

University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign
Department of African American Studies
Theory in African American Studies
AFRO 490, Fall 2011

Tuesdays 9-11:50 in the Conference Room, 1201 W. Nevada

Instructor

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Office hours

Tuesdays 8-9 am and by appointment.

Course description and goals

An introduction to various theories and methodologies rising out of the study of the Black world based on African American intellectual traditions. Goals include:

1. To survey major theoretical positions in Black intellectual history
2. To introduce methods for creating theory in Black studies
3. To document theoretical work on Malcolm X
4. To develop a public discourse on theory in Black Studies

Required readings

[A] Molefi Kete Asante and Abu S. Abarry, editors. *African intellectual heritage: A book of sources*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996.

[G] Henry Louis Gates, Jr., and Nellie Y. McKay, editors. *The Norton anthology of African American literature*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1996

[M] Manning Marable and Leith Mullings, editors. *Let nobody turn us around: Voices of resistance, reform, and renewal: An African American anthology*. Second edition. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003.

[Intro] Abdul Alkalimat and Associates. *Introduction to African American Studies: A People's College Primer. 6th Edition*. Chicago: Twenty-first Century Books and Publications, Chicago. 2009, 1984. Full text at <http://www.eblackstudies.org/intro/>

[Paradigms] Abdul Alkalimat, ed., *Paradigms in Black Studies: Intellectual History, Cultural Meaning, and Political Ideology*. Chicago: Twenty-first Century Books and Publications, 1990.

Do not purchase, will be supplied by instructor.

Other readings are available online.

Grades

Class participation.....	30%
Class bibliography project on Malcolm X	30%
Individual research project on a theorist.....	40%

Public lectures

Five lectures during the course will be a public lecture series, "Rethinking Theory in Black Studies" and will be video recorded. This won't include you being videotaped, just the lecture. Please invite others you think might be interested.

September 13: Ideology

September 27: Methodology

October 11: History

October 25: Tradition

November 8: Debate

Class process

1. Read the required text and be prepared to present in class as instructed. For some readings the entire page range is indicated; for others just the first page, be sure and read the entire item indicated.
2. After opening remarks by the instructor, class will be conducted using the Socratic Method (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Socratic_method)
3. Each class will be in two parts separated by a ten minute break, a and b.

Weekly schedule

1 / Tuesday, August 23. Introduction

A. Who are we, what are the texts, the syllabi, instructor's philosophy and pedagogy

B. Read: *E. Franklin Frazier, "The failure of the Negro intellectual." *Negro Digest*, February 1962. Reprinted (pages 52-66) in *The Death of white sociology: essays on race and culture*. Joyce A. Ladner, editor. Black Classic Press, 1998.
<http://books.google.com/books?id=cni7hXfc1roC&lpg=PA52&ots=Jv7BRqbOB0&dq=E.%20Franklin%20Frazier%2C%20%E2%80%9CThe%20failure%20of%20the%20Negro%20intellectual.%E2%80%9D&pg=PA52#v=onepage&q=E.%20Franklin%20Frazier,%20%E2%80%9CThe%20failure%20of%20the%20Negro%20intellectual.%E2%80%9D&f=false>

*W. E. B. DuBois, "The propaganda of history." In *Black Reconstruction in America*. W.E.B. Du Bois. New York: Russell & Russell, 1935, 1962.
<http://www.nathanielturner.com/propagandaofhistorydubois.htm>

2 / Tuesday, August 30. Introduction to Malcolm X and to Research

A. Read: Malcolm's Detroit Speeches, <http://www.brothermalcolm.net/aug04index.html>

Scan: *Malcolm X: A Research Site*, <http://brothermalcolm.net>

B. Discussion of class project and individual research project

3 / Tuesday, September 6. Ideology: Class discussion

A. Read: Paradigms book (Abdul Alkalimat, Houston Baker, Amiri Baraka, Robert Harris, Manning Marable, Cornel West)

B. Black culture and art. Read:

Fanon, On national culture, A236 [Asante page 236]

DuBois, Criteria of Negro art, G777 [Gates page 777]

Hoyt Fuller, Toward a Black aesthetic, G1852

Countee Cullen, Yet do I marvel, G1341

Margaret Walker, For my people, G1619

Baraka, Black art, G1943

Larry Neal, Black Art Movement, G2038

Karenga, Black Art, G2086

Angela Davis, Black women and music, A765

Baraka, Revolutionary culture, A689

Gayle, The Black aesthetic, G1911

OBAC, The Wall of Respect,

<http://www.blockmuseum.northwestern.edu/wallofrespect/main.htm>

Paul Robeson, The Negro artist looks ahead, M326 [Marable page 236]

*Ralph Bunche, Conceptions and Ideologies of the Negro Problem

<http://scholarworks.umass.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1109&context=cibs>

4 / Tuesday, September 13. Ideology: Public lecture

A. Read: Abdul Alkalimat, The relevance of local politics,
<http://www.eblackchicago.org/HAROLD/PDF/relevance.pdf#page=8>

B. Read: Abdul Alkalimat. The ideology of Black social science,
http://books.google.com/books?id=cni7hXfc1roC&pg=PA173&dq=the+ideology+of+black+social+science&hl=en&ei=uUpRTvCfGcaAsgL91dHkBg&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1&sqi=2&ved=0CC0Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=the%20ideology%20of%20black%20social%20science&f=false

5 / Tuesday, September 20. Method: Class discussion

A. Read: Schomburg, Negro digs up his past, G962

Hughes, Negro artist and racial mountain, G1311

Wright, Blueprint for Negro writing, G1403
Ellison, Richard Wright's blues, G1538
Gates, Esu and the Signifying Monkey, A160
Asante, The principal issues in Afrocentric inquiry, A256
Nkrumah, Consciencism, A354
Karenga, Mguzo Saba, A543
Woodson, Miseducation of the Negro, A656

*Alkalimat, eBlack Studies,

<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/ccbh/souls/vol2no3/vol2num3art7.pdf>

B. Read: Alkalimat, Harold Washington and Black Studies Methodology: The Autobiography of a Research Project, <http://eblackchicago.org/HAROLD/pdf/2.pdf#zoom=60>

Scan: *Harold Washington*, <http://eblackchicago.org/HAROLD/>

6 / Tuesday, September 27. Method: Public lecture

A. Read: Abdul Alkalimat, BRAIN, Black Research Archive on the Internet: Toward a research program for eBlack Studies. <http://murchisoncenter.org/acrl/paper.htm>

B. Read: Abdul Alkalimat, Social Cyberpower in everyday life, in *Cyberorganizing*, edited by Abdul Alkalimat. <http://eblackstudies.org/grbk/organizing.pdf>

7 / Tuesday, October 4. History: Class discussion

A. Read: Olaudah Equiano, The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, M9

William Wells Brown, Narrative, G315

W. E. B. Dubois, Souls of Black Folk, G692

Walter Rodney, African before the Europeans, A706

Nat Turner, Narrative, A620

Frederick Douglas, 4th of July, A637

Ida B. Wells, Lynching, A651

Mary McCleod Bethune, Last Will, A671

Black Workers in the Great Depression, M273

Black Women Workers During the Great Depression, M300

A Philip Randolph, March on Washington, M308

Rose Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott, M352

B. Read: Intro, Introduction

Read the introductions to the sections in the three anthologies,

Asante A 1-7, 9-14, 57-63, 109-114, 283-287, 441-446, 595-600

Gates G xxxvii, 3-8, 151-162, 541-554, 953-962, 1355-1368, 1831-1850, 2127-2139

Marable M xxi-xxix, 1-7, 115-122, 217-224, 341-352, 487-501

8 / Tuesday, October 11. History: Public lecture

A. Read: Intro, chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

B. Read: Intro, chapters 7, 8, 9, 12, 14

9 / Tuesday, October 18. Tradition: Class discussion

A. Liberation Theology, Pan-Africanism, and Feminism.

Read on Liberation Theology:

Richard Allen, The Founding of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, M20

The Spirituals: Go down Moses and Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel, M111

Henry McNeal Turner, Black Christian Nationalist, M128

The Yoruba Creation Narrative, A45

James Weldon Johnson, The Creation, A53

Jomo Kenyatta, Religion and Ancestor Veneration, A88

God, Johnson, Franklin, Thurman, Townsel, King, Malcolm X, Forbes, and Williams, Sermons, G94

Gates, Scholars and Prayers, 94-129

Intro, Chapter 10

Read on Pan-Africanism:

Pan-African Congress Resolution (1919), A517

Pan-African Congress Resolution (1945), A518

Kwame Nkrumah, The Need for a Union Government for Africa, A559

C.L.R. James The Rise and Fall of Nkrumah, A573

Emperor Haile Selassie, Address to the League of Nations, A664

Charter of the Organization of African Unity, A698

Martin R. Delaney, The Condition, Elevation, Emigration and Destiny of the Colored People of the United States, G255

Marcus Garvey, Africa for the Africans and The Future as I See It, G995

Intro, Chapter 15

Read on Feminism:

Alice Moore Dunbar-Nelson, The Negro Woman and the Ballot, M264

Claudia Jones, An End to the Neglect of the Problems of the Negro Woman! M316

Fannie Lou Hamer: The Special Plight and the Role of Black Women, M395

Angela Y. Davis, I Am a Revolutionary Black Woman, M459

Audre Lorde, I Am You Sister, M515

bell hooks, Shaping Feminist Theory, M522

Anna Julia Cooper, Womanhood: A Vital Element in the Regeneration and Progress of a Race, A643

Third World Women's Alliance. Black Women's Manifesto: Documents from the Women's Liberation Movement. <http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/wlm/blkmanif/>

Intro, Chapter 11

B. Socialism, Nationalism.

Read on Socialism:

Black Bolsheviks: Cyril V. Briggs and Claude McKay, M228

League of Revolutionary Black Workers, Our thing is DRUM, M463

W. E. B. DuBois, The Salvation of American Negroes Lies in Socialism, M385

Karl Marx, The Communist Manifesto, part 1.

<http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/communist-manifesto/>

Intro, Chapter 16

Read on Nationalism:

Elijah Muhammed and the Nation of Islam, M401

Black Power, M418

The National Black Political Convention, M469

The 1928 and 1930 Comintern resolutions on the Black National Question in the United States, <http://www.marx2mao.com/Other/CR75.html>

Intro, Chapter 15

10 / Tuesday, October 25. Tradition: Public lecture

A. Read: Ernest Allen, African American Identity: Reflection on the Pre-Civil War Era
<http://scholarworks.umass.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1047&context=cibs>

B. Scan: St Clair Drake <http://www.stclairdrake.net/>

11 / Tuesday, November 1. Debate: Class discussion

A. Emancipation Debate

Read: David Walker, G227-238, A627-636, M24-33

Sojourner Truth, G245-249, M66-67

Henry Highland Garnet, G345-352, M56-62

Frederick Douglass, G385-483, A637-640, M84-88, M122-128

Nat Turner, A620-626, M34-39

Maria Stewart, M40-46

Pease and Pease, Negro Convention Movement,

<http://journeytohistory.com/History110/Readings%202/The%20Negro%20Convention%20MovementWilliam%20H.pdf>

Bell, A survey of the Negro Convention Movement, Chapters 1, 5, 6, 7.

http://books.google.com/books?id=0_gGtph7VQwC&printsec=frontcover&dq=negro+convention+movement&hl=en&ei=1S5RTvyvMLHE0AGin_m_AQ&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CCoQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false

B. Self-Determination Debate.

Read: DuBois, M195-208, M209-212, A492-499, G686-785

Garvey M241-250, M251-252, G995-1003, A402-406, A503-504

Washington, M174-180, A483-491, G570-602
Ida B. Wells, M191-194, G675-686
T. Thomas Fortune, M135-137
Trotter, M181-182, A500-502
Cyril Briggs, M228-240
Angelo Herndon, M281-287
Southern Negro Youth Congress, M306-307
Thurgood Marshall, M331-340

12 / Tuesday, November 8. Debate: Public lecture

A. Black Liberation Debate.

Read: SNCC, M371-374, 383-385, 399-401, 418-429
Ella Baker, M375-376
King, M377-383
DuBois, M385-395
Malcolm X, M404-418
Panthers, M445

B. Black Liberation Debate.

Scan: The debate over Manning Marable's the recent book on Malcolm X, at
<http://brothermalcolm.net>

Read: William Sales, Malcolm X: A Life of Reinvention by Manning Marable.
<http://brothermalcolm.net/marable/pdf/Sales.pdf>

Abdul Alkalimat, Rethinking Malcolm means first learning how to think: What was Marable thinking? And how? <http://echicago.illinois.edu/alkalimat-reviews-marable-june-2011.pdf>

13 / Tuesday, November 15

A. Read: Alkalimat, Studies on Malcolm X.
<http://www.brothermalcolm.net/2003/aamx/pdf/sage.pdf>

B. Discussion of group research on Malcolm X bibliography

Tuesday, November 22 is Thanksgiving, no class

14 / Tuesday, November 29

Finishing the class bibliography project

15 / Tuesday, December 6

Presentation of individual research volumes and an early pizza lunch

Assignment instructions for Class Bibliography on Malcolm X

This assignment is for the class to collectively produce a bibliography, in other words, to assemble a volume that we will call *A Comprehensive Bibliography (1986-2011) of Works about Malcolm X*. This entails compiling a list of 25 years of commentary and research. This will update the two bibliographies already published on Malcolm X:

1. Lenwood G. Davis and Marsha L. Moore. *Malcolm X, a selected bibliography*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1984.
2. Timothy V. Johnson. *Malcolm X: a comprehensive annotated bibliography*. New York : Garland Publishing, 1986.

This work requires learning and using the free plug-in Zotero, which works with Firefox. It enables you to collect citations and generate not only a text bibliography but an .ris file which is shareable and interoperable and can be combined with other .ris files. So you should work in Firefox that has zotero installed. You can download it from zotero.org and it is also in use in the U of I libraries. You can learn it by asking a librarian, a classmate, a friend, and/or watching the videos at zotero.org. Individual tasks will include collecting citations from:

- Google Scholar (<http://scholar.google.com/>)
- Dissertation Abstracts (linked from U of I library home page, or direct at <http://www.library.illinois.edu/rex/erefs/dissertations.html>)
- The bibliography of the dissertations we collect (scanning the downloaded pdfs)
- The bibliographies of books we collect
- Newspaper databases (via the U of I library website, <http://www.library.illinois.edu>)

We'll review progress every two weeks in class and adjust tasks according to what we are finding. So every due date, you bring to class and hand in (or move to the instructor's laptop):

1. A printed bibliography of your work
2. That bibliography on a flash drive
3. The .ris file containing the same contents, on a flash drive.

Due dates are:

Tuesday, September 6
Tuesday, September 20
Tuesday, October 4
Tuesday, October 18
Tuesday, November 1
Tuesday, November 15
Tuesday, November 29

Assignment instructions for Individual Research Project

You will select a contemporary Black Studies theorist or school of thought, from the list below or your own choosing, collect their work, write a 5 page introduction, create a table of contents, and assemble it all into a one-volume monograph (pdf and hard copy). **Due Tuesday, December 6.**

1. Identify the theorist/school of thought. Possibilities include:

William Sales
Sam Anderson
Lou Turner
Robert Allen
Barbara Ransby
Sundia Cha Jua
Ron Bailey
Geneva Smitherman
Communiversity
Yaki (James Sayles)

2. Locate the person and communicate with them to get their permission and assistance. For instance, ask for a curriculum vitae (this will list their work).
3. Do research in the library and online and produce a bibliography using Zotero.
4. Collect the work and assemble pdfs.
5. Send the author the bibliography and ask for their corrections and additions.
6. Write an introduction to the collection and a table of contents for what you will include in the volume. For instance, you cannot include an entire book.
7. Send the author your introduction and TOC and ask for their corrections and additions.
8. Assemble the volume (pdfs and word documents) into one pdf using Adobe Acrobat Pro, create a cover, print and bind it (The binding is called “perfect binding” and is available at the U of I Print Shop, 54 E. Gregory, Urbana, and at Kinko’s).
9. Bring to class on due date one perfect bound book and the book as pdf on a flash drive, to move to instructor’s laptop.