

MEJO/ AAAD 342.001
THE BLACK PRESS AND U.S. HISTORY
SPRING 2021

Mondays and Wednesdays 2:30 p.m.-3:45 p.m.

Remote

Meeting ID: 983 8334 9281

Passcode: 048695

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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 We will examine black newspapers and magazines, along with other historical documents that presented the challenges and successes, concerns and aspirations, which informed and inspired the growing African American community.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 researching, writing, and preserving history.

IAAR-SLATE

Along with many other courses across UNC, this course is participating in an important initiative by the Institute of African American Research called [Student Learning to Advance Truth and Equity](#). IAAR-SLATE seeks to increase undergraduates' understanding of race, racism and racial equity. All courses, like ours, in the program will include at least **six required** activities that explore this topic. By enrolling in this course, you are also committing to joining in all of the assigned activities for the program, some of which are in-class and some of which

take place outside of our class time. We will discuss some material together in our class, but we will also have opportunities to meet and learn from people whose work or lives help us understand race, racism and racial equity better. In some of the activities, you will also be able to dialogue with students in other courses who are also participating in the same required activities.

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).
- ◆ Zora Neale Hurston, *Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo"* (New York: Amistad, 2018).
- ◆ Patrick S. Washburn, *The African American Newspaper: Voice of Freedom* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2006).
- ◆ Ida B. Wells-Barnett, *Southern Horrors Lynch Law in All Its Phases*. Kindle Edition.
- ◆ **IAAR-SLATE Reading 1:** Michelle Lanier, "An Open Letter for These Times: Black Lives and Historic Sites," North Carolina Historic Sites, North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources. <https://historicsites.nc.gov/resources/open-letter-these-times-black-lives-and-historic-sites>
- ◆ **IAAR-SLATE Reading 2:** Sonny Kelly, "The Talk," <https://www.sonnykelly.com/the-talk> This "reading" is an 80-minute performance video which will become available for a limited time just prior to Mr. Kelly's lecture. I will keep you posted.)
- ◆ **IAAR-SLATE Reading 3:** Divya Chhabra, "How to Continue Activism in a Racist Country," *Teen Vogue*, November 13, 2020. https://www.teenvogue.com/story/how-to-continue-activism-in-a-racist-country#intcid=teen-vogue-amp-bottom-recirc_96aa2702-8dae-40ee-828f-d11c53d8bfaf_text2vec1

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).

IAAR-SLATE EVENTS (all virtual)

- ◆ "A Conversation with Henry Louis Gates," February 9, 2021 – 5:30 p.m.
- ◆ "Sonny Kelly: The Talk," March 18, 2021 (time to be announced)
- ◆ "An Hour of Action," Dates and Times to Be Announced.

Unless otherwise noted, other readings will be on (designated ER) and can be accessed through the Library Reserves tab in Sakai. 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.

PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND CORE COMPETENCIES

Individual professions in journalism and mass communication may require specialized values and competencies. Irrespective of their particular specialization, all students should be aware of certain core values and competencies and be able to:

- ◆ demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
- ◆ demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications;
- ◆ demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society;
- ◆ understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
- ◆ demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
- ◆ think critically, creatively and independently;
- ◆ conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
- ◆ write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- ◆ critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness.

GRADE INFORMATION

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

- ◆ **Textual Analyses** (50 points each) For the first textual analysis, each student will choose a particular time period early in the semester for Textual Analysis 1. Due dates for the first textual analysis are listed throughout the syllabus. For the second textual analysis, you may choose any event during the Civil Rights era EXCEPT the event you are assigned for the final project. The second textual analysis will be due at the class session following our discussion of the event. For both of the textual analyses, 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. Please upload your paper to the appropriate assignment (e.g. Textual Analysis 1, Textual Analysis 2) in Sakai. Use Chicago Style Notes and Bibliography.
- ◆ **IAAR-SLATE Reflection Papers** (50 points each). You will choose one of the IAAR-SLATE Readings and one of the IAAR-SLATE Events for your reflection paper. The paper should be between 350-500 words and include the following:
 - Description of “reading” or event
 - Any assumptions you had prior to the experience
 - What did you learn as a result of the “reading” or event?
 - Changes in perceptions, beliefs, etc. as a result of the reading or event
 - Arguments on the issue raised
 - Relevant points not explored in the “reading” or event
 - Any questions you may have about the issue explored
 - Your overall feeling and interpretation

- ◆ **Exam 1 (Midterm)** (100 points) There will be a take-home examination due **no later than 10:00 p.m. Wednesday, March 22.**
- ◆ **Exam 2 (Final Exam)** (100 points) This exam may cover everything we explored throughout the semester. Note: It is strongly encouraged that your answers include material from outside courses as well as from required readings.
- ◆ **Research Project/Presentation** (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. 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.
- 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 (Forum) 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	50 points	_____
• Textual Analysis 2	50 points	_____
• Reflection Paper –SLATE Reading	50 points	_____
• Reflection Paper –SLATE Event	50 points	_____
• Midterm Exam	100 points	_____
• Final Exam	100 points	_____
• Research Project	200 points	_____

Breakdown of Grades

A = 570-600	A- = 540-569	B+ = 522-539
B = 498-521	B- = 480-497	C+ = 462-479
C = 438-461	C- = 420-437	D+ = 402-419
D = 360-301	F = 359 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 expected that each student in this class will conduct him/herself within the guidelines of the Honor System. All academic work should be done with the high level of honesty and integrity that this University demands (<http://honor.unc.edu>). You are expected to produce your own work in this class. If you have any questions about your responsibility or your instructor's responsibility as a faculty member under the Honor Code, please see the course instructor or Senior Associate Dean Charlie Tuggle, or you may speak with a representative of the Student Attorney Office or the Office of the Dean of Students.

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 Accessibility Services at 962-8300 or visit the Department's website at: <https://accessibility.unc.edu/>

Diversity

The University's policy on Prohibiting Harassment and Discrimination is outlined in the Undergraduate Bulletin <http://www.unc.edu/ugradbulletin/>. UNC is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community and does not discriminate in offering access to its educational programs and activities on the basis of age, gender, race, color, national origin, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

COURSE SCHEDULE

*Note, the readings should be completed prior to the class for which they are listed.

January

- 20 Introduction. Syllabus. Assignments. Why study history?
- 25 Antebellum Press
Read:
Washburn, Ch. 1 "Introduction."
W.E.B. DuBois' *The Souls of Black Folk*: "[The Forethought](#)" and "[Of our Spiritual Strivings](#)" (Sakai Primary Source Archive)
Bacon, "The History of *Freedom's Journal*: A Study in Empowerment and Community" (ER)
Fraser, "Emancipatory Cosmology: *Freedom's Journal*, *The Rights of All*, & the Revolutionary Movements of Black Print Culture" (ER)
- 27 Frederick Douglass
Read:
Frederick Douglass' "[Fourth of July](#)" speech.
Frederick Douglass' "[A Plea for Free Speech in Boston](#)" speech.
Blackett, "Martin R. Delany and Richard Campbell: Black Americans in Search of an African Colony."

February

- 1 **Historians' Tools: Tips from a Research Librarian.**
Stephanie Willen Brown,
Director, Park Library, Hussman School of Journalism and Media
Frederick Douglass and Mary Ann Shadd Cary
Read:
Washburn, Chapter 2 "The Early Black Press"
Yee, "Finding a Place: Mary Ann Shadd Cary and the Dilemmas of Black Migration to Canada, 1850-1870." (ER)
Calloway-Thomas, "Mary Ann Shadd Cary: Crafting Black Culture through Empirical and Moral Arguments." (ER)
- 3 Discussion: A First-hand Account of Slavery and Freedom—in the words of Kossola
Read:
Hurston, *Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo"*
- 8 1866-1898: Reconstruction and the Black Press
Read:
Washburn, Chapter 3 "Struggling but Surviving."
Perloff, "The Press and Lynchings of African Americans." (ER)
Stuart, "From the Archives: Ida B. Wells Confronts "Excuses for Lynching in 1901" (ER)
SLATE Discussion: Lanier "An Open Letter for These Times: Black Lives and Historic Sites," North Carolina Historic Sites, North Carolina

Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.

<https://historicsites.nc.gov/resources/open-letter-these-times-black-lives-and-historic-sites>

Textual Analyses due on Antebellum & Emancipation Eras are due

- 10 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)
Wells-Barnett, *Southern Horrors Lynch Law in All Its Phases*
- 15 **Wellness Day**
- 17 1866-1919: The *New York Age* and Booker T. Washington
Read:
Drake, "Militancy in Fortune's *New York Age*" (ER)
Washburn, Chapter 4 "A New Type of Newspaper"
Thornbrough, "More Light on Booker T. Washington and the *New York Age*." (ER)
- 22 1898-1919: W.E.B. Du Bois
Read:
DuBois, "[Talented Tenth](#)"
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)
Textual Analyses on Reconstruction are due
Textual Analyses on Post Reconstruction/Gilded Age are due
Reflection Papers for SLATE Reading 1 are due
Reflection Papers for SLATE Event 1 are due
- 24 1898-1919: The case of the *NC Record* and the Wilmington Riot of 1898
Read:
McLaurin, "Commemorating Wilmington's Racial Violence of 1898." (ER)
Williams, "A War in Black and White: The Cartoons of Norman Ethre Jennett & the North Carolina Election of 1898."

March

- 1 1898-1919: WWI and the Black Press
Read:
Jordan, "'The Damnable Dilemma:' African-American Accommodation and Protest during World War I." (ER)
Textual Analyses on Progressive Era are due

- 3 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)
- 8 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)
Textual Analyses on Great Depression/New Deal Era are due
- 10 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"
Watch: [Scottsboro: An American Tragedy](#) (streaming through UNC Libraries)
- 15 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)
- 17 **Discussion: Sonny Kelly, "The Talk"**
Textual Analyses on World War II Era are due
- 22 **Midterm Exam**
- 24 **Historians' Tools: Tips from a Research Librarian.**
Stephanie Willen Brown, Director, Park Library,
Hussman School of Media and Journalism
Reflection Papers for IAAR SLATE Reading 2 are due
Reflection Papers for IAAR SLATE Event 2 are due
- 29 Work day
- 31 Work day

April

5

WELLNESS DAY

7

1920-1954: Prelude to Civil Rights Era
White House Correspondents
The Korean War and the McCarthy Era
Read:
Washburn, Chapter 7, "From an Incredible High to an Incredible Low"
Washburn, Chapter 8, "The Civil Rights Era and the Black Press"
Booker & McCabe Booker, Chapters 1-4
["Ethel Payne's foreign assignments for the Defender"](#)
["Frances Murphy's remembrances of the Afro American" Part 1](#)
["Frances Murphy's remembrances of the Afro American" Part 2](#)

12

Civil Rights Era Presentations
Read:
Roberts & Klibanoff, Chapter 5, "The Brown Decisions Harden the South"

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Civil Rights Era Presentations
Read:
Booker & McCabe Booker, Chapters 5-7
Roberts & Klibanoff, Chapter 6, "Into Mississippi"
Roberts & Klibanoff, Chapter 7, "The Till Trial"

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Civil Rights Era Presentations
Read:
Booker & McCabe Booker, Chapters 8-9

21

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"](#) (From NPR)
[Daisy Bates, from the UNC-CH Southern Oral History Project](#)
["A Mighty Long Way from Little Rock"](#) (From NPR)

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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"

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Civil Rights Era Presentations
Read:
Booker & McCabe Booker, Chapters 16-18

May

3 Civil Rights Era Presentations
Read:
Booker & McCabe Booker, Chapters 19-20

5 Civil Rights Era Presentations
Read:
Booker & McCabe Booker, Chapters 21-22
Reflection Papers for IAAR SLATE Reading 3 are due
Reflection Papers for IAAR SLATE Event 3 are due

FINAL EXAM, FRIDAY MAY 14, 2020 8:00 a.m.