or engage each other on similar themes. The historiographic essay is due on the last day of class.

Method of Grade Determination

Attendance and Participation	20%
Article Discussion (précis)	10%
Book Review Essay	30%
Historiographic Essay	40%

Grading Scale:

A:	93 and above	C+:	77-79
A-:	90-92	C:	73-76
B+:	87-89	C-:	70-72
B:	83-86	D+:	67-69
B-:	80-82	D:	63-66
E: 62 and below			

Student Conduct:

Students are expected to abide by the guidelines listed in the OSU Code of Student Conduct. In addition students are not allowed to sleep, read newspapers, leave class early without permission, use cell phones (to text message or talk), or hold off-topic conversations during the class session. The instructor will ask students to leave the class and reserves the right to withdraw students from the course for disruptive behavior. In addition, any form of academic dishonesty or misconduct (e.g., cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized copying or collaboration, forging signatures on class rosters) will be directed to the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM). Students found in violation of the Code of Student Conduct by COAM may receive a failing course grade and are subject to disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion from the Ohio State University (Faculty Rule 33356-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct (http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/info_for_students/csc.asp).

Disability Services:

Students who feel they may need an accommodation due to a disability should contact me to arrange an appointment as soon as possible. During this meeting we can discuss the course format, anticipate your needs, and explore potential accommodations. We rely on the Office for Disability Services for assistance in verifying the need for accommodations and developing strategies. If you have not previously contacted the Office for Disability Services, you may do so at: 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307 (V), 292-0901 (TDD); <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>

Course Outline
(All articles are on Closed Reserve in the Library)

Week I:

Introduction: Why African American Historiography?

Due: Precis and Discussion Leader assignments arranged with Professor.

**Part I: African American History in the Late Eighteenth to the
Mid-Nineteenth History**

Week II:

Revisioning the Origins of African American History

Readings:

John Ernest, *Liberation Historiography: African American Writers and the Challenge of History, 1795-1861* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003)

Benjamin Quarles, "Black History's Antebellum Origins" in Benjamin Quarles, *Black Mosaic: Essays in Afro-American History and Historiography* (Amherst University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 109-135

John Hope Franklin, "On the Evolution of Scholarship in Afro-American Historiography," in Darlene Clark Hine, ed., *The State of Afro-American History: Past, Present, and Future*. Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1986

Week III:

Memory and the African American Past

Readings:

Elizabeth Raul Bethel, *The Roots of African American Identity: Memory and History in Antebellum Free Communities* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1999)

Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Memoire (The Sites of Memory)," reprinted in Genevieve Fabre and Robert O' Meally, *History & Memory in African American Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994). 284-300

Week IV:

Emancipation Celebrations: Celebrating Freedom in African American Communities

Readings:

Mitch Kachun, *Festivals of Freedom: Memory and Meaning in African American Emancipation Day Celebrations, 1808-1915* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003)

Kathleen Clark, "Celebrating Freedom: Emancipation Day Celebrations and African American memory in the Early Reconstruction South," in W. Fitzhugh Brundage, *Where the Memories Grow: History, Memory and Southern Identity* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000)

Benjamin Quarles, *Black Mosaic* (Read section on Blacks in the Revolutionary Period)

Part II: African American History: Mid-Nineteenth to the Early Twentieth Century

Week V:

African American History and Historical Representation in the Public Sphere

Readings:

Kirk Savage, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War and Monument in Nineteenth Century America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997)

Stephen G. Hall, "To Render the Public Private: William Still and the Selling of the Underground Railroad." *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 127 (2003): 35-55.

W. Fitzhugh Brundage, "Meta Warrick's 1907 'Negro Tableaux' and Representing African American historical Memory," *The Journal of American History* 89 (2003): 1386-1400.

Laurie Maffly-Kipp, "Redeeming Southern Memory: The Negro Race History, 1874-1915 in Brundage, *Where the Memories Grow*. 169-190

Benjamin Quarles, *Black Mosaic*—(Read material on Blacks in Abolition and Civil War)

Part III: Professionalization and the Changing Meanings of History

Week VI:

Institutionalization and the Rise of Professional Black History

Readings:

Jacqueline Goggin, *Carter G. Woodson: A Life in Black History* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1993)

Jacqueline Goggin, "Countering White Racist Scholarship: Carter G. Woodson and the *Journal of Negro History* 68(Autumn 1983): 355-375

Janette Hotson Harris, "Woodson, Wesley: A Partnership in Building the Association for Study of Afro-American Life and History *The Journal of Negro History* 83(Spring 1998), 109-119

August Meier and Elliott Rudwick, "J. Franklin Jameson, Carter G. Woodson and the Foundations of Black Historiography," *The American Historical Review* 89 (October 1984), 1005-1015

Benjamin Quarles, *Black Mosaic* (Read section on Blacks in the Twentieth Century and Black History)

Week VII:

Due: Topic for Essay

Gender and the Making of African American History

Readings:

Julie Des Jardins, *Women and the Historical Enterprise in America: Gender, Race and the Politics of Memory, 1880-1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003)

Jacqueline Goggin, "Challenging Sexual Discrimination in the Historical Profession: Women Historians and the American Historical Association, 1890-1940" *The American Historical Review* 97(June 1992), 769-802

Part V: African American History: Beyond Institutionalization

Week VIII:

Due: Book Review

Afrocentrism and Popular History

Wilson Jeremiah Moses, *Afrotopia: The Roots of African American Popular History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998)

Dickson Bruce, "Ancient Africa and the Early Black American Historians, 1883-1915," *American Quarterly* 36 (Winter 1984), 684-699

Week IX:

Reading African American History Beyond the Nation State

Readings:

Maghan Keita, *Race and the Writing of History: Riddling the Sphinx* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000)

Robin D.G. Kelley, "But a Local Phase of a World Problem: Black History's Global Vision," *The Journal of American History* 86 (June 1999): 1045-1077

Earl Lewis, "To Turn as on a Pivot: Writing African American History into a History of Overlapping Diasporas," *The American Historical Review* 100 (June 1995): 765-787

Week X:

Reflecting on African American History: Autobiography, Referee Reports and Final Comments

Readings:

Paul Cimbala and Robert Himmelberg, *Historians and Race: Autobiography and the Writing of History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996)

Earl Thorpe, Review of August Meier and Elliott Rudwick *Black History and the Historical Profession, 1915-1980* in the *Journal of Negro History* 58 (Spring 1993): 123-127

David Thelen, "What We See and Can't See in the Past: An Introduction," *The Journal of American History* 83 (March 1997): 1217-1220

Joel Williamson, "Wounds Not Scars: Lynching, the National Conscience. And the American Historian," *Journal of American History*, 83 (March 1997): 1221-1253

Edward Ayers, et al "Referees' Reports," *The Journal of American History* 83 (March 1997), 1254-1267