JOMC/AFAM 342.001

THE BLACK PRESS AND U.S. HISTORY

SPRING 2014

**Mondays and Wednesdays 2:00 p.m.-3:15 p.m.**

**103 Gardner**

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Office Hours: MW 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., M 3:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m., by appointment, or whenever my office door is open.

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“Commit to your dream and the desired resources are provided now.”

--Trevy A. McDonald, 2003

Since its inception in 1827, the black press has been a defender of civil rights for African Americans. The black press was essential during the abolition movement, encouraged Southern blacks to migrate to the north during the twentieth century, and connected African Americans beyond their individual communities during the Civil Rights movement by covering stories not featured in the mainstream press. This course will trace the development and investigate the impact of the black press from Russwurm and Cornish’s *Freedom’s Journal* in 1827 through the Civil Rights movement in the mid 20th century. We will examine black newspapers and magazines, along with other historical documents that presented the challenges and successes, concerns and aspirations, which informed and inspired the growing African-American community.

It is my goal that through this course you will gain a broad understanding of the significance of the black press in the United States, become closely familiar with the men and women who developed black media and the obstacles they overcame to share their message. I hope that you become passionate about the black press as well as for researching, writing, and preserving history.

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

* Simeon Booker and Carol McCabe Booker, *Shocking the Conscience*: *A Reporter’s Account of the Civil Rights Movement* (Jackson, MS: University of Mississippi Press, 2013).
* Roger Streitmatter, *Raising Her Voice: African-American Women Journalists Who Changed History* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1994).
* Patrick S. Washburn, *The African American Newspaper: Voice of Freedom* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2006).

**RECOMMENDED TEXT**

* Gene Roberts and Hank Klibanoff, *The Race Beat: The Press, the Civil Rights Struggle, and the Awakening of a Nation* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 2006).
* Unless otherwise noted, all other readings will be on [Electronic Reserves](http://eres.lib.unc.edu.libproxy.lib.unc.edu/eres/coursepage.aspx?cid=3624) (designated ER) and can be accessed there. Readings in the texts will be designated by the last name of the authors. In addition, some readings can be accessed by hotlinks from this syllabus or from URLs provided. Also, a handful of readings can be found in the Primary Source Archive under “Resources” in Sakai.

**GRADE INFORMATION**

Your grade in this course will be based on the following:

* **Textual Analyses** (20 percent or 50 points each) You are to chose any one of the periods identified in the syllabus (e.g. Antebellum black press, Reconstruction era black press, WWII black press, etc.) and the Civil Rights era. I would like you to examine black newspapers from the period and write a brief analysis of what you find, factoring in the motivators for historical action that we shall be discussing in the class. Length: **Maximum** of three typed, double-spaced pages, not including footnotes. Talk about what you see—and what you don’t—in two or more newspapers from that period. How does the content reflect what is going on in the United States of that period. These papers will be the basis for class discussions. Papers will be due at the next class after we have completed that section on the schedule (e.g. Antebellum black press, January 22). Please upload your paper to the appropriate assignment (e.g. Textual Analysis 1, Textual Analysis 2) in Sakai.
* **Midterm Exam** (20 percent or 100 points) There will be a take-home examination due **no later than 5:00 p.m. Wednesday, March 5.** Questions will be distributed electronically on **Wednesday, February 26**. Completed exams must be typed, double-space, and uploaded to Sakai under “Midterm Exam” as a virus-free **Word attachment (no pdfs)**. Questions will be taken from a list of questions that will be posted on the Sakai site throughout the semester as we finish each segment of the course. You are encouraged to prepare for the examination by forming small study groups. Note: It is *strongly* encouraged that your answers include material from outside sources as well as the required readings.
* **Final Exam** (20 percent or 100 points) This is a required examination due by **12:00 noon on Friday, May 2.**  Questions will be distributed electronically on **Friday, April 25.** Completed exams must be typed, double-spaced, and uploaded to Sakai under “Final Exam” as a virus-free Word attachment. This exam may cover everything we explored throughout the semester. Examination questions will be taken from the list of questions posted on Sakai throughout the semester as we complete study on each topic. You are encouraged to study in small groups to prepare for this examination. Note: It is strongly encouraged that your answers include material from outside courses as well as from required readings.
* **Research Project/Presentation** (40 percent or 200 points) Students will work in teams of two to compare and contrast coverage of assigned topics in the Black press and the mainstream press. Students will also analyze Harris Poll data to examine how public opinion changed as a result of the media coverage. Detailed guidelines and assignments will be distributed to students in the coming weeks.

**Attendance**

Students are expected to attend each class session. The maximum attendance score can only be earned for perfect attendance. Because some exam questions will come from material that was presented in class it is imperative that you attend each class. However, everyone may take four absences for any reason as excused absences.

* You cannot use your excused absence on the day of a presentation or test.
* If you are late to the class but arrive prior to the halfway point it will count as ½ of an absence.
* If you leave class early, but not until after the halfway point, it will count as ½ of an absence.
* **Any unexcused absence will result in a ½ grade reduction (e.g. a B becomes a B-).**

If you must miss an additional class beyond the four automatically excused absences, it can only be considered an excused absence if you provide documented proof of the reason you were absent (e.g. a doctor’s note if you were sick, an obituary notice for a funeral, a mechanic/towing bill in the case of car problems). **It is your responsibility to provide such proof.**

**Participation**

All students are expected to actively participate in class. This means that you ask questions, share opinions, challenge and critique in a respectful manner. I’m sure you will find that the more you contribute to class and online discussions, the more knowledgeable we all become.

**Grades**

Definitions of Undergraduate Grades

These definitions were adopted by the Faculty Council in 1976. The Council reiterated that the purpose of grades is to identify **degrees of mastery of subject matter.** Moreover, those grades have specific meaning with respect to mastery of the material.

A

Outstanding mastery of course material. Students earning an “A” have performed far above that required for credit in the course and far above that usually seen in the course. The “A” grade should be awarded sparingly and should identify student

performance that is relatively unusual in the course. The “A” grade states clearly that the student has shown such outstanding promise in the aspect of the discipline under study that he or she may be strongly encouraged to continue.

B

Superior mastery of course material. Students earning a “B” have exhibited mastery clearly above that required for credit in the course. The “B” grade should represent student performance that is strong and very clearly above performance that is generally held to be satisfactory. The “B” grade states that the student has shown solid promise in the aspect of the discipline under study.

C

Satisfactory mastery of course material. The “C” grade should reflect performance that is satisfactory on all counts and that clearly deserves full credit for the course. The “C” grade states that, while not yet showing an unusual promise, the student may continue to study in the discipline with reasonable hope of intellectual development.

D

Mastery of course material that is unsatisfactory or poor along one or more dimensions. Students achieving a “D” have exhibited incomplete mastery of course material but have achieved enough to earn credit for the course. The “D” grade states that the student has given no evidence of prospective growth in the discipline; an accumulation of “D” grades should mean that the student would be well advised not to continue in that academic field.

F

Unsatisfactory mastery of course material. Students earning a “F” have not demonstrated sufficient mastery of course material to earn credit for the course. The “F” grade indicates that the student’s performance in the required exercises has revealed almost no understanding of the course content. A grade of “F” should warrant an adviser’s questioning whether the student may suitably register for further study in the discipline before remedial work is undertaken.

Grading Worksheet

**Assignment/Test Grade value My Grade**

* Textual Analysis 1 10% or 50 points \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Textual Analysis 2 10% or 50 points \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Midterm Exam 20% or 100 points \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Final Exam 20% or 100 points \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Research Project 40% or 200 points \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Breakdown of Grades

A = 475-500 A- = 450-474 B+ = 435-449

B = 415-434 B- = 400-414 C+ = 385-399

C = 365-384 C- = 350-364 D+ = 335-349

D = 300-314 F = 299 and below

* Your grade will be lowered for unexcused absences (see Attendance section).
* Your grade for a specific assignment will be lowered if it is turned in late (see Assignments section).
* Your grade for the papers and final project will be limited to a C if it contains ten or more spelling, grammar, or punctuation errors.

**Grading Disputes**

My goal is to be fair, consistent, and objective in grading each student based on the established grading rubric criteria. If you have any questions about your grade you must make an appointment with me to discuss it within a week after the assignment was returned. However, if you feel that an error has been made in grading it is your right to appeal the grade using the procedure outlined on page 384 of the *Undergraduate Bulletin.*

**Honor Code**

It is the responsibility of each student to abide by the UNC Honor Code, which prohibits lying, cheating or plagiarism. The Honor Code, which has governed the performance of all academic work at UNC for more than 120 years, will be enforced in this class. For a refresher visit http://honor.unc.edu/students/index.html

**Getting Assistance from Me**

You can contact me outside of class by e-mail. I will try to respond to all emails within 24 hours. Feel free to visit me during office hours to discuss any problems you may be having with the course. It is imperative that you address problems as they arise rather than waiting until the end of the semester.

**Special Accommodations**

If you require special accommodations to attend or participate in this course, please let me know as soon as possible so that I can help ensure that your needs are met. **I prefer to know about any special circumstances within the first two weeks of the semester.**

If you need information about disabilities, you can contact the Department of Disability Services at 962-8300 or visit the Department’s website at: <http://disabilityservices.unc.edu>.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**January**

8 Introduction. Syllabus. Assignments. Why study history?

13 Antebellum Press

Read:

Washburn, Ch. 1 “Introduction.”

W.E.B. DuBois’ *The Souls of Black Folk*: ["The Forethought"](http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/dubois/fore.html) and ["Of our Spiritual Strivings"](http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/dubois/ch01.html) (Sakai Primary Source Archive)

Bacon, “The History of *Freedom’s Journal*: A Study in Empowerment and Community” (ER)

15 **Historians’ Tools: Tips from a Research Librarian.** Stephanie Willen

Brown, Director, Park Library, School of Journalism and Mass

Communication

Read:

Frederick Douglass’ ["Fourth of July"](http://pages.uoregon.edu/mjdennis/courses/hst456_douglass.htm) speech.

Frederick Douglass’ ["A Plea for Free Speech in Boston"](http://www.thisnation.com/library/douglassplea.html) speech.

Blackett, “Martin R. Delany and Richard Campbell: Black Americans in

Search of an African Colony.”

**20 DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING HOLIDAY—NO CLASS**

22 Frederick Douglass and Mary Ann Shadd Cary

Read:

Washburn, Chapter 2 “The Early Black Press”

Streitmatter, Chapter 1 “Maria W. Stewart”

Streitmatter, Chapter 2 “Mary Ann Shadd Cary”

Yee, “Finding a Place: Mary Ann Shadd Cary and the Dilemmas of Black Migration to Canada, 1850-1870.” (ER)

27 1866-1898: Reconstruction and the Black Press

Read:

Washburn, Chapter 3 “Struggling but Surviving.”

Perloff, “The Press and Lynchings of African Americans.”

29 1866-1898: Post-Reconstruction; Jim Crow: Ida B. Wells

Read:

Tucker, “Miss Ida B. Wells and Memphis Lynching” (ER)

Wade-Gayles, “Black Women Journalists in the South, 1880-1905: An

Approach to the Study of Black Women’s History.” (ER)

Streitmatter, Chapter 3 “Gertrude Bustill Mossell”

Streitmatter, Chapter 4 “Ida B. Wells-Barnett”

Streitmatter, Chapter 5 “Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin”

**February**

3 1866-1898: The *New York Age*. Black Press Responses to US Foreign Policy

Read: \* all articles are ER

Drake, “Militancy in Fortune’s *New York Age*”

Suggs, “The Response of the African American Press to the United States

Occupation of Haiti, 1915-1934.”

5 1866-1919: Booker T. Washington.

Read:

Washburn, Chapter 4 “A New Type of Newspaper”

Thornbrough, “More Light on Booker T. Washington and the *New York*

*Age*.*”* (ER)

10 1898-1919: The case of the NC *Record* and the Wilmington Riot of 1898

Read:

McLaurin, “Commemorating Wilmington’s Racial Violence of 1898.” (ER)

12 1898-1919: W.E.B. Du Bois

Read:

DuBois, ["Talented Tenth"](http://www.yale.edu/glc/archive/1148.htm)

Green, “W.E.B. Du Bois’ Talented Tenth: A Strategy for Racial

Advancement.” (ER)

Bauerlein, “Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois: The Origins of a

Bitter Intellectual Battle.” (ER)

W.E.B. Du Bois, “Close Ranks.” (Sakai Primary Source Archive)

17 1898-1919: WWI and the Black Press

Read:

Jordan, “’The Damnable Dilemma:’ African-American Accommodation

and Protest during World War I.” (ER)

19 1898-1919: The northern migration and the emergence of the modern

black press. Entrepreneurship; Chicago Defender, Pittsburgh Courier,

Madam C.J. Walker

Read:

Lochard, “Robert S. Abbott—Race Leader” (ER)

24 1920-1945: Du Bois, Garvey, Randolph; the Harlem Renaissance

Read:

Washburn, Chapter 5, “Between the Wars”

Singleton, “Birth, Rebirth, and the ‘New Negro’ of the 1920s” (ER)

Delgado-Tall, “The New Negro Movement and the African Heritage in a

Pan-Africanist Perspective” (ER)

26 1920-1945: The Associated Negro Press, Heroes of the Depression: Joe

Louis, Jesse Owens. The National Newspaper Publishers Association.

Read:

Washburn, Chapter 6, “World War II”

**March**

3 1920-1945: The “Double V” campaign. The black war correspondents.

Editorial drawings of Charles Alston. *Negro Digest* and the beginning of

Johnson Publications.

Read:

Finkle, “The Conservative Aims of Militant Rhetoric: Black Protest

during World War II” (ER)

McGuire, “Desegregation of the Armed Forces: Black Leadership,

Protest, and World War II” (ER)

Sitkoff, “Racial Militancy and Interracial Violence in the Second World

War” (ER)

5 1920-1945: Prelude to the Civil Rights Era

Read:

Washburn, Chapter 7, “From an Incredible High to an Incredible Low”

10 **SPRING BREAK—NO CLASS**

12 **SPRING BREAK—NO CLASS**

17 The Korean War and the McCarthy Era

Read:

Washburn, Chapter 8, “The Civil Rights Era and the Black Press”

Streitmatter, Chapter 9, “Alice Allison Dunnigan”

Streitmatter, Chapter 10, “Ethel L. Payne”

Booker & McCabe Booker, Chapters 1-4

["Ethel Payne's foreign assignments for the *Defender"*](http://beta.wpcf.org/oralhistory/payn6.html)

["Frances Murphy's remembrances of the Afro American" Part 1](http://beta.wpcf.org/oralhistory/murph1.html)

["Frances Murphy's remembrances of the Afro American" Part 2](http://beta.wpcf.org/oralhistory/murph2.html)

19 Work Day

24 Civil Rights Era Presentations

Read:

*Roberts & Klibanoff, Chapter 5, “The Brown Decisions Harden the South”*

26 Civil Rights Era Presentations

Read:

Booker & McCabe Booker, Chapters 5-7

*Roberts & Klibanoff, Chapter 6, “Into Mississippi”*

*Roberts & Klibanoff, Chapter 7, “The Till Trial”*

31 Civil Rights Era Presentations

Read:

Booker & McCabe Booker, Chapters 8-9

**April**

2 Civil Rights Era Presentations

Read:

Booker & McCabe Booker, Chapters 10-11

*Roberts & Klibanoff, Chapter 8, “”Where Massive and Passive Resistance*

*Meet”*

*Roberts & Klibanoff, Chapter 10, “Toward Little Rock”*

*Roberts & Klibanoff, Chapter 11, “Little Rock Showdown”*

["Daisy Bates and the Little Rock Nine"](http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=14563865) (From NPR)

[Daisy Bates, from the UNC-CH Southern Oral History Project](http://docsouth.unc.edu/sohp/G-0009/menu.html)

["A Mighty Long Way from Little Rock"](http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=112256670) (From NPR)

7 Civil Rights Era Presentations

Read:

Booker & McCabe Booker, Chapters 12-15

*Roberts & Klibanoff, Chapter 14, “From Sit Ins to SNCC”*

*Roberts & Klibanoff, Chapter 15, “Alabama…Freedom Riders”*

9 Civil Rights Era Presentations

Read:

Booker & McCabe Booker, Chapters 16-18

14 Civil Rights Era Presentations

Read:

Booker & McCabe Booker, Chapters 19-20

16 Civil Rights Era Presentations

Read:

Booker & McCabe Booker, Chapters 21-22

21 Civil Rights Era Presentations

23 Civil Rights Era Presentations