

HIST 244
American Civil Rights History, 1877-1970
Fall 2004, T Th 11:30-12:45
Library Conference Room

Dr. Susan Youngblood Ashmore
Office: Language Hall 101
Office Hours: MW 2:30-3:30
T Th 2:30-3:30 or by appointment
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COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Description:

This course focuses on the modern civil rights movement in America from 1877 to 1970 with particular emphasis on the social, political, economic, and cultural aspects of the grass-roots movement that ended legalized segregation. In order to understand how America in general, and the South in particular, came to terms with its racist past we will look at three themes throughout the semester: first, the variety of ways African Americans reacted against oppression; second, the ways the political system—on the federal, state, and local level—responded to the demands for change; and third, the myriad ways white Southerners confronted their changing environment. The struggle for African Americans to gain legal recognition as full citizens did not follow a straight path, and as a result this course will look at why it took almost one hundred years to accomplish some important goals. Throughout the semester we will have the opportunity to visit a few of the historical sites associated with the civil rights movement in Alabama.

Course Goals:

There are several objectives for this course. First, by gaining a factual knowledge of this historical period the course seeks to assist students in learning to think historically by recognizing and criticizing evidence and using primary and secondary sources to understand the process of history. Second, this course strives to help students discover, understand, and appreciate the interplay of forces and personalities that shaped the history of the modern civil rights movement. Third, as a writing intensive class that fulfills the sophomore writing requirement, this course will also assist students in developing and refining their writing abilities by organizing, describing, and reaching conclusions on paper about material that they have studied. These skills will benefit students in the future when they are in upper division courses.

Required Reading:

 These books and CD are available at the campus bookstore

Thomas C. Holt and Elsa Barkley Brown, editors, *Major Problems in African-American History: Volume II From Freedom to "Freedom Now," 1865-1990s*, Houghton Mifflin Press: Boston, 2000.

Steven F. Lawson and Charles Payne, *Debating The Civil Rights Movement 1945-1968*, Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.: New York, 1998.

Waldo E. Martin, Jr., *Brown v. Board of Education: A Brief History with Documents*, Bedford/St. Martin's Press: Boston, 1998.

Cheryl Lynn Greenberg, *A Circle of Trust: Remembering SNCC*, Rutgers University Press: New Brunswick, 1998.

Glenn T. Eskew, *But for Birmingham: The Local and National Movements in the Civil Rights Struggle*, University of North Carolina Press: Chapel Hill, 1997.

Charles W. Eagles, *Outside Agitator: Jon Daniels and the Civil Rights Movement in Alabama*, University of Alabama Press: Tuscaloosa, 1993.

Sing for Freedom: The Civil Rights Movement in Song, Folkways Recordings: The Smithsonian Institution, Compact Disc.

Primary documents and journal articles provided through JSTOR on the library web page under Information Gateway and/or by the professor.

Grading and Assignments:

Essay One (5-7 double-spaced pages) Document/Photograph Analysis (15%) due at the *beginning* of class on September 30th. **Essay Two** (5-7 double-spaced pages) Film Analysis in conjunction with assigned readings (15%) due at the *beginning* of class on November 16th. **Midterm essay exam** (20%) given on October 19th. **Final exam** (30%) given on **Thursday, December 9 from 9:00 to 12:00 noon**. **Class preparation** (10%) includes announced and unannounced reading quizzes as well as journal entries on one outside trip, and four responses to the films screened throughout the semester. **Participation and attitude** (10%) includes attending at least one outside trip scheduled throughout the semester: Saturday

October 23rd to visit Dexter Avenue Baptist Church/ Rosa Parks Museum/Civil Rights Monument in Montgomery, Alabama; Saturday November 20th to visit the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, Birmingham, Alabama; as well as regular attendance and active participation in class discussions.

All assignments as well as your final course grade will be based on the +/- system.

Honor Code:

We are a community of scholars. Therefore, academic dishonesty is not tolerated. Your name or signature on a paper, test, or journal entry submitted for credit shall indicate you have neither given nor received unauthorized information on the work, nor have you condoned the giving or receiving of unauthorized information by others. As a student at Oxford College of Emory University you have agreed to abide by the honor pledge and have taken upon yourself the responsibility of upholding the Honor Code; you are urged to inquire of the Honor Council about any doubtful case at any time throughout the semester. For complete details on the Honor Code please see pages 97-100 in the Oxford College 2004-2005 Catalog.

Note on writing and plagiarism: Students must be scrupulous to avoid plagiarism and to give very precise and complete citations for any work used in any way. Always make it exactly clear to the reader through the use of quotation marks and citations which words, if any, are taken from some other source. Be very careful if you draw on any source—whether from the internet, a film, a photograph, or an archival reference—to give the precise source of each and every word used. Avoid using too many direct quotations; I am much more interested in your paraphrasing of, and commentary upon, an authors' arguments than in your ability to quote directly. Nevertheless, even when paraphrasing you need to cite the source used. For further details see Chapter 5 in Mary Lynn Rampolla's *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History* (on reserve in the library) as well as the American Historical Association's "Statement on Plagiarism" that will be handed out and discussed in class.

Attendance Policy:

Class begins at 11:30 and ends at 12:45. This is a course that requires your regular attendance and active participation in class. Students are allowed two absences, every absence after that will deduct points from the class participation/attitude portion of your final course grade. It is your responsibility to obtain missed notes from class and to turn in all assignments on time. During class discussion of reading material I expect you to have prepared before class. You will be expected to attend at least one (although you can go on more than one) outside trip scheduled for Saturday October 23rd to Montgomery, Alabama or Saturday November 20th to Birmingham, Alabama. You will be expected to attend the viewing of four films scheduled throughout the semester.

If you miss a due date for the midterm or final exam, **only absences due to medical or family emergencies** (for example, you are in the hospital) are valid. You will need to present written evidence of your illness or family emergency for an excused absence. If you miss a due date on a written assignment, a late penalty of **five points per day** (including weekends) will be deducted from your grade for that assignment. If you turn in your written assignment in after the beginning of class but on the same day it is due you will be deducted **2.5** points from your grade for that assignment. You cannot change the time of your final exam because of travel plans, vacation plans, job opportunities, or having more than one final exam on one day.

I encourage you to visit me during my office hours, or make an appointment with me if my office hours do not coincide with your schedule. One of the positive experiences you can have at Oxford College is getting to know your professors well. So, take advantage of that opportunity and come see me throughout the semester.

Class Etiquette:

Class Discussion: We will spend time this semester discussing readings written by professional scholars, civil rights activists, as well as by ourselves. In this process of discussion it is important to nurture the habit of being a good listener. Practice paying close attention to what others are saying as well as what you are saying. Through this process of listening well we will also respect each other. Our goal is to understand, not to operate only out of a place of judgment. In this manner we will be able to see the nuance and historical context of what we study to gain a deeper understanding. It is also essential that we build a sense of trust among ourselves that will enable us to speak frankly about some difficult parts of our historical past. If education means anything it changes us. That is not easy because we do not like change. So we have to be prepared to face historical reality to enable us to see the world from the perspective of others.

Cell phones: I do not take phone calls during class so you should not either. Turn off your cell phone when you are in class, watching a film, or when we are visiting a historic cite. If this becomes a common occurrence, I will ask you to leave the class.

E-mail: We will have a class conference on LearnLink that corresponds with this course. I will post on the conference all assignments as well as other pertinent items that may enhance class discussion. When communicating with your fellow classmates on the conference or with me on my personal e-mail address do not post anything that you would not be comfortable saying to your classmates or to me in person.

E-mail has become an important educational tool. All of us use it on a regular basis. However, the convenience of e-mail can often lead to informality and misunderstanding. For this reason, there are different rules for writing in formal situations—class discussions, letters to professors, student discussion lists—that do not necessary apply when writing to friends and family. So, here are my suggestions for using e-mail in our class. When writing to me or on our LearnLink conference you should use a serious tone. Address me by my proper title, follow rules of grammar and mechanics, and do not use all lower or upper case letters. You should use black ink in your e-mail messages. Avoid using curse words and other slang in formal situations. I have heard it said that writing is like fashion, one style is not appropriate for every situation. For example you would not wear your bathing suit to a job interview at a bank. So, get in the habit of using your professional voice when communicating as a professional, in your case your profession right now is being a college student. Most importantly, remember that even though you cannot see them, you are communicating with real human beings whenever you send e-mail. Do not let the impersonal screen make you forget to be as respectful in your communication as you would be when speaking face to face.

Do not assume just because you *can* get in touch with me when you want to that I will be available to read your message. I rarely check e-mail once I leave campus, which is usually around 5:30 p.m., and I don't check e-mail over the weekend. So, note that I read e-mail from 9:00-5:30 Monday through Friday. Take time to think about your message before you send it. Never send a message when you are feeling emotional, particularly if you are upset or angry.

I also do not accept written assignments, such as your document analysis essays, via e-mail. I only accept hard copies of written assignments.

Finally, remember that e-mail is not a very private communication system. Your messages can be printed out, and they can also be sent on to others as forwarded messages. Any private message you send potentially can come under public scrutiny; therefore you should not write anything that would cause you or someone else embarrassment or trouble should your e-mail become public.

SCHEDULE

Aug 26	Syllabus, Defining the Civil Rights Movement—what is it?
Aug 31	
	Debating the Civil Rights Movement Lawson/Payne
Sept 2	
	Reconstruction and Its Aftermath Holt/Brown
Sept 7	
	Creation of Jim Crow Segregation Holt/Brown
Sept 9	
	Strategies for Change: Ida B. Wells/WEB DuBois

		Holt/Brown; “The Credo”
Sept 14		Creation of the NAACP
Sept 16		Holt/Brown; “The Call” The Great Migration/World War One Holt/Brown; Jacob Lawrence Art
Sept 21		The Great Depression and the New Deal
Sept 23		Holt/Brown World War II: Double V Campaign Holt/Brown
Sept 28		NAACP Plan to Overturn <i>Plessy</i>
Sept 30		Holt/Brown; Martin <i>Brown</i> <i>v. Board of Education</i> decision Holt/Brown; Martin; Journal Articles
	Essay One due at the <i>beginning</i> of class	
Oct 5		Response to <i>Brown</i> Martin; Journal Articles
Oct 6	Screening of the film “Intolerable Burden” 7:30 p.m. Library Video Conference Room	
Oct 7		Montgomery Bus Boycott and its Aftermath Holt/Brown; Journal Articles
Oct 12	No Class – Fall Break	
Oct 13	Screening of the film “Boycott” 7:30 p.m. Library Video Conference Room	
Oct 14		Integration of Little Rock Central High School Martin; Journal Articles

Oct 19	Midterm Exam – all lectures through Response to <i>Brown</i>, readings, documents, and photographs.	
Oct 21		The Nashville Movement and Student Sit Ins Greenberg; “Eyes on the Prize”
Oct 23	**Trip to Montgomery to see Ebenezer Baptist Church/ Rosa Parks Museum/Civil Rights Memorial**	
Oct 26		SNCC– Freedom Rides and Mississippi Greenberg; Eskew
Oct 27	Screening of the film “Freedom Song” 7:30 p.m. Library	
Oct 28	Video Conference Room	
		The Albany Movement Greenberg, Journal Articles
Nov 2		Birmingham Campaign Eskew
Nov 3	Screening of the film “Four Little Girls”	
Nov 4		Birmingham Campaign Eskew
Nov 9		March on Washington and the Federal Response Eskew; Greenberg
Nov 11		The Civil Rights Act–why it mattered Journal Article
Nov 16		Freedom Summer, 1964 Greenberg
	Essay Two due at the <i>beginning</i> of class	
Nov 18		Selma and the Alabama Black Belt Greenberg; Eagles
Nov 20	**Trip to Birmingham to see the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute**	

Nov 23		MFDP and the Democratic Convention Greenberg
Nov 25	No Class – Thanksgiving Holiday	
Nov 30		SCLC in Alabama and the Voting Rights Act Eagles Quest
Dec 2		for Black Power in Lowndes Co., Alabama Eagles
Dec 7	What has Changed?	
Dec 8	Reading Day	
Dec 9	Final Exam 9:00 12:00 noon	