K20.1560
FALL 2014

GALLATIN SCHOOL OF INDIVIDUALIZED STUDY
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

PROFESSOR E. FRANCES WHITE
715 BROADWAY, 503
212 998 2192

OFFICE HOURS:
TUESDAYS 2:30PM TO 4:30PM
THURSDAYS 2:30PM TO 4:30PM
f.white@nyu.edu

Middle Passage mem’ries...they in a dungeon in my head.
Ain’t no jailor, ain’t no keys, ain’t no judgment read...

James A. Emanuel

This course looks at the relationships between history, memory, counter-memory, trauma and identity. We will use the history and memory of American slavery as our case study. Tracking back and forth between learning about the slave era and about its continuing impact in the 20th and 21st centuries, we ask: What gets remembered about African-American history? How do subordinated peoples create counter-memories, including humor?

Our goal is to achieve a solid grounding in the history of American slavery and to develop conceptual tools for making complex analyses of the past and of the politics of memory.
Course Outline

For explanations on written assignments and student presentations, please see the handout entitled, Assignments and Grades. Articles and book chapters are either in the Resource tab of Classes or found in the Bobcat Database noted in the brackets.

September 2 Introduction

September 4 Memory and History


RESPONSE PAPER

September 9 Memories of Africa


THREE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

September 11


RESPONSE PAPER DUE

September 16  The Middle Passage
Equiano, Chapter 2 [ebrary]


SCREENING: Roots episode 2

THREE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

September 18

THREE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

September 23


**FIND A THESIS STATEMENT IN HARTMAN, EBRON OR HOLSEY**

**September 25  “Birth of a Nation”**


**FIND A THESIS STATEMENT IN BAY, GORDON-REED OR SMITHERS**

**September 30**

**SCREENING:** Spielberg, Steven *et. al. Amistad* Part I

**THREE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

**October 2**

**SCREENING:** Amistad Part II

**RESPONSE PAPER**

**October 7  Building the Old South**
Carson, James Taylor. “‘The Obituary of Nations’: Ethnic Cleansing, Memory, and the Origins of the Old South.”


FIND THESIS STATEMENT IN CARSON OR TADMAN

October 9  Who was Uncle Tom?

SCREENING: Porter, Edwin S, Uncle Tom’s Cabin (1903); Clips from Pollard, Harry A. Uncle Tom’s Cabin (1927);

THREE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS PERTAINING TO VOL. 1

October 14  NO CLASS

October 16  Complete Uncle Tom’s Cabin

SCREENING: Clips from Uncle Tom’s Cabin (1987)

THREE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

October 21  Slave Testimony
Northup, Solomon. Twelve Years a Slave: Narrative of Solomon Northup. Auburn: Derby and Miller, 1853. Chapters 1-12 [Free online; read any version]

SCREENING: McQueen, Steve and John Ridley. 12 Years a Slave (2013)

THREE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

October 23  Complete Twelve Years a Slave

RESPONSE PAPER
October 28    The Civil War
3 Group Presentations: To be discussed

October 30    Reconstruction
3 Group Presentations: To be discussed

November 4    Theoretical Interlude

THREE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

November 6    History, Trauma and Humor

RESPONSE PAPER

November 11    Neo-Slave Naratives

THREE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
November 13
Morrison, Beloved (read at least to 165)

Childs, Dennis. “‘You Ain’t Seen Nothin’ Yet’: Beloved, the American Chain Gang, and the Middle Passage Remix.” American Quarterly 61:2 (June 2009): 271-297. [Project Muse]

THREE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

November 18
Morrison, Beloved (complete book)

Response Paper

November 20

SCREENING: Clips from Fleming, Victor. Gone with the Wind. (1939).

November 25  NO CLASS But N.B.: Assignment Due
Screen Tarantino, Quentin. Django Unchained. [on reserve; see assignment page]

Response Paper Due on Classes by 5pm

November 27  Thanksgiving Break

December 2
Student Presentations

December 4
Student Presentations

December 9
Student Presentations

December 11
Student Presentations

FINAL PAPER DUE.