History 125B  
To Make It In America: African American History, 1865 - 2008
Summer 2013  •  M T W Th 10-12  •  TBA

Instructor: Felicia Viator  
Office Hours: Mondays, 12-2p, Office TBA

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Course Description

This course examines African American history from Emancipation to the Obama administration. It is designed not simply to help students consider the experiences of those on the margins, but to encourage them to think critically about how those experiences have shaped broader national developments. We will explore a wide variety of topics, including migration, labor and class, gender, cultural expression, the shaping of political ideologies, rights activism, and changing notions of citizenship. Class materials and assignments will focus, in particular, on the notion of the “American Dream”—its definitions, its limits, its symbolic power, and the manners in which it is pursued—in the context of the African-American experience. To guide us through this and other themes, the class will engage with the works of historians along with an array of primary sources, like memoirs and speeches, court cases and legislation, letters and novels, photographs, film, and music.

I’ve created a course website—www.feliciaviator.com/history125B—with a collection of resources to help you through the session. Feel free to refer to it often.

Required Texts

All required books are available at the Cal bookstore, online, and on 2-hour library reserve.

• Booker T. Washington, Up From Slavery  
• W.E.B. Du Bois, Souls of Black Folk  
• Ida B. Wells, Southern Horrors and Other Writings  
• Chester Himes, If He Hollers Let Him Go  
• Brown v. Board of Ed, Brief History  
• Anne Moody, Coming of Age in Mississippi  
• Deborah Gray White, Too Heavy a Load, Black Women in Defense of Themselves  
• Barack Obama, Dreams From My Father  
• Course Reader (available at Copy Central, 2560 Bancroft Way)

Recommended (but not required) Texts

• Eric Foner, Give Me Liberty!: An American History, Volume 2 (3rd Edition)  
• William Strunk, Jr. and E.B. White, The Elements of Style
Requirements and Grading

Class Participation: 10%
Reading Responses: 15%
Midterm Exam: 20%
Research Essay: 25%
Final Exam: 30%

Class Participation
Regular attendance and active participation is not only critical to ensuring that we have a rich and lively learning environment, but it is also a requirement for the course. Come to class having completed all of the week’s assigned reading. Be prepared to share your perspectives, ask questions, engage in debate, and support and encourage your fellow classmates.

Reading Responses
Each week, you’ll compose a brief response to the selected readings (for a total of 5). In no more than 2 typed pages, you will be asked to examine a central theme, key ideas, and/or the historical context of the texts. Only hard copies are acceptable; no email submissions. More info on reading responses will be offered in the first week of class.

Research Essay
You will write a short research paper in which you closely examine a few historical documents of your choice. Please note that all papers are due in class on June 27. Late papers will be docked ½ a letter grade for each day late, including weekend days. Only hard copies are acceptable; no email submissions. Specifics will be discussed during the first week of class.

Midterm and Final Exam
Both exams will include short identifications and essay questions. Bring at least one green/blue test booklet and a blue or black pen to each exam. Exams are closed-note, and all electronic devices must be stowed and out of sight. The unauthorized use of a cell phone during an exam will result in an automatic zero.

Make-up Exams
You may not take a make-up exam unless you provide a doctor’s note or other official documentation noting an emergency. If you do not contact me within 48 hours of a missed exam, you will not be eligible for a make-up test. Remember, exams are scheduled well in advance, so be sure to check the class schedule and plan accordingly.

Additional Course Policies

Punctuality
We will always begin promptly, so please arrive on time.

Electronic Devices
Turn off all cell phones before class. I prefer you use notebooks for note taking, but if you must use a laptop or an iPad, be sure to turn off WiFi.
Discussion Etiquette
When participating in class discussion, do be courteous and respectful. At times we will venture into topics that may spark heated debate. Diverse perspectives are always encouraged, but when disagreeing, please always strive to be generous and open-minded rather than dismissive.

Plagiarism and Cheating
Cheating and plagiarism include (but are not limited to) presenting someone else’s work as one’s own, failing to properly identify the original sources used in your work, and using unauthorized materials, including cell phones or pre-written notes, during an exam. The penalty for a first offense is an “F” on the assignment/test. A second offense will result in an “F” for the course and/or further University action. For more information on UC Berkeley’s policies on cheating and plagiarism, refer to the Center for Student Conduct:
http://campuslife.berkeley.edu/conduct/integrity.

Students with Disabilities
If you think you will need additional accommodations, I strongly encourage you to contact the Disabled Students’ Program in the César Chávez Student Center #4250 (phone: 510-642-0518; website: dsp.berkeley.edu). You will be responsible for making arrangements with this office for special accommodations for class activities, assignments, or exams.

Extra Help
We will be covering nearly a century and a half in six weeks, so we’ll be moving at break-neck speed. At times, you may find the fast pace of this course to be a bit overwhelming. Get to know your classmates and swap emails. You can exchange notes, share thoughts, tackle questions, and offer one another fresh perspectives to bring to class. You are also encouraged to utilize tutoring services at the Student Learning Center (slc.berkeley.edu). Remember that I, too, am a resource for this course, so I invite you to visit me in office hours. I am also available to answer questions via email, but please always allow 48 hours for a response.

Course Schedule
(Please note: The details of this syllabus are subject to change. You are responsible for noting in-class announcements and checking class-related emails for such changes.)

Week 1: A New Dawn of Freedom
   May 27: No Class; Memorial Day
   May 28: The Civil War and the Emancipation Proclamation
   May 30: “A Splendid Failure”: The Era of Radical Reconstruction

READING:  Booker T. Washington, *Up From Slavery*
          Reader: Emancipation Proclamation; Leon Litwack, *How Free Is Free*
           (selections)
Week 2: Democracy’s Boundaries
   June 3: “Redemption”: Post-Reconstruction and the New South
   June 4: “Crossroad Blues”: Jim Crow, North and South
   June 6: “The Promised Land”: World War I and the Great Migration
READING:  W.E.B. Du Bois, Souls of Black Folk (selections)
          Ida B. Wells, Southern Horrors and Other Writings
          Reader: Du Bois, “Returning Soldiers” (1919); Marcus Garvey on Africa for the
          Africans (1921); Robert Johnson lyrics

Week 3: The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement
   June 10: The “New Negro”: Black Culture and Society in the North
   June 11: A “Raw Deal”?: Race, Economic Crisis, and the New Deal
   June 12: “Double V”: African Americans and World War II
   June 13: MIDTERM EXAM
READING:  Chester Himes, If He Hollers Let Him Go
          Reader: Harlem Renaissance excerpts; Studs Terkel, The Good War (selections)

Week 4: A Second Reconstruction
   June 17: The Early Southern Civil Rights Movement
   June 18: “A Change Is Gonna Come”: A National Civil Rights Movement
   June 19: “Too Little Too Late”: The Emergence of Black Power
   June 20: “Burn Baby Burn”: Unrest, Urban Radicalism, and the Vietnam War
READING:  Brown v. Board of Ed, Brief History
          Anne Moody, Coming of Age in Mississippi
          Reader: “The Southern Manifesto” (1956); Martin Luther King, Jr., “I Have a
          Dream” (1963); John Lewis, original March on Washington speech (1963); Black
          Panther Party, “Ten Point Program”

Week 5: Black America and the New Right
   June 24: The “Silent Majority”: Decline of the CRM and the Rise of the New Right
   June 25: “Keys to the Kingdom”: Black Political and Economic Gains; FILM
   June 27: Redefining “Black”: Ethnicities, Feminists, and LGBTQs; FINAL PAPER DUE
READING:  Deborah Gray White, Too Heavy a Load, Black Women in Defense of Themselves
          Reader: N.W.A. lyrics; [more]

Week 6: African Americans and the New Century
   July 1: The “New Jim Crow”: Hurricane Katrina and the Black Poor
   July 3: Last Day of Class; FINAL EXAM
READING:  Barack Obama, Dreams From My Father
          Reader: Ta-Nehisi Coates, “Fear of a Black President” (2012)