

Professor: Dayo Gore

Office Hours: Tues and Thurs 12:45-1:45 pm and by appointment

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Women's Studies 391M
African American Women and the U.S. Civil Rights/Black Power Movements
Tuesday and Thursday, 2:30-3:45 pm, Bartlett 119

To die for the revolution is a one-shot deal; to live for the revolution means taking on the more difficult commitment of changing our day-to-day life patterns.

-Francis Beal, "Double Jeopardy: To Be Black and Female"

This course examines black women's participation in, and influence on, the long civil rights movement in the United States (including black power, feminism and transnational activism) from the 1930s to the 1980s. Centering black women's experiences as grassroots organizers and political leaders, the course explores significant events, organizations and political debates that helped to form and transform the black freedom struggle as well as the impact of these struggles on black women's daily lives and status in the United States. In addition, we will examine debates over leadership styles and political goals, the dynamics of class, sexuality, race, gender and region that shaped civil rights activism, and the cultural politics of the period. From this vantage point we will begin the process of exploring a range of issues that have plagued activists and theorists alike, including building solidarity, creating viable organizations, and developing strategies for long-term social change.

Required Readings:

Barbara Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement* (2003)

Lorraine Hansberry, *Raisin in the Sun* (1959)

Assata Shakur, *Assata: An Autobiography* (1987)

Additional Readings available on course website through SPARK.

All required books are available at **Food For Thought Books** at 106 N. Pleasant St and Hansberry and Shakur are on reserve at the Du Bois Library. Individual readings are posted on the course website, through SPARK. Log on using your OIT user name and password.

Assignments and Grades:

This is a very demanding course, but it also has the potential to be transformative. Given the focus and depth of this course active engagement in the class, including consistent class attendance and thorough completion of all readings and written assignments, is crucial. Reflecting this, 20% of your grade will be based on class participation including regular attendance, contributions to class discussions, participation in class activities such as breakout sessions and in class quizzes worth 5% of the grade. **More than 2 unexcused absences will result in a lowering of your grade.**

To encourage active engagement with the readings you will also be responsible for completing five (5) 2 pg. response papers. These response papers are an opportunity for you to examine one or two ideas emerging from the week's readings and should demonstrate that you have read and have an analysis of the assigned readings. The papers **should not** summarize the readings but rather pull out key points and examples that support your own analysis and interpretations. **There is no need to cite or quote extensively from the readings.** The papers will be due at the beginning of class on any five Thursdays of your choice (except the last week of class) and each paper will be worth 5% of your grade (25% total). **Late response papers will not be accepted.**

An additional 20% of your grade will be based on a 15-minute group presentation (really only 15 minutes). The presentations should provide the class with information/insights gained from an outside source (i.e. film, recent book not used in course, current event, historical article, primary source document, artistic work etc.) that relates to and raises questions for the week's discussion. Students will choose groups (size dependent on class numbers) and sign -up for presentations the second week of class. Each Group should discuss with me their proposed source and **must provide me with a citation sheet listing your source(s) and group members.** Presentations will be evaluated on the full participation of every group member, clarity in presentation, organization and how well it relates to the topic of the week. Group members will all receive the same grade on the presentation.

The remaining course work (35%) will be based on the completions of a 12-15 pg. research paper that makes use of outside sources to detail the political contributions and life experiences of a particular African American woman activist (for example: Beulah Richardson, Daisy Bates, Kathleen Cleaver etc.) or examines black women's involvement in a specific civil rights/black power organization or event (i.e. SNCC, Third World Women's Alliance, Freedom Rides, etc.). The paper will be graded in two parts.

- A 2 pg. abstract outlining your paper topic and major sources (including one primary source) is due at the beginning of class on Thursday, October 23rd. The abstract must include an annotated bibliography and a copy of your primary source, and will count for 10% of your grade.
- The completed final research paper, which accounts for the final 25% of your grade, is due in the Women's Studies office by 4 pm on December 17th. A more detailed handout of the assignment will be forthcoming.

Summary of Assignments:

5 Response papers	25%
Group Presentation	20%
Class Participation/in class activities/quizzes	20%
2 pg. Abstract and bibliography	10%
12-15 pg. Research Paper	25%

Academic Honesty

It is expected that all assignments handed in for this class are your own original work. Academic dishonesty, in any form, will not be tolerated and you are responsible for being knowledgeable of University's official policy on academic honesty. You can read it in full at:

http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/codeofconduct/acadhonesty/

Week 1: Introduction and Overview

Readings: B. Ransby, *Ella Baker*, pp. 1-12
E. Higgenbotham “ African American Women’s History and the Metalanguage of Race” on SPARK

Sept. 2: Overview of Course

Sept. 4: Theory, Timeline and Geography of a Movement

Week 2: Black Life in the South and Daily Resistance

Readings: Ransby, *Ella Baker*, pp. 13-63
W. Chafe, et. al., *Remembering Jim Crow*, selections on SPARK
13, 14 & 15 Amendments on SPARK
Plessy v. Ferguson (full version on SPARK)
<http://www.let.rug.nl/usa/D/1876-1900/plessy/plessy.htm>

Sept. 9: Defining the Power and Politics of Racism

Sept. 11: White Supremacy and Black Resistance and **Sign-up for Group Presentations**

Week 3: Setting the Stage: Early Organizations

Readings: Ransby, *Ella Baker*, pp. 64-147
Excerpt "Origins of the Civil Rights Movement" on SPARK

Sept. 16: From 1930s Radicalism to Post War Resistance

Sept. 18: Discussion

Week 4: Setting the Stage: Gender and Racial Politics in U.S.

Readings: Robin Kelley, "We Are Not What We Seem," on SPARK
Feldstein, "I Want the Whole World to See" on SPARK

Sept. 23: Black Women and Racial Politics North and South

Sept. 25: Presentation and Discussion

Week 5: Black Women, Desegregation and Organized Resistance

Readings: Ransby, *Ella Baker*, 148-195
“Brown v. Board of Ed.,” in *Eyes on the Prize Reader* on SPARK
Melba Patillo Beals, *Warriors Don't Cry*, on SPARK

Sept: 29: Julianne Malveaux Speaking on the Elections at 4pm, Campus Center

Sept 30: The Meanings of Desegregation: From Radical Resistance to Respectability

Oct. 2: Presentation and Discussion: Desegregation its victories and lessons

Week 6: The Movement Takes off : Sit-ins and Student Organizing

Readings: Ransby, *Ella Baker*, pp. 209-272
Diane Nash Interview on SPARK
"SNCC Statement" and "Bigger Than a Hamburger" in *Eyes on the Prize Reader* on SPARK

Oct. 7: The Sit-Ins and Freedom Rides

Oct. 9: Discussion (No Presentations)

Week 7: Freedom Summer and the Mississippi Democratic Freedom Party

Readings: Barbara Ransby, *Ella Baker*, pp. 273-352
Wesley Hogan, "The High Summer of Transformation" on SPARK

Oct. 14: No Class – Monday Schedule

Oct. 16: Presentation and Discussion: The Struggle for Power and Economic Rights

Week 8: From Civil Rights to Black Power a Movement in Transition

Readings: Peter Levy, "Gloria Richardson and the Civil Rights Movement" on SPARK
Greenberg, "Black Power," pp. 152-176 on SPARK
Cleaver, *New York Times* article on SPARK
BPP, "What We Believe" on SPARK

Oct. 21: The Political Implications and Meanings of a Changing Movement

Oct. 23: Presentation and Discussion: What Was Lost? What Was Gained?

Week 9: Artists, Culture and the Movement

Readings: Lorraine Hansberry, *A Raisin in the Sun*, Intro – Act 2, Scene 1
"Interview with Bernice Johnson Reagon," in *Eyes on the Prize Reader* on SPARK

Oct. 28: Black Women Artists and the Movement

Oct. 30: Presentation and Discussion -
Abstract & Bibliography Due at the Start of Class

Week 10: Movement Organizing in the North

Readings: Lorraine Hansberry, *A Raisin in the Sun*, Act 2, Scene 2 –End (*Read for Tuesday*)
Theoharis and Woodard, "Introduction"
Assata, Intro - 44

Nov. 4: The Connections and the Differences in the Northern Civil Rights Movement

Nov. 6: Presentation and Discussion

Week 11: The Politics of Black Power and Black Women's Leadership

Readings: Robyn Spencer, "Engendering the Black Freedom Struggle" on SPARK
Stephen Ward, "Third World Women's Alliance" on SPARK
Readings from *The Black Women: An Anthology* on SPARK

Nov. 11: No Class

Nov. 12: Where Are the Women in the Black Power Movement?

Nov. 13: Presentation and Discussion

Week 12: Black Liberation and Gender

Readings: Farah J. Griffin, "Ironies of a Saint" on SPARK
Combahee River Collective on SPARK
Assata, Chps. 3-8, pp. 45-140

Nov. 18: Why Gender Matters for Black Liberation

Nov. 20: *Assata* and Black Liberation/Women's Liberation

Week 13: Third World Revolutionaries at Home and Abroad

Readings: *Assata*, chp. 9-end

Nov. 25: Discussion: Defining the State, Fighting The State

Nov. 27: Thanksgiving Break No Class

Week 14: Attacking the Empire, the Empire Strikes Back

Readings: Max Elbaum, "The System Becomes the Target," on Course Website
Angela Davis, "If They Come in the Morning," on Course Website

Dec. 2: Internationalizing the Movement and Challenging the System

Dec. 4: Destroying a Movement: The impact of COINTELPRO

Week 15: Legacies and Lessons from the Civil Rights/Black Power Movements

Readings: "Regents of U of California v. Allan Bakke" in *Eyes on the Prize Reader* on SPARK
Barack Obama, "Speech on Race," NYT transcript on SPARK
Website Interview w/ Kathleen Cleaver,
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/race/interviews/kcleaver.html>
Derrick Bell, excerpt from, *Faces at the Bottom of the Well* on SPARK

Dec. 9: The Methods and Meanings of Change

Dec. 11: Lessons and Legacies

FINAL PAPER DUE BY 4PM WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 17th

GROUP # :

PRESENTATION DATE:

MEMBERS NAMES: