

MEJO/ AAAD 342.001  
THE BLACK PRESS AND U.S. HISTORY  
SPRING 2024

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

**201/202 Curtis Media Center**

**Zoom Link for Remote Meetings**

<https://unc.zoom.us/j/98332697199?pwd=d0VJb3pyNUlwUGVadWlR5S21yeW12UT09>

Meeting ID: 983 3269 7199

Passcode: 578128

Professor: Trevy A. McDonald, Ph.D. (she/her/hers)  
Office: 329 Carroll Hall  
e-mail: [trevy@email.unc.edu](mailto:trevy@email.unc.edu)  
Office Hours: MW 12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m. or by appointment

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

--Trevy A. McDonald, 2003

Since its inception in 1827, the black press has defended African Americans' civil rights. 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 We will examine black newspapers and magazines and other historical documents presenting the challenges, successes, concerns, and aspirations that informed and inspired the growing African American community.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 you become passionate about the black press and 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).
- ◆ 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.

## 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, 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:

- ◆ **Two 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 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.

- ◆ **Exam 1 (Midterm)** (100 points)
- ◆ **Exam 2 (Final Exam)** (100 points) This exam may cover everything we explored throughout the semester.
- ◆ **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. Due to the uptick in respiratory viruses, I am including an online option, so that students can attend remotely if necessary. 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 two 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 two 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.**

### **Remote Class Meetings**

It may be necessary for our class to meet remotely via Zoom. Here is the Zoom Meeting information for remote class meetings.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://unc.zoom.us/j/98332697199?pwd=d0VJb3pyNUlwUGVadWlrS21yeW12UT09>

Meeting ID: 983 3269 7199

Passcode: 578128

### **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	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*.

**Attendance**

**University Policy:**

No right or privilege exists that permits a student to be absent from any class meetings, except for these University Approved Absences:

1. Authorized University activities
2. Disability/religious observance/pregnancy, as required by law and approved by [Accessibility Resources and Service](#) and/or the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](#) (EOC)
3. Significant health condition and/or personal/family emergency as approved by the [Office of the Dean of Students, Violence Prevention and Advocacy Services](#), and/or the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](#) (EOC).

**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. All academic work should be done with the high levels of honesty and integrity that this University demands. 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 one of the Associate Deans—Jules Dixon-Green (Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies or Lucinda Austin (Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and Research), or you may speak

with a representative of the Student Attorney Office or the Office of the Dean of Students.

For a refresher, visit [Honor Code](#)

Use of an AI Generator such as ChatGPT, iA Writer, MidJourney, DALL-E, etc. is explicitly prohibited unless otherwise noted by the instructor. The information derived from these tools is based on previously published materials. Therefore, using these tools without proper citation constitutes plagiarism. Additionally, be aware that the information derived from these tools is often inaccurate or incomplete. It is imperative that all work submitted should be your own. Any assignment that is found to have been plagiarized or to have used unauthorized AI tools may receive a zero and/or be reported for academic misconduct.

### **Getting Assistance from Me**

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

### **Diversity**

I strive to make this classroom an inclusive space for all students. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to improve; I appreciate any suggestions. More broadly, our school has adopted diversity and inclusion [mission and vision statements](#) and implemented a [DEI Action Plan in October 2022](#). These complement the University's policy on [prohibiting harassment and discrimination](#). In summary, 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 based on age, gender, race, color, national origin, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. The Dean of Students (Suite 1106, Student Academic Services Building, CB# 5100, 450 Ridge Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-5100 or [919] 966-4042) has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the University's non-discrimination policies.

### **Accessibility Resources and Services**

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill facilitates the implementation of reasonable accommodations, including resources and services, for students with disabilities, chronic medical conditions, a temporary disability, or pregnancy complications resulting in barriers to fully accessing University courses, programs, and activities.

Accommodations are determined through the Office of Accessibility Resources and Service (ARS) for individuals with documented qualifying disabilities in accordance with applicable state and federal laws. See the ARS Website for contact information: <https://ars.unc.edu> or e-mail [ars@unc.edu](mailto:ars@unc.edu)

(Source: <https://ars.unc.edu/faculty-staff/syllabus-statement>)

### **Counseling and Psychological Services**

CAPS is strongly committed to addressing the mental health needs of a diverse student body through timely access to consultation and connection to clinically appropriate services, whether for short or long-term needs. Go to their website: <https://caps.unc.edu> or visit their facilities on the third floor of the Campus Health Services building for a walk-in evaluation to learn more.

The Hussman School has an embedded CAPS counselor in Carroll Hall for MEJO majors; more details [here](#).

### **Title IX**

Any student who is impacted by discrimination, harassment, interpersonal (relationship) violence, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, or stalking is encouraged to seek resources on campus or in the community. Reports can be made online to the EOC at <https://eoc.unc.edu/report-an-incident/>. Please contact the University's Title IX Coordinator (Elizabeth Hall, interim – [titleixcoordinator@unc.edu](mailto:titleixcoordinator@unc.edu)), Report and Response Coordinators in the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office ([reportandresponse@unc.edu](mailto:reportandresponse@unc.edu)), Counseling and Psychological Services (confidential), or the Gender Violence Services Coordinators ([gvsc@unc.edu](mailto:gvsc@unc.edu); confidential) to discuss your specific needs. Additional resources are available at [safe.unc.edu](http://safe.unc.edu).

### **Policy on Non-Discrimination**

The University is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community and to ensuring that educational and employment decisions are based on individuals' abilities and qualifications. Consistent with this principle and applicable laws, the University's [Policy Statement on Non-Discrimination](#) offers access to its educational programs and activities as well as employment terms and conditions without respect to race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, creed, genetic information, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. Such a policy ensures that only relevant factors are considered, and that equitable and consistent standards of conduct and performance are applied.

If you are experiencing harassment or discrimination, you can seek assistance and file a report through the Report and Response Coordinators (see contact info at [safe.unc.edu](http://safe.unc.edu)) or the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](#), or online to the EOC at <https://eoc.unc.edu/report-an-incident/>.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

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

### **January**

10	Introduction. Syllabus. Assignments. Why study history?
15	<b>Dr. Martin Luther King Holiday – No Class</b>
17	Antebellum Press Read: Washburn, Ch. 1 "Introduction." W.E.B. DuBois' <i>The Souls of Black Folk</i> : " <a href="#">The Forethought</a> " and " <a href="#">Of our Spiritual Strivings</a> " (Sakai Primary Source Archive) Bacon, "The History of <i>Freedom's Journal</i> : 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)

22

**Historians' Tools: Tips for Research**

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."

24

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)

29

Discussion: A First-hand Account of Slavery and Freedom – in the words of Kossola

Read:

Hurston, *Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo"*

31

1866-1898: Reconstruction and the Black Press

Read:

Washburn, Chapter 3 "Struggling but Surviving."

Perloff, "The Press and Lynchings of African Americans." (ER)

Brundage, "The Press & Lynching." (ER)

Stuart, "From the Archives: Ida B. Wells Confronts "Excuses for Lynching in 1901" (ER)

**Textual Analyses due on Antebellum Era are due**

**February**

5

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*



- 7 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)  
 Haywood, "Fight for a New America." (ER)  
**Textual Analyses on Reconstruction are due**  
**Textual Analyses on Post Reconstruction/Gilded Age are due**
- 12 **Wellness Day – NO CLASS**
- 14 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)
- 19 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."  
 Gustafson, "Death of Democracy NC." (ER)  
 Greene, "Mississippi Plan." (ER)
- 21 1898-1919: WWI, Northern Migration, and the Black Press –  
 Entrepreneurship, *Chicago Defender*, *Pittsburgh Courier*, and Madam C.J. Walker  
 Read:  
 Jordan, "'The Damnable Dilemma:' African-American Accommodation and Protest during World War I." (ER)  
 Kelley, "Silencing a Generation." (ER)  
 Lochard, "Robert S. Abbott – Race Leader" (ER)  
**Textual Analyses on Progressive Era are due**

- 26 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**
- 28 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)
- March**
- 4 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)  
**Textual Analyses on World War II Era are due**
- 6 **Midterm Exam**
- 11 **SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS**
- 13 **SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS**
- 18 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](#)
- 20 **Historians' Tools: Tips for Research**

- 25 Guest Speaker
- 29 Work day – No Class
- April**
- 1 Work day – No Class
- 3 Civil Rights Era Presentations  
Read:  
*Roberts & Klibanoff, Chapter 5, "The Brown Decisions Harden the South"*
- 8 Civil Rights Era Presentations  
Read:  
Booker & McCabe Booker, Chapters 5-7  
*Roberts & Klibanoff, Chapter 6, "Into Mississippi"*  
*Roberts & Klibanoff, Chapter 7, "The Till Trial"*
- 10 Civil Rights Era Presentations  
Read:  
Booker & McCabe Booker, Chapters 8-9
- 15 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)
- 17 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"*
- 22 Civil Rights Era Presentations  
Read:  
Booker & McCabe Booker, Chapters 16-18
- 24 Civil Rights Era Presentations  
Read:  
Booker & McCabe Booker, Chapters 19-20

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Civil Rights Era Presentations

Read:

Booker & McCabe Booker, Chapters 21-22

**FINAL EXAM, THURSDAY, MAY 2, 8:00 A.M.**