

Race Religion and Rebellion

REL: - Section

AFA: 3354 – Section RS11

POS: 4931 - Section 931 F

Spring 2021

Professor Rik Stevenson, PhD

Meeting Days T-R (Tues.10:40-11:30 & Thur. 10:40-12:35)

Matherly 0015

Syllabus

General Description:

This course is an interdisciplinary theoretical examination of the interplay of religion, race and rebellion in the organization and execution of the various revolts, insurrections and social movements of black people in the U.S. from the period of enslavement through the Civil Rights and Black Power Eras of the 60s, 70s and 80s. We will utilize the writings of historians, sociologists and theologians in our examination of the role of religion in these revolts, insurrections and rebellions. The class will study biographical material, written as well as documented on film, video and audiotapes, on the lives of prominent activists in these struggles. The lives we will examine most closely include: Nat Turner, Denmark Vesey, and Gabriel Prosser, three men who planned and executed daring North American slave revolts; David Walker and his audacious *Appeal* and its call for armed revolt if need be to end slavery. Also examined will be the life and times of Rev. Henry McNeil Turner who was a minister and politician and a fierce critic of white supremacy and racial oppression. He chided blacks for worshipping a white image of Jesus saying they should see Jesus as a black person like themselves. Also considered will be the influence of religion on Harriet Tubman, and Sojourner Truth as they rallied and fought against white supremacy and sexism.

We will also learn about religious and secular 20th century blacks who rebelled against the racist status quo: For example, Marcus Garvey and his movement - The Negro Improvement Association - a religiously influenced international back to Africa Movement – which was the largest mass movement of blacks ever to be organized in the world. We will also investigate the religious as well as political dimensions of the great Muslim leader Malcolm X whose life – second only to Garvey - most clearly demonstrates the road to freedom via racial separation and nation building – one of the two recurrent themes in the long African American freedom struggle. To understand Malcolm X and his legacy, we must understand the Nation of Islam (NOI), built by his mentor and father figure, Mr. Elijah Muhammad, and his ideology. During Malcolm X's tenure in the organization, he catapulted it into a formidable international religious and social uplift black organization. Also examined will be the role and work of the Deacons for Defense, The Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), the Black Panther Party (BPP), the Black Dot Gang and the Ocala Hunting and Fishing Club just to add a mother perspective of the militant movements of the Civil Rights and Black Power periods. While these groups were not religious ones, most of the members of SNCC and the Deacons were deeply ingrained in the culture and religious ethos of the African American community, which they consistently used in their efforts to rally the troops.

Course Format

The professor will utilize a lecture/discussion format. Students are required to complete all weekly reading assignments and be prepared to engage in he classroom discussions. This

dialogical structure will provide the students with greater opportunities to engage in dialogue with one another as they consider the required reading and viewing assignments. This approach to learning is known as "Critical Pedagogy". Critical pedagogy encourages educators to provoke dialogue in the classrooms. By facilitating the conversation, educators open themselves to challenges from their students, but they are rewarded as co-learners in the classroom.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Our main objective is to help students gain an increased awareness of the most important thematic issues of African American and African Studies so that those who are interested in pursuing advanced undergraduate study and graduate study in the discipline are provided with the most essential basic knowledge about the scholarship that the discipline produces.

In summary our main goal throughout this semester is to investigate the role that religions—Christianity, Islam & Traditional African Religion - have played in the long African American struggle for freedom, justice, and equality. These struggles have influenced all the other peoples of color as well as for women's struggle for justice here in the U.S. and many other parts of the world.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES: - CONTENT SKILLS:

CONTENT	CRITICAL THINKING	COMMUNICATION
Know the history, underlying theories and methodologies used within the discipline of African American Studies	Identify and analyze key elements, biases and influences that shape thought within African American Studies. Approach issues and problems within that discipline from multiple perspectives.	Communicate knowledge thoughts and reasoning clearly and effectively in forms appropriate to African American Studies, individually and/or in groups.

Assignment	Due Dates	% Of Grade
Attendance and Participation	Ongoing	20%
Research Paper Presentation	TBA	10%
4 Short response Papers	TBA	20%
Research Paper	TBA	30%

Quizzes and Test TBA 20

Course Requirements:

- 1. Reading the Assigned Selections Each Week: This is a reading intensive course. Therefore reading the assigned texts thoroughly is the first and primary requirement for this course. A reading of the assigned material that is complete, careful and on schedule is essential for this course since our seminar format will be based on comprehension and discussion of what we have read, seen or heard. Also each student will be required to make presentations before the class of selected assigned readings. Each student is asked to write out three important points (or questions) they learned from each of the assigned readings scheduled for that class date. You will be asked to share those verbally with the class during our discussion periods.
- 1. Regular Attendance Is Required: Role will be taken at each class session. Each person gets three unexcused absences without penalty. Unexcused absences after that will negatively impact your final grade. A <u>number</u> of unexcused absences (above the two you get without penalty) can hurt your final grade (each <u>unexcused absence</u> will take 2 pts off of your final grade.) Being chronically late for class (without alerting me beforehand) or coming to class, signing in and then leaving before the class ends, without giving me a valid reason and getting prior approval, will be marked <u>absent</u> for that class.
- 1. Four Reaction Papers: We do not have quizzes or exams in this class. Your grade is based on written assignments and class participation. Each student is to write four (6 page minimum) reaction papers during the term on the assigned readings. In these reaction papers you are to briefly summarize the content of the assigned readings, listing at least three new things you learned in each of the chapters of the assigned readings. Additionally, you will address several questions about the readings that will be found in the Guidelines for Reaction Papers). (Guidelines for reaction Papers will be sent via e-mail early in the semester.) These papers will be graded and make up 30% of your grade. I will ask you to select your four dates for each of your reaction papers early in the term (generally by the fourth class) from the list of class readings which will be distributed in the second meeting of the class and sent to you via e-mail also.
- 4). Student In-Class Presentation of Class Readings: By the fourth class, a sheet will be circulated for students to sign up for the class reading(s) they want to present to the class. (Dependent on the number of students in the class more than one such presentation may be required). These class presentations will be on the same date as one (or two) of your Reaction Papers. Each student in preparation for his or her presentation is to develop an outline or synopsis of their assigned reading, photocopy it and distribute it to the class at the time of their presentation or send to me 24 hours ahead of class to send out via our class e-mail list. During this oral presentation, each student is expected to present the main themes and arguments in the readings assigned for that class. Also any questions that arose in your mind while reading the assignment should be shared with the class for

discussion. You may also develop questions for your classmates. You are the teacher for this class and you can chose to present the material as you like. Powerpoint presentations are encouraged but not required. These presentations should be 15 to 20 minutes, followed by classroom discussion. These presentations plus the student handouts make up $\underline{10\%}$ of the student's grade for the term.

1. End of Term Research Paper: A minimum 12 page research paper is due at the end of the semester on a topic agreed on by both the instructor and the student. I hope that you will find interesting topics to write about. You might want to write a biographical paper on one of the leaders we will meet via writings and documentaries and discuss in this class. They include men mentioned in the Course Description: Nat Turner, Denmark Vesey, & Marcus Garvey. There are also heroic women who have played important roles in the freedom struggle who could be selected as a person to write about in your research paper. They include, Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, Ida Wells Barnett and others. In more contemporary times, we have had Miss Fannie Lou Hammer, Miss Ella Baker, Diane Nash Bevel and numerous others. Of course you can select the topic that interests you the most. The deadline for Topic Approval and the 4 or more sources that you plan to use in preparing the research paper will be listed in our Course Outline. The sources on these people can be books, journal articles and academic or profession web articles. (At least three of your sources should not be materials we have read and discussed in this class but can be from our list of Recommended Texts I share with you below if applicable to your project) The topic and the sources must be approved before you write your paper. Deadlines for Topics and research sources are to be typewritten and turned in to me by the date listed on the Course Outline. During the term, each student will update the class on their research. These dates will be found on the Course Outline also. Toward the end of the term, each student will present a 5 to 8 minute oral synopsis of his or her research paper to the class. The oral presentation is to be accompanied by a brief class handout that is either an outline of the student's research or a synopsis of that research with a bibliography of the sources you are using in your paper. The Research Paper accounts for 30% of the grade for the term. Your oral presentation and handout on your Research Paper will count for 10% of your grade. You can see the importance of this Research Project because it represents 40% of the grade in this class.

I urge you to utilize the excellent library resources we have at the University of Florida. We have **two expert librarians for both the African American Studies Program and the Religion Department** who can help you with sources for your Research Projects. They are: For African American Studies –**Stephanie Birch**, stephanie.birch@ufl.edu. Her direct phone number is 352-273-2656. The library specialist for the Religion Department is: **Dr. Blake Landor**, blaland@uflib.ufl. His phone number is 273-2644. I will be sending this syllabus to them and alerting them that you will be in touch for help with your Research Projects.

1. <u>Attendance and participation in one class outing</u> to an African American Church service or some other important event here on campus or in the African American community during the semester will be required. Attendance and participation in this event will count for 10%

of your grade. (Since we may still be under COVID-19 protocols, we will discuss this option.)

Grades will be based on six things:

Reaction Papers (Four) -	30%
Student Class Presentation of one	
Assigned Reading w/Handout	10%
Research Paper -	30%
Research Paper Presentation	10%
Attendance & Participation in an event	10%
Overall Classroom Participation	10%
Total	100%

This is intended to be a lively, student friendly course, as we will work together to understand the role of religion in the insurrections, revolts, rebellions and social movements of African Americans in their resistance to slavery, racism and oppression. All opinions will be valued and respected. We will be reading and viewing controversial and sensitive material about classism, racism, and sexism. I expect everyone to discuss these materials in a mature way.

EXTENSIONS ON WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

Students will be allowed an extension of a due date if they provide documentation of a reasonable problem including illness, death in family, university related activities and others deemed appropriate by the teacher. **Students are expected to manage their time to meet deadlines**. While there will be penalties for unexcused late submissions, it is better to submit written assignments late rather than not at all.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

An implied honor code is observed in all academic work at the University. Every student must operate according to an implied pledge that "any work submitted for credit the student has neither received nor been given unauthorized aid." In other words, cheating and plagiarism are breaches of academic honesty subject to disciplinary action, which may include a failing grade for the course. For more details, consult the website: http://www.dso.ufl.edu/studentguide/studentrights.php#studenthonorcode

ACCOMMODATIONS TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students needing classroom accommodation should register with the Dean of Students Office, where the necessary documentation will be issued. Students must submit that documentation to the professor when requesting accommodation.

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION:

Our class will be largely dialogical, and your participation in these discussions is central to your success in this class. It is imperative that every student contributes to our shared knowledge base by actively engaging the topics at hand. This means not only arriving to class having completed the assigned readings, with your cell phone off, and laptops used only with my explicit approval, but also adding your voice to class discussions. Please see me at the beginning of the semester if you are uncomfortable speaking in class so that we can discuss possible alternatives. A portion of this grade will reflect your participation in in-class conversations with your peers. Your overall, in class contributions constitute 20% of your grade.

Reading Responses and Current Reading Assignments/In Class Work:

Course Policies

Canvas:

I will use Canvas to post the syllabus, detailed instructions for assignments, and additional course information, and for quizzes as needed.

Discussion: Please show mutual respect when listening to and responding to others in class. We will re-examine our personal and cultural values and as well as relevant questions regarding race and community in the United States. This process can be painful, controversial, and rich with opportunities for raising opposing points, of view and diverse individual perspectives. It is important that we all respect and learn from each other. Questions are encouraged. Clarification often leads to deeper understanding. Please read assigned materials prior to class so that you may contribute to discussion. Rudeness in the form of inattention (including attention diverted by electronic devices/laptops/sleep) or speaking while another is talking prevents the dialog that our course requires. Therefore please conduct yourselves respectfully.

Be an active student:

Few students can absorb and retain all the ideas presented in class without taking notes for future review. This course tests your ability to acquire knowledge aurally (through your ears, by listening to me and to fellow students) and through your eyes. Completing assigned reading ahead of class, attending class, and taking notes are essential. Bring your books and readings to class. *On taking notes:* I do not provide detail notes on PowerPoint slides; rather, I use PowerPoint almost exclusively for images. Studies suggest taking notes by hand, not on computer, improves learning and retention. Most students must actively take notes during class to do well on the exams. Be engaged and speak up! Doing this helps you learn. If you find yourself becoming bored by the course, drop it and move along to something that is more fulfilling. If you surf the net, text, watch videos on your smartphone, or chat with friends during

class, you are distracting your classmates and most likely annoying some of them. Please do these things outside of class time.

Laptops

If you use a laptop to take notes in school, **you will be required to submit your notes** via email to me within one hour after class has ended. Not submitting your notes will result in a point deduction in your class participation grading

Guidelines for submitted work:

All submitted work should be typed, double spaced, and in 12 point font, Times New Roman. Proper citation is expected. All late work will have half a grade deducted for every day it is late after its due date.

Attendance: Attendance and active participation are highly valued. Three unexcused absences will lower your overall grade by 10%, so you should provide documentation regarding absences. If your absence is excused, you should consult with me to discuss the material you missed.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

In compliance with the University of Florida's policy and equal access laws, I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that may be required for students with disabilities. Requests for academic accommodations are to be made in writing during the first three weeks of the semester, except for unusual circumstances, so arrangements can be made. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with Student Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation.

Diversity and equity:

All students regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, national origin, or political beliefs are welcome in this class and will be treated respectfully by all class participants

CLASSROOM DECORUM:

- 1. Since we are using Zoom as a communication platform, there are a few protocols that must be followed.
 - 1. Please keep your cameras and physical presents available.
 - 2. Please be ready to respond to inquiries.
 - 3. Also if and when necessary use the "chat" function to participate in the discussions as well.
- 2. Be respectful of your classmates and the professor.
- b. No eating or drinking in class. Eat before you arrive.
- c. If you're sick with a contagious disease, please don't attend class get a doctor's note.

- d. No cell phones, laptops or other electronic devices may be used in class without prior approval from the professor. Students who violate this rule, may be asked to leave class and/or be considered absent for that day.
- e. No person has permission to audio or videotape classes without the professor's permission.
- f. If you engage in behavior such as reading texts, browsing the internet, sleeping, daydreaming, not participating in activities or any other behavior that I consider to be disrespectful, you may be considered absent for that day.
- g. You do not have my permission to do classwork from other classes during this class.
- h. Bring your text and/or other relevant readings to class.

COMMUNICATIONS:

- a. Identify yourself and the class that you're in when you e-mail me.
- b. Add a salutation/greeting (Good morning, Good Afternoon, Good Evening Dr. Stevenson when you e-mail me. Also, add a closing along with your name to the message. (i.e. Sincerely, Thank you, etc.) or I am not likely to respond.
- c. Allow about 24-30 hours for a response to your e-mail. I may respond sooner.
- d. DO NOT slide papers under my office door or put them in my mailbox unless asked to do so.
- e. Feel free to e-mail me and/or visit me during my office hours. I cannot meet right before or after class.
- f. Have Fun!."

MAKE UP POLICY: All assignments are known in advance; therefore, permission to hand in an assignment late is only granted for exceptional circumstances.

Quiz/Test: Pop quizzes will not be rescheduled. Only students with a documented official UF or medical excuse may take a make-up quiz/test if they have already missed a quiz. In this case, the professor must be notified before or immediately after the absence and the make up must be rescheduled on the first day that the student returns to campus. Students who do not provide appropriate documentation and reschedule the quiz/test immediately upon their return will not be given a make up.

Assignments: Assignments are known ahead of time so your grade will be reduced one letter grade for each day the assignment is not turned in beginning with the due date. Students with valid official university or documented medical excuses will be allowed to schedule make up inclass presentations within one day of her/his return to campus without penalty.

UF STUDENT HONOR CODE: Each student in this course is expected to abide by the University of Florida's Student Honor Code and Code of Conduct. Any work submitted by a

student in this course for academic credit **will be the student's own work**. Do not plagiarize. All work must be cited. Students suspected of academic dishonesty or of violating the Honor Code will be reported to the Dean of Students Office. To learn more about the UF policy regarding Academic Honesty and behaviors that violate UF policy, please visit: https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/.

UF COUNSELING ASSISTANCE: Students who may experience stress related personal issues are encouraged to visit the University of Florida Counseling and Wellness Center at 3190 Radio Road. Phone: 392-1575. Website: http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/contact-us.aspx

OTHER CAMPUS RESOURCES:

Library Support, http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask. Various ways to receive asistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/

Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/

E-learning technical support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learning-support@ufl.edu. https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml.

Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling. http://www.crc.ufl.edu/

U Matter, We Care: If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

University Police Department, 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies). http://www.police.ufl.edu/ Academic Resources

Student Complaints Campus: https://www.dso.ufl.edu/documents/UF_Complaints_policy.pdf On-Line Students Complaints: http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process

STATEMENT REGARDING HARASSMENT: UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty. To learn more about this policy, visit: http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/sexual/

COURSE EVALUATION: "Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in

their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/ . Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/ ."
COURSE THEMES:
Theme 1: Race as a Social Construct: What is it?
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Theme 2:
Theme 3:
Theme 4:
Theme 5:
Theme 6-
Theme 0-

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

- 1). Eric Robert Taylor, If We Must Die: Shipboard Insurrections in the Era of the Atlantic Slave Trade, Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge, 2006.
- 2). James H. Cone, Black Theology & Black Power, Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1997.
- 3). Malcolm, The Man behind the X, Accord Publications, 1993.
- 4). We will view several film documentaries in this class. Also if there is interest, I would like for the class to go as a group to see **Django Unchained** in lieu of one of our classes with discussion to follow. I will see if there is interest during the first or second class of the semester. (I may assigned this video from Netflix.)

Additional Readings will be listed in the Class Outline and will be placed on E-Reserves or sent as a pdf file. They include among others, chapters from:

THE BOOKS BELOW ARE NOT REQUIRED

TEXTBOOKS that may be of INTEREST for Your RESEARCH PAPERS

These texts may be of interest because they are classics on the topic we are covering in this class. Additionally, we may read a chapter or more from some of them. When we do, these will be in the Sakai site for this class or sent to you as a pdf file. Also, these are sources that will provide more in depth coverage of some of the topics that we will cover this semester. They are also excellent resources for the research papers you will be writing for this class. Please Note: All of these books, except for the Joanne Grant book can be used as sources in your Research Papers if applicable. You are not required to purchase these books and some may be found in UF's Library if you plan to use in your Research Projects.

Joseph Cephas Carroll, Slave Insurrections in the U.S. 1800-1865, Dover Publications, 2004.

James H. Cone, *The Cross And The Lynching Tree*, Orbis Press, 2011.

Gayraud S. Wilmore, *Black Religion and Black Radicalism*, 3rd edition (revised & enlarged), Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1998, ISBN 9781570751820.

Richard Brent Turner, *Islam in the African American Experience*, 2nd edition, Indiana U.P. 2003, ISBN 9780253216304.

Juan Williams & Quinton Dixon, *This Far by Faith: Stories from the African American Religious Experience*, Harper-Collins Publ. 2003, ISBN 9780060934248..

Joanne Grant, ed., *Black Protest: History, Documents and Analyses*, 1619 to the Present, Fawcett World Library, 1968.

Hasan Kwame Jeffries, Bloody Lowndes: Civil Rights and Black Power in Alabama's Black Belt,

Alex Haley, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* with forward by Attallah Shabazz, Ballantine Ed, 1964.

Lance Hill, *The Deacons For Defense: Armed Resistance and the Civil Rights Movement*, University of North Carolina Press, 2006.

Mattias Gardell, In the Name of Elijah Muhammad, Louis Farrakhan & The Nation of Islam, Duke UP, 1999.

Martha F. Lee, *The Nation of Islam- An American Millenarian Movement*, Syracuse University Press, 1996.

Barbara Diane Savage, Your Spirits Walk Beside Us: The Politics of Black Religion, Harvard U.P., 2008.

William L. Van Deburg, *New Day in Babylon: The Black Power Movement and American* Culture, 1965-1975, University of Chicago Press, 1993.

Kimberly Springer, *Living for the Revolution: Black Feminist Organizations*, 1968-1980, Durham: Duke University Press, 2005.

Russell J. Rickford, *Betty Shabazz: A Remarkable Story of Survival and Faith Before and After Malcolm X*, Naperville, Ill., Sourcebooks, Inc. 2003.

Stokely Carmichael with Kwueme Michael Thelwell, *Ready for Revolution: The Life and Struggles of Stokely Carmichael*, Scribner Book, Co. 2003.

Rod Bush, We are Not What We Seem: Black Nationalism and Class Struggle in the American Century, New York: New York University Press, 2003.

Eddie S. Glaude, Jr. ed., *Is It Nation Time? Contemporary Essays on Black Power and Black Nationalism*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2002.

Eldridge Cleaver, *Soul on Ice*, New York: Dell Publishers, 1999 [reprint, originally published in 1968].

James Forman, *The Making of Black Revolutionaries*, Illustrated Edition, Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1997.

Charles Payne, I've Got The Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.

C. Eric Lincoln, *The Black Muslims in America*, *3rd Edition*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing & Trenton, Third World Press, 1994.

Hugh Pearson, *The Shadow of the Panther: Huey Newton and the Price of Black Power in America*, New York: Addison-Wesley, 1994.

Malcolm X, February 1965 – The Final Speeches, New York: Pathfinder Press, 1992.

Elaine Brown, A Taste of Power- A Black Woman's Story, New York: Pantheon Books, 1992.

Sterling Stuckey, Slave Culture: *Nationalist Theory and the Foundations of Black America*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1988.

Wilson Jeremiah Moses, *The Golden Age of Black Nationalism 1850-1925*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988.

Assata Shakur, An Autobiography, Westport Conn.: Lawrence Hill and Co. 1987.

Angela Davis, Freedom on My Mind – An Autobiography, New York: Random House, 1974.

George Jackson, Soledad Brother: The Prison Letters of George Jackson, New York: Coward McCann, 1972.

Archie Epps, ed., *The Speeches of Malcolm X at Harvard*, New York, William Morrow & Company: 1968.

Stokely Carmichael & Charles V. Hamilton, *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in America*, New York, Vintage Press, 1967.

Robert F. Williams, *Negroes with Guns*, ed., by Marc Schleifer, New York: Marzani & Munsell, Inc, 1962.