

AFRO-MODERN POLITICAL THOUGHT

Political Studies 367, Spring 2019

Cross-listed: Africana Studies, American Studies

Wednesday 1:30-3:50pm in Hegemon 300

Professor Kevin Duong

Office Hours: Aspinwall 209, Thursdays 3:00-4:30pm

This advanced seminar is an intensive study of the meaning of freedom in Black political thought and intellectual history. Students can expect to read both classic works as well as contemporary social criticism. Particular attention will be paid to W. E. B. Du Bois, his critics, and his relation to other black intellectuals at home and abroad. Our goal will be to use Afro-modern political thought as a point of observation, the better to see the broader shape of twentieth century radical politics from the civil rights movement to communism and decolonization.

Required Materials

The following textbooks will be made available at the bookstore:

1. W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (Dover)
2. W. E. B. Du Bois, *Darkwater* (Verso)
3. W. E. B. Du Bois, *Dusk of Dawn* (Oxford)

Most of our readings will be posted online on Moodle. Our class moodle website can be accessed here: <https://moodle.bard.edu/course/view.php?id=2277>

The enrollment key for the moodle board is: **horizonS19**

Course Objectives and Expectations

Assignments: Students will be responsible for (1) weekly memos, (2) class participation, and (3) a seminar paper. Each weekly memo should be approximately half a page, synthesizing and critically engaging the readings that week. The seminar paper will be 12-15 pages. More details will be provided in class.

Attendance: Attendance is mandatory for this class. We will be moving through a large amount of material each week. Our class policy is that I ask no questions for the first two absences. Beyond the first two absences, any unexcused absences will penalize a student's participation grade if an adequate justification, to be determined by the instructor, is not forthcoming. A student's overall grade will be in jeopardy after four unexcused absences.

Class Participation: Please note that participation is a substantial component of the course's overall evaluation. Students can ensure that they maximally receive participation points by attending class, participating in class discussion, and by showing general attentiveness towards, including thoughtful responses to, their fellow classmates. If for any reason a student is concerned about their ability to do the above listed, please feel free to discuss the matter with me early in the semester.

Laptop Policy: This is largely a discussion class, so there will not be much lecturing. Since class will therefore be participatory, laptops will not be permitted in class. Note taking can be done adequately with pencil and paper when the need arises. If there is an unusually compelling reason, however, for why on a particular day you may need your laptop out, please let me know and we can try to accommodate that. I also expect that you will refrain from texting, sending emails, using the internet, and doing other work during class.

Course Evaluation:

Weekly memos:	30%
Participation:	20%
Final paper:	50%

Other Matters:

Plagiarism: Each student is expected to abide by the code of academic integrity. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with college policies regarding plagiarism and other violations of academic integrity, which will be strictly observed in this class. If work is found to be plagiarized, the student will receive an automatic failing grade in the class, and depending on the situation additional sanctions may be imposed by the college.

Reasonable Accommodations for Students: If you require assistance or accommodations, or if you have any questions related to any accommodation for testing, note taking, reading, etc., please speak with me as soon as possible. You may also contact the Disability Support Coordinator in Stevenson Library, Room 211, if you have further concerns.

Additional Writing Help: If you seek additional writing help beyond the scope of the course, I encourage you to visit the Bard College Learning Commons which provides writing resources for students. You can visit their website here: <http://www.bard.edu/learningcommons/students>

Schedule of Readings

Readings and assignments are to be completed by their corresponding date. ‘Optional’ readings are additional selections that may improve your mastery of the material, but aren’t required. Readings required with asterisks (*) are available on Moodle. Please read the assigned texts in the order they are listed.

PART 1: THE POLITICAL THOUGHT OF W. E. B. DU BOIS

Week 1: What is Afro-Modern Political Thought?

Jan 30: Introduction

Optional: Michael Dawson, *Black Visions: The Roots of Contemporary African-American Political Ideologies* (pp. 1-43)
 Michael Hanchard, “Contours of Black Political Thought: An Introduction and Perspective”
 Charles Mills, *The Racial Contract*

Week 2-6: The Political Thought of Du Bois

Feb 6: Booker T. Washington, “Atlanta Compromise”

W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (pp. 1-67)

Ida B. Wells, “On Booker T. Washington and His Critics”

Feb 13: W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (pp. 99-125, 141-165)

Robert Gooding-Williams, *In the Shadow of Du Bois: Afro-Modern Political Thought in America* (pp. 1-65)

Feb 20: W. E. B. Du Bois, *Darkwater: Voices From Within the Veil* (pp. 1-42, 47-59)

Feb 27: W. E. B. Du Bois, *Darkwater: Voices From Within the Veil* (pp. 70-108)

Lawrie Balfour, *Democracy’s Reconstruction: Thinking Politically with W. E. B. Du Bois* (pp. 97-114)

Mar 6: W. E. B. Du Bois, *Dusk of Dawn* (pp. 173-267)

Adolph L. Reed Jr., *W. E. B. Du Bois and American Political Thought: Fabianism and the Color Line* (pp. 15-26, 71-92)

Optional: Robert Gooding-Williams, “Philosophy of History and Social Critique in the Souls of Black Folk,” *Social Science Information* (1987)

Juliet Hooker, *Theorizing Race in the Americas: Douglass, Sarmiento, Du Bois, and Vasconcelos*

Shamoon Zamir, *Dark Voices: W. E. B. Du Bois and American Thought, 1888-1903*

PART 2: CURRENTS OF AFRO-MODERN POLITICAL THOUGHT IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Week 7-8: Négritude & European Humanism

Mar 13: Léopold Sédar Senghor, *Prose & Poetry* (pp. 96-100, 121-22)*

Aimé Césaire, *A Discourse on Colonialism* (pp. 29-78)*

Edouard Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse* (pp. 166-169)

Mar 20: Spring Break – No Class

Optional: Donna Jones, *The Racial Discourses of Life Philosophy: Négritude, Vitalism, and Modernity*

Gili Kliger, “Humanism and the Ends of Empire, 1945-1960”*

Gary Wilder, *The French Imperial Nation-State: Négritude & Colonial Humanism Between the Two World Wars*

Reiland Rabaka, *The Négritude Movement: W.E.B. Du Bois, Leon Damas, Aimé Césaire, Leopold Senghor, Frantz Fanon, and the Evolution of an Insurgent Idea*

Week 9-10: Pan-Africanism & Anticolonial Nationalism

Mar 26 **Special Class: Robert Gooding-Williams and Fred Moten at 6pm**

Mar 27: Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (pp. 7-14, 210-222)*

Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (pp. 148-205)*

Michael Goebel, “‘The Capital of the Men without a Country’: Migrants and Anticolonialism in Interwar Paris”*

Apr 3: Fifth Pan-African Congress, “The Challenge to Colonial Powers,” “Congress Resolutions”*

First Afro-Asian Conference, “Final Communiqué”*

Kwame Nkrumah, “I Speak of Freedom”*

Kwame Nkrumah, “African Socialism Revisited”*

Kwame Ture, “Pan-Africanism”*

Optional: Evan White, “Kwame Nkrumah: Cold War Modernity, Pan-African Ideology and the Geopolitics of Development”

Michael Goebel, *Anti-Imperial Metropolis: Interwar Paris and the Seeds of Third World Nationalism*

Week 11: Black Communism and Marxism

Apr 10: C. L. R. James, “The Place of the Negro is In the Vanguard”*

C. L. R. James, “The Revolutionary Answer to the Negro Problem in the USA”*

C. L. R. James, “Black Power”*

C. L. R. James, “Every Cook Can Govern”*

Angela Y. Davis, *Women, Race & Class* (pp. 87-98, 222-244)*

Cedric Robinson, *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* (pp. 175-184, 241-286)*

Optional: Cornel West, *Prophesy Deliverance! An Afro-American Revolutionary Christianity*

Robin D. G. Kelley, *Hammer and Hoe: Alabama Communists During the Great Depression*

Week 12: Black Feminist Reformulations and Critiques

Apr 17: Claudia Jones, “An End to the Neglect of the Problems of Negro Women”^{*}
 Claudia Jones, “We Seek Full Equality For Women”^{*}
 Frances Beal, “Double Jeopardy: To Be Black and Female”^{*}
 Combahee River Collective, “Combahee River Collective Statement”^{*}
 Pat Parker, “Revolution: It’s Not Neat or Pretty or Quick”^{*}
 Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, *How We Get Free: Black Feminism and the Combahee River Collective* (pp. 1-14)^{*}

Optional: Cheryl Higashida, *Black Internationalist Feminism: Women Writers of the Black Left, 1945-1995*
 Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*
 Carole Boyce Davies, *Left of Karl Marx: The Political Life of Black Communist Claudia Jones*

PART 3: NEW WORK IN AFRO-MODERN POLITICAL THEORY

Week 13-14: Contemporary Black Political Theory

Apr 24 Adom Getachew, *Worldmaking After Empire: The Rise and Fall of Self-Determination* (pp. 1-9, 37-70, 142-181)

May 1 Lester Spence, “The Neoliberal Turn in Black Politics”^{*}

Optional: Shatema Threadcraft, *Intimate Justice: The Black Female Body and the Body Politic*
 Julius Scott, *The Common Wind: Afro-American Currents in the Age of the Haitian Revolution*
 Achille Mbembe, *Critique of Black Reason*

May 8 **Final Paper Due**