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HIST 243-01, The Civil Rights Movement, Spring 2013

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History 243 – The Civil Rights Movement

Dr. Charles W. McKinney

Spring 2013, 212 Buckman
MWF 1.00 – 1.50
Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays
11.00-12.00, 2.00-3.00 and by appointment

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Course Description

This course will examine the development of the American Civil Rights Movement from roughly The Reconstruction Era through the early twenty-first century. In the semester, we will examine the social, cultural, political and economic climate of this “long civil rights” period and consider how black and white Americans navigated the titanic changes that occurred during a period many refer to as “The Second Reconstruction.” Specifically, the course will focus on various individuals and organizations and the strategies they implemented to affect change; the tension between local and national initiatives; the impact of gender on the formulation of civil rights struggles; the significance of major events, such as World War II; *Brown v. Board of Education*; the founding of key organizations like the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC); legislation such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964; and the impact of mass incarceration. Additionally, the course will analyze the various reactions to initiatives that allowed African Americans to attain many of the rights and privileges that have become commonplace in today’s society.

Course Requirements:

Books:

- Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow (Jim Crow)*
- James Baldwin, *The Fire Next Time (Fire)*
- Danielle McGuire, *At the Dark End of the Street (Dark)*
- Timothy Tyson, *Blood Done Sign My Name (Blood)*

Two primary source papers – (4-5 pages) – 25% of final grade

Students will submit **two** 4-6 page papers due on **January 28** and **February 25**. A note on the paper: when I say it should be 4-6 pages long I mean it. *Papers that do not have at least four full pages of text will not be graded.* Although this should go without saying, I’ll put it in here anyway: a title page does **not** count as page one of your paper.

One Film Analysis – (3 pages) – 15% of final grade

Students will watch one movie produced in the Civil Rights/Black Power era and write a comprehensive review. The movie review is due **March 25**.

Class Participation – 20% of final grade

I expect you to attend every class, arrive on time and come ready, having done the assigned reading and/or written assignment. Since there will be a very high premium on class discussion, it is imperative that everyone comes to class ready to contribute with comments, questions and insights. Remember though, class participation is not a contest. The people who talk the most do not necessarily “win.” What really counts is your ability and willingness to bring something valuable to the discussion that your colleagues and I can build upon in our efforts to bring some clarity to the issues that we are discussing. Of course, this level of participation will require full reading of assigned work. Please keep in mind that this is a lecture **and** discussion course. Each class will feature a lecture designed to add depth and breadth to the subjects covered in the reading assignments. Please note that these lectures will **not** be reviews of the reading assignments. Therefore, it is necessary to read assigned material before coming to class in order to glean the most from the lectures. Also, to ensure the best possible experience for all of us, let’s refrain from using inappropriate language, or any other activity that may make our classroom less than open and engaging. Also, coming to the office during office hours to discuss material covered in the class also counts towards your class participation grade.

Blog entries – 15% of final grade

In this course, a portion of students' writing assignments will be completed on a blog ("The Civil Rights Movement") that has been set up especially for this course. The URL for the site is www.civilrhodes2013.blogspot.com. Each student is required to complete **2 independent "posts" (of no less than 400 words)** and **4 "comments" before** the midterm, and **2 independent posts and 4 comments after** the midterm. Contributions to the blog will be graded in the same way that formal writing assignments would be graded, so students should pay attention to the technical aspects of their writing (spelling, grammar, punctuation) as well as the compositional aspects (clarity of thesis, style, organization of argument, relevance, etc.). Students who participate on the blog in excess of the requirements will be rewarded in their final grade.

Final Paper – 25% of final grade

The final paper will be an 8-10 page research paper that utilizes primary sources materials. This paper will be due **Wednesday, April 24**.

Please Note: Assignment Due Dates Are Fixed.

Please do not hesitate to come by my office to discuss any of these requirements.

Honor Code:

All work turned in for this course is to be completed in accordance with the Rhodes College Honor Code. To demonstrate your commitment to the Code, each student must write "pledged" and sign his/her name on every assignment. If you have questions about plagiarism you should talk to me directly.

A Note on written work:

All written work must be composed on a computer, be double-spaced and in 10 or 12 point font. Have your name, the assignment name (and number if necessary), date, course name and email address on each document you turn in. Make sure your pages are **numbered and stapled**. The papers that you submit should reflect your best efforts. Students who feel that they need assistance with written assignments should feel free to contact me so that we can discuss whatever challenges you may be facing.

Attendance:

Students will be allowed three unexcused absences. *All other absences after the third one must be excused. Each unexcused absence after the third one will cost you 5% of your **final** grade. If you miss three weeks' worth of classes, you can be dropped from the class or flunked.* Valid excuses for missing class include but are not limited to religious observances, college-sanctioned academic or athletic travel, personal illness or injury, family illness or injury or bereavement. Excuses after the allotted three should be accompanied by a note from the Dean's office. Needless to say, infrequent class attendance will negatively impact your class participation grade.

Paper grades:

As a general rule, grades are not negotiable. However, I will gladly discuss the grade on any assignment 24 hours after the work is turned in.

Late Papers:

Papers are due at the beginning of class. Papers that are one day late will be penalized one letter grade. "My computer crashed the morning the paper was due", or "the printer was out of toner" are not valid excuses for a late paper; rather, they are a testament to poor time management on your part. **Papers over one day late will receive an F.** *However, please note that you must turn in all of the assigned work in order to pass the class.*

Learning Differences:

I am strongly committed to accommodating students with disabilities, and ask your cooperation in making sure that I'm aware of any such accommodation you might need. For more information, please contact Student Disability Services to alert them of any needs you may have.

Additional Information:

- Please turn off all cell phones, pagers, games, and any other object that can beep, buzz, ring or vibrate. These devices are extremely disruptive when they go off in the middle of class
- The readings for the week should be done by the *beginning of each week*
- Unless otherwise indicated, films on the syllabus may be streamed at the Rhodes Online Media Center website, located at <http://ms.rhodes.edu/>
- ***I reserve the right to amend this syllabus as necessary***

Class Schedule:

January

Overview

W 9 – Review syllabus; Master narrative: why study the movement?

F 11 – Library presentation

READINGS: “When did segregation begin?” (folder)

Reconstruction/Turn of the century

M 14 – Reconstruction/Freedom Rights

W 16 – The Rise of Jim Crow

F 18 – Hellhounds

READINGS: “Bloody Lowndes”; “Trouble in Mind” (folder)

WATCH: “Slavery by Another Name” (PBS) or “Rise and Fall of Jim Crow: Promises Betrayed”

World War II: Fighting for Victory Abroad and at Home

M 21 – **Martin Luther King, Jr. (Morehouse, class of 1948) National Holiday (No Class)**

W 23 – New Deal, World War II

F 25 – Black Veterans and the emerging movement. **Special Guest Star: Prof. Robert Saxe**

READINGS: “Settling Down” (Folder); *Dark*, chps 1-2; “I’ve Got the Light of Freedom” (folder)

WATCH: “We Work Again” @ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8BafaRPPxIU;>

“The Negro Soldier” @ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sj4ibGEYRS4>

Brown and Beyond

M 28 – The lesson of *Brown* - ***PRIMARY SOURCE PAPER DUE***

W 30 – Voting and Mobilizing

Feb 1 – The Christian Roots of the Movement

READINGS: *Dark*, 3-4; “Multiple Fronts” (folder); “African American Religious

Intellectuals” @ <http://search.proquest.com/docview/217513415/fulltextPDF?accountid=13503>

WATCH: “Eyes on the Prize: Awakenings”

February

Montgomery and Little Rock

M 4 – Women, Sexual Violence and Ella Baker

W 6 – The Boycott and MLK

F 8 – Little Rock

READINGS: *Dark*, 4-5; Ransby, “The Preacher and the Organizer” (folder)

WATCH: Rosa Parks Interview @ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L3h6s9jxZtE;>

“The Long Walk Home” @ http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xtl7sV_-8VE

Sit-Ins and Freedom Rides

M 11 – Sit ins and the birth of SNCC

W 13 – Freedom Rides

F 15 – **Special Guest Star: Anthony Siracusa**

READINGS: “The Nonviolent Anvil”; “Ain’t Scared of Your Jails” (folder)

WATCH: “Integration Report” @ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zTvmBclBL8E>

“Negroes With Guns” @ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JNWzAeymRCs>

SNCC

M 18 – SNCC – ***PRIMARY SOURCE PAPER DUE***

W 20 – Movie: “February One”

F 22 – **No Class**

READINGS: “Inside the Sit ins” (folder); *Blood*, 1-3

Birmingham and the March on Washington

M 25 – Tactics: Nonviolence and Self-Defense

W 27 – “Bombingham”

Mar 1 – The March on Washington and the Federal Government

READINGS: “No Easy Walk” (folder); *Dark*, 6-7

WATCH: “Citizen King” @ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cVz-lz5QN8s>

March

Fire

M 4 – **Special Guest Star: Dr. Ernest Gibson**

W 6 – The Wages of Whiteness

F 8 – Baldwin’s America

READINGS: *Fire*, **all**

WATCH: James Baldwin Interview @ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FpRziHGxeEU>

March 11 – 15 Spring Break

“The Middle of the Iceberg”

M 18 – Freedom Summer and MFDP

W 20 – Selma

F 22 – Lowndes County and the Roots of Black Power

READINGS: *Blood*, 4-6; “Give Light and the People will find a Way” (folder);

WATCH: “Freedom Song”

The Movement in Transition

M 25 – Watts and Urban Unrest – ***MOVIE REVIEW DUE***

W 27 – Memphis and the Meredith March; **Special Guest Star: Dr. Aram Goudsouzian**

F 29 – **Easter Break**

READINGS: “Three Weeks in Mississippi” (folder); *Blood*, 7-9

WATCH: “Eyes on the Prize: Bridge to Freedom”

April

“We’re Gonna Start Saying Black Power”

Apr 1 – Brother Malcolm

W 3 – The Rise of Black Nationalism

F 5 – Civil Rights on Campus

READINGS: “*Eyes: Power!*” (folder); *Dark*, 8-Epilogue

WATCH: “Freedom Song”; “Off the Pigs!” @ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BTL7QWBu0FA>

Memphis and Beyond

M 8 – Sanitation Strike

W 10 – I may not get there with you...

F 12 – Black Power on Campus

READINGS: Shirletta Kinchen Reading (folder); “Eyes: The Promised Land”; “The Last Segregated Hour”

WATCH: “I Am a Man”

The New Jim Crow

M 15 – The Rebirth of Caste

READING: *Jim Crow*, chps 1-2

W 17 – Race and Justice

READING: *Jim Crow*, 3-4

F 19 – What’s Old is New Again

READING: *Jim Crow*, 5-6

Looking Back to Move Forward

M 22–Obama and The Legacy of the Civil Rights Movement

W 24–Why Study the Movement? ***FINAL PAPER DUE***

F 26 –**URCAS**

READINGS: “Not Even Past” (folder); “Why Study the Movement?” (folder)