

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AT AMHERST
Introduction to African American History, 1619-1860

Fall 2010
Afro-American Studies 132
Professor Manisha Sinha
Office Hours: Mon. & Wed. 11.00a.m-12.00 p.m.
and by appointment
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Teaching Assistants:
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Alex Carter email: amcarter@afroam.umass.edu
Office Hours: Wed. 10.00 a.m.-12.00 p.m.
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Cynara Robinson email: ckrobins@afroam.umass.edu
Office Hours: Wed. 9.30-11.30 a.m.
325, New Africa House

Course Description

The main aim of this course is to make you familiar with some of the most important developments and issues in African American history from the African slave trade until the Civil War. We will focus on the black experience under slavery and the struggle for emancipation. Topics include the African background, the evolution of African American communities and culture, the American Revolution, the free black community, the distinct experience of black women, abolition and the black protest tradition, and the Civil War and its aftermath. The format of the course is lecture supplemented by class discussions.

Course Requirements

All students must regularly attend class and the discussion sections and read the required assignments in the course schedule. Active class participation is expected. All students will write two five page response papers, the midterm and final examinations. The final grade for the course will be divided in the following manner: Midterm 20%, Final 30%, Papers 40%, Class Attendance and Participation in the Discussion Sections 10%. All books used for the course are on reserve in the library and may be purchased from the Textbook Annex.

Required Readings

John Hope Franklin and Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, From Slavery to Freedom: A History of African Americans Vol. I Ninth Edition (New York: McGraw Hill, 2011)

John H. Bracey Jr. and Manisha Sinha, African American Mosaic: A Documentary History from the Slave Trade to the Twenty First Century Vol. One (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2004)

Kenneth Greenberg ed., The Confessions of Nat Turner (Boston: St. Martin's Press, 2000)

David Blight ed., Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass An American Slave Written By Himself (Boston: St. Martin's Press, 1993)

Jennifer Fleischner ed, Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl Written By Herself (Boston: St. Martin's Press, 2010)

Deborah Gray White, Ar'n't I a Woman?: Female Slaves in the Plantation South (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1985)

Course Schedule

NOTE: Discussion Sections will meet every week in 210, Herter Hall. All students must read the weekly assignments and come well prepared for the discussion sections. The following is the schedule for the discussion sections:

D01 Monday 1:25 p.m. Alex Carter

D02 Monday 2:30 p.m. Cynara Robinson

D03 Wednesday 1:25 p.m. Kabria Baumgartner

D04 Wednesday 2:30 p.m. David Swiderski

D05 Friday 1:25 p.m. Alex Carter

D06 Friday 2:30 p.m. Cynara Robinson

Lecture Topics and Weekly Reading Assignments

Week 1 (Sep. 8): Introduction

Bracey and Sinha, African American Mosaic, Introduction

Weeks 2 (Sep. 13 & 15): Origins of the African Diaspora and the Atlantic Slave Trade

Franklin and Higginbotham, From Slavery to Freedom, Chaps. 1-2

Week 3 (Sep. 20): Origins of the African Diaspora and the Atlantic Slave Trade (Contd)

Bracey and Sinha, African American Mosaic, pp.3-31

Documentary: Olaudah Equiano

(Sep 22): Colonial Slavery

Franklin and Higginbotham, From Slavery to Freedom, Chaps. 3 & 4

Week 4 (Sep. 27 & 29): Colonial Slavery (Contd.)

Bracey and Sinha, African American Mosaic, pp. 32-47, 49-51

Documentary: Africans in America, Part One

Sep 29: First Response Paper Due

Week 5 (Oct. 4 & 6): African Americans and the American Revolution
Franklin and Higginbotham, From Slavery to Freedom, Chaps.5 & 6
Bracey and Sinha, African American Mosaic, pp. 52-96, 100-105

Week 6 (Oct. 12-Monday Schedule & 13): Slavery in the Old South
Franklin and Higginbotham, From Slavery to Freedom, Chap. 7
Bracey and Sinha, African American Mosaic, pp. 105-119, 130-144, 170-1

Week 7 (Oct. 18): Slavery in the Old South (Contd.)
Blight ed., Narrative of the Life Frederick Douglass
Documentary: When Lions Wrote History

Oct 20: MIDTERM EXAMINATION

Week 8 (Oct. 25 & 27): African American Women and Slavery
White, Ar'n't I a Woman?, Chapters 1 & 2
Flesichner ed, Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl

Week 9 (Nov. 1 & 3): African American Resistance to Slavery
Kenneth Greenberg ed., The Confessions of Nat Turner
Bracey and Sinha, African American Mosaic, pp.171-7, 190-1
Documentary: Nat Turner

Week 10 (Nov. 8): The Free Black Community
Franklin and Higginbotham, From Slavery to Freedom, Chap. 8
Bracey and Sinha, African American Mosaic, pp. 178-180, 193-209

Week 11 (Nov. 15 & 17): Black and White Abolitionists
Franklin and Higginbotham, From Slavery to Freedom, Chap. 9
Bracey and Sinha, African American Mosaic, pp. 209-268

Week 12 (Nov. 22 & 24): The Coming of the Civil War
Bracey and Sinha, African American Mosaic, pp. 271-280
Documentary: Africans in America, Part Four

Nov 24: Second Response Paper Due

Week 13 (Nov. 29 & Dec. 1): The Civil War and Emancipation
Franklin and Higginbotham, From Slavery to Freedom, Chap. 10
Bracey and Sinha, African American Mosaic, pp. 280-319, 322-6

Week 14 (Dec. 6 & 8): Reconstruction
Franklin and Higginbotham, From Slavery to Freedom, Chap. 11
Bracey and Sinha, African American Mosaic, pp. 326-334, 366-367, 377-386

FINAL EXAMINATION: DATE, TIME AND VENUE TO BE ANNOUNCED