

Last Updated August 29, 2011
(Syllabus subject to change. Latest syllabus will be posted on blackboard)

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COURSE SYLLABUS

Gendered Experiences of Pan-Africanism:
Travel Encounters during the Cold War
WMST 300 004, AFAM 390 002, HIST 387 004, ANTH 399 003
Class Location: Science Technology I 126
Class Time: 12:00 pm - 1:15 pm, TR

Course Description

This course explores the writings and activism of people of African descent who looked toward the African continent in general and Ghana in particular for racial solidarity, a connection to a shared cultural past and present, an opportunity to build working-class solidarity, or a political landscape on which to build pan-African political movements. The course will examine the ethnic, national, gender and class dimensions of African American interactions with Africans through analyses of writings and other sources detailing the interconnections through travel. The course will interrogate the underlying basis of these interactions as a way of understanding the extent to which solidarities were conceived as romantic, essentialist links to a shared past or with a recognition of the economic, political, and social complexities of transnational encounters on a diverse African continent. The course will examine these links between the diaspora and Africa within the context of the Cold War, US civil rights and African anti-colonial movements, and racial and gender ideologies of the time.

Required Course Texts

Richard Wright, *Black Power: Three Books from Exile: Black Power; The Color Curtain; and White Man, Listen!* Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2008.

James T. Campbell, *Middle Passages: African American Journeys to Africa, 1787-2005*, Penguin Press, 2006.

Yvette Richards, *Conversations With Maida Springer: A Personal History Of Labor, Race, and International Relations*, Univ. of Pittsburgh Press, 2004.

Maya Angelou, *All God's Children Need Traveling Shoes*, Vintage; 1st edition, 1991.

Robert Johnson, *Fighting for Africa: The Pan-African Contributions of Ambassador Dudley J. Thompson and Bill Sutherland*, University Press of America, 2010.

Kevin K. Gaines, *American Africans in Ghana: Black Expatriates and the Civil Rights Era*, Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2007.

Learning objectives

At the end of this course, students will ...

understand the influence of the Cold War on domestic civil rights and international activism;
understand the role of gender, race, and nationality in shaping the travel experiences of African Americans;
understand the different ideological threads of Pan-Africanism;
understand the connections between civil rights and African labor and independence struggles;
know how to analyze a text to find its main argument.

Course Requirements and Methods of Instruction and Evaluation

1. In-class participation (10%)

Attendance Policies: Students are expected to be prepared for each class and to participate in discussion. Instructors may use absence, tardiness, or early departure as de facto evidence of nonparticipation.

2. Lead class discussion (10%)

Students will lead a class discussion once during the semester. This assignment requires that students post on blackboard 3 broad questions concerning the reading(s). In class they should open up the discussion by stating briefly the thesis or argument or the main themes of the reading before proceeding to the questions.

3. Short analysis papers for two assigned class dates. (20%)

The papers are due on the day that the readings are discussed in class. Failure to turn in a paper on the appointed day during class will result in no credit for that paper.

Pick out a major theme in the class reading that intrigues you. The theme may be related to one of these issues or the intersection of any of these issues: race, class, sexuality, colorism, gender, labor, Cold War, exile, racism, imperialism, foreign policy, ethnic divisions, nationality, nationalism. Alternately you may compare the experiences and outlook of two or more different people faced with a similar set of parameters.

The papers should run two **full** pages in length and be double-spaced, with type of 12-point font and regular one-inch margins. Anything less will incur a significant grade reduction. Students should run a spell and grammar check on their papers.

3. **Take-Home Midterm** (25%)

Midterm questions will be given and the midterm must be typed and checked for spelling and grammar. No midterms will be accepted after the in-class due date, without a doctor's excuse. Failure to turn in the midterm on the appointed day will result in a failing grade for the exam. There is to be no collaboration on the midterm.

4. **Final Exam** (35%)

The Final is given only on the appointed day. Failure to take the final exam will in a failing grade for the exam.

See George Mason University's Academic Polices

<http://catalog.gmu.edu/content.php?catoid=17&navoid=1315>

Grading Scale

100-95 A+

94-93 A

92-90 A -

89-87 B+

86-83 B

82-80 B-

79-77 C+

76-73 C

72-70 C-

69-60 D

59 and below F

About Blackboard

This course management system is a very important tool for this class. I will post on blackboard the syllabus, instructions for all course assignments, selected class notes, exam review questions, some required and recommended readings, links to relevant web sites, photographs, instructions for accessing and using library databases, and selected campus services. If any changes occur in the syllabus, I will post an updated document. I will announce in class any changes to the syllabus and also alert you through the blackboard message system. I also strongly prefer blackboard email for correspondence instead of the regular Mason email service.

About Writing Skills

Students may elect to visit the Writing Center on their own to get help with writing strategies. After your first writing assignment, I may recommend students to visit the writing center. These services are valuable and free.

“The Writing Center will not proofread your work for you, but we will work with you to develop revision and editing strategies that can last a lifetime. Our tutors want to emphasize positive attitudes and helpful ways of thinking about writing. We want you to become more confident and effective writers across the curriculum and in your personal and professional lives.”

Writing Center: A114 Robinson Hall; (703) 993-1200; <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>
email, wcenter@gmu.edu

PLEASE NOTE: COURSE POLICIES

1. George Mason University Honor System and Code:

George Mason University has an Honor Code, which requires all members of this community to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing are all prohibited. All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee.

Please see the University Catalog for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. What does academic integrity mean in this course? Essentially this: when you are responsible for a task, you will perform that task. When you rely on someone else's work in an aspect of the performance of that task, you will give full credit in the proper, accepted form. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind) please ask for guidance and clarification.

<http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm>

Plagiarism (statements from Mason Web Site)

Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving that person credit.

<http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm#plagiarism>

2. Class Registration:

Students are responsible for verifying the accuracy of their own schedules. Students need to check PatriotWeb regularly to verify that they are registered for the classes that they think they are. This is particularly important since students are no longer dropped for nonpayment. Faculty may not allow a student who is not registered to continue to attend class and may not grade the work of students who do not appear on the official class

roster.

Deadlines each semester are published in the Schedule of Classes available from the Registrar's Web Site registrar.gmu.edu

The add and drop deadlines for courses:

Last day to add - September 6

Last day to drop with no tuition penalty: September 6

Last day to drop with a 33% tuition penalty: September 19

Final drop deadline (67% tuition penalty): September 30

Selective withdrawal: October 3 - 28

After the last day to drop a class, withdrawing from this class requires the approval of the dean and is only allowed for nonacademic reasons. Undergraduate students may choose to exercise a selective withdrawal. See the Schedule of Classes for selective withdrawal procedures.

3. Accommodations for students with disabilities:

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Resources (ODS) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office. <http://ods.gmu.edu>

The need for accommodations should be identified at the beginning of the semester and the specific accommodation has to be arranged through the Office of Disability Resources. Faculty cannot provide accommodations to students on their own (e.g. allowing a student extra time to complete an exam because the student reports having a disability).

4. Mason email accounts:

Students must use their Mason email accounts—either the existing “MEMO” system or a new “MASONLIVE” account to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. See <http://masonlive.gmu.edu> for more information.

Other Useful Campus Resources:

University Libraries: “Ask a Librarian”

<http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/IM/IMRef.html>

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS): (703) 993-2380

<http://caps.gmu.edu>

Links to the University Catalog (catalog.gmu.edu)

University Policy website (<http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/>).

Class Schedule

August 30

Introduction

McCray, "Slang in Ghana Eclipses Harlem's: INA," *CD*, Apr. 5, 1958.

McCray, "Use Of Apt Terms Patterns U. S.: INA," *CD*, July 5, 1958.

September 1

Film: *Negroes with Guns: Rob Williams and Black Power*, DVD, E185.615 .N36 2005

September 6

Pre-Independence Africa – Thompson and Wright

Marcia M. Greenlee, "Era Bell Thompson Interview," *Black Women's Oral History Project*, v. 9, 413-435, 442-447, 452-454, 460-463 (**blackboard**).

September 8

Wright, *Black Power*, 17-21, 51-61, 66-93, 110-114.

September 13

Wright, *Black Power*, 126-134, 158-161, 385-389, 399-409.

September 15

Campbell, *Middle Passages*, "Native Son, American Daughter," 288-295.

Eileen De Freece-Wilson, "Era Bell Thompson: Chicago Renaissance Writer,"

Dissertation, Rutgers University, 2010:

Chapter Three, *Africa Travel Narratives of the Twentieth Century: Africa, Land of My Fathers and Black Power*, 111-128.

<http://mss3.libraries.rutgers.edu/dlr/showfed.php?pid=rutgers-lib:27272>

September 20

Campbell, *Middle Passages*, "Native Son, American Daughter," 296-308.

Eileen De Freece-Wilson, "Era Bell Thompson: Chicago Renaissance Writer,"

Dissertation, Rutgers University, 2010:

Chapter Three, *Africa Travel Narratives of the Twentieth Century: Africa, Land of My Fathers and Black Power*, 128-150.

<http://mss3.libraries.rutgers.edu/dlr/showfed.php?pid=rutgers-lib:27272>

September 22

Nationality, Race and Belonging

McCray, In New Africa column for *The Chicago Defender* newspaper (**blackboard**)

“McCray finds Surprises in Ghana; Just Like Home,” Dec. 28, 1957.

“They’re Glad to See you in Ghana, Says McCray,” Jan. 11, 1958.

“McCray Joins Africans in Recreational Activities,” Feb. 1, 1958.

“Hospitality And Fufu Are Prime Features Of Ghana,” Mar. 1, 1958.

“Female Cop Too Much for Tough African Criminals,” Feb. 8, 1958.

“Says Women of Ghana Hide Charm,” Mar. 15, 1958.

“Top Ghana Beauty is Mother of Four,” Apr. 19, 1958.

“Status, Color Rate 1st in Ghana,” Apr. 26, 1958.

“Maturity Is Cause For Celebration,” June 28, 1958.

September 27

Murray, *The Autobiography of a Black Activist, Feminist, Lawyer, Priest and Poet*

“A Question of Identity,” 318-332,

“Teaching in Ghana,” 333-343 (**blackboard**).

September 29

Gaines, *American Africans in Ghana*,

“Pauli Murray in Ghana,” 110-135.

October 4

Angelou, *All God’s Children Need Traveling Shoes*, 48-53, 81-88.

Wright, *Black Power*, 385-388.

Ernest Dunbar, *The Black Expatriates: A Study of American Negroes in Exile*, Dutton, 1968:

Gloria Lindsey 25-38,

Bill Sutherland, 88-109 (**blackboard**).

October 6

Film – *The Wind of Change: The End of Colonialism in Africa* (DT 353. W56 2004, DVD)

October 11

Columbus Day recess (Monday classes/labs meet Tuesday. Tuesday classes do not meet this week)

October 13

Take-home Midterm

October 18

Midterm due at the beginning of class

Traveling in Service to Africa

Richards, *Maida Springer, Conversations With Maida Springer*, “African Policy Conflicts within the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions,” 23-45, 123-129.

October 20

Richards, *Maida Springer, Conversations With Maida Springer*, “African Policy Conflicts within the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions,” 159-167, 176-187, 192-195, 200-205, 211-233.

October 25

Sandra M. Watson, “Interview with Olivia Pearl Stokes,” *The Black Women’s Oral History Project*, v. 9 (Westport, 1991), excerpt (**blackboard**).

October 27

The Politicos Arrive

Campbell, *Middle Passages*, “Black Star,” 315-345.

November 1

Gaines, *American Africans in Ghana*, “Escape to Ghana, 136-140, 156-173.

November 3

Cheryl Gilkes, “Muriel Sutherland Snowden Interview,” *Black Women’s Oral History Project*, excerpt (**blackboard**).

November 8

Johnson, *Fighting for Africa: The Pan-African Contributions of Ambassador Dudley J. Thompson and Bill Sutherland*, University Press of America, 2010.
“Bill Sutherland,” 45-55.

Dunbar, *The Black Expatriates: A Study of American Negroes in Exile*:
Priscilla Stevens Kruize 51-68.
Robert E. Lee, 69-87 (**blackboard**).

November 10

Angelou, *All God's Children Need Traveling Shoes*, 3-23, 29-36, 39-43, 53-76.

November 15

Angelou, *All God's Children Need Traveling Shoes*, 93-105, 105-119, 119-128, 193-208.

November 17

Leslie Lacy, *The Rise and Fall of a Proper Negro: An Autobiography*, 136-179
(**blackboard**).

November 22

Malcolm X with the Revolutionary Returnees

Gaines, *American Africans in Ghana*, “Malcolm X in Ghana,” 179-209

November 24

Thanksgiving break

November 29

Maya Angelou, *All God's Children Need Traveling Shoes*, 128-146.

December 1

Lacy, *The Rise and Fall of a Proper Negro: An Autobiography*, 196-244 (**blackboard**).

December 6

The Ghanaian Coup

Campbell, *Middle Passages*, “Black Star,” 345-364.

December 8

Gaines, *American Africans in Ghana*, "The Coup," 228-243.

December 15

Final Exam, Thurs. **10:30am** – 1:15 pm