

Philosophy 274

African American Political Philosophy

Spring 2012

Tuesday/Thursday 9.30-10.45 Caldwell 103.

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919-962-3328 Office Hrs Tue/Thur 3.30-4.30.

Required Texts:

Martin R. Delany: *The Condition, Elevation, Emigration and Destiny of the Colored People of the United States*, and *Official Report of the Niger Valley Exploring Party*. Edited by Toyin Falola.

Frederick Douglass: *Selected Speeches and Writings*. Edited by Philip S. Foner and Yuval Taylor.

W.E.B. DuBois: *Writings*. Edited by Nathan Huggins.

These texts will be supplemented by further readings easily available on internet.

Class Requirements:

Two essays five pages each; a final; regular class attendance and participation.

Your final grade will depend on how you do in all three categories. Each paper will be 25% of your grade.

The final will be 40%. Class attendance and participation 10%.

Purpose of the class:

To examine how three representatives of the African American people responded philosophically to slavery and racism.

Schedule of Readings and Assignments.

January 12 : Thomas Jefferson. *The Declaration of Independence*. (Jefferson's original draft and congressional amendments.) *Notes on the State of Virginia*. Queries XIV; XVIII; XIX.

Insofar as these writings reflect white American attitudes they present our authors with opportunities and obstacles.

Delany: January 17- January 31.

Paper on Delany is due February 7.

From *The Condition, Elevation, Emigration and Destiny of the Colored People of the United States*, and *Official Report of the Niger Valley Exploring Party*.

The Condition, Elevation, Emigration and Destiny of the Colored People of the United States, 35-226.

Official Report of the Niger Valley Exploring Party, 229-395.

Douglass February 2-March 20.

Paper on Douglass due March 29.

From *Selected Speeches and Writings*.

General overview of Douglass as Garrisonian abolitionist, and as abolitionist after his break with Garrison: Introduction: xi-xv. The Anti-Slavery Movement 311. Roughly the break coincides with Douglass's return from England and his editing the abolitionist paper *The North Star* (with Delany), but it seems to have begun earlier and was completed only some years later.

Three main issues leading to the break:

Prejudice among the Garrisonian abolitionists: reread especially Introduction xii, xiii. The Anti-Slavery movement especially page 311; to Sumner 332; The Do Nothing Policy 343 especially.

Dispute over the Constitution: The Constitution and Slavery 127; The Constitution and Slavery 129; To Gerrit Smith 137; To Gerrit Smith 171; Change of Opinion 173; To Gerrit Smith 174; The True Ground 333; Dred Scott 344; The Constitution 381.

Dispute over Moral suasion and violent resistance:

Moral Suasion: The Folly of Our Opponents 8; My Slave Experience in Maryland 10; To Garrison 14; To Horace Greely; An Appeal to the British People 30; To Henry Wright 49; Farewell Speech to the British People 54; The Right to Criticize American Institutions 75; To Henry Clay 91; To Thomas Auld 111; To Thomas Auld 143; Lecture on Slavery 163; Meaning of the 4th of July 188; Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin.

Resistance: A letter to the slaves 158; Freedom's Battle at Christiana 179; The Heroic Slave 219; Terror to Kidnappers 271; Is it Right and Wise to Kill a Kidnapper? 277; Do Nothing 342; Peaceful Annihilation of Slavery is Hopeless 344; West India Emancipation 358; to Redpath 396; The Prospect in the Future 398; Speech on John Brown 417; Why Should a Colored Man enlist? 528; John Brown 633; I Denounce the So Called Emancipation 712.

Other issues: *Racial Inferiority*: Claims of the Negro 282.

Prejudice: Prejudice 99; Colorphobia 141; Future of the Negro People 474; To Powell 608; the Color Line 648.

Colonization. Colonization 125; The Destiny of Colored Americans 148; to Horace Greely 185; Horace Greely on Colonization 187; the President and his speeches 510.

Law and mores After Abolition: A day for poetry and song 523; Seeming and Real 606; Address to the People of the United States 669. Civil Rights Cases 685.

Community and Collective Action. Address to the Colored People 117; Harriet Beecher Stowe 213; Douglass Institute 580; to Gerrit Smith 614.

Justice and Benevolence. What shall be done with the slaves if emancipated 470; Future of the Negro People. 474.

Women's rights. The Rights of Women 101; To Josephine Sophie White Griffing 598; The Women's Suffrage Movement 706.

On Lincoln. Oration in memory of Abraham Lincoln. 616.

DuBois March 22-April 24.

Of Mr. Booker T. Washington and Others. 392. Note especially: DuBois's analysis of the history of black resistance and his attempt to replace Washington with himself as Douglass's heir; his criticism of Washington's focus on economic advance; his insistence on the need for a liberally educated elite.

Of the Wings of Atalanta 415; Of the Training of Black Men 424; Of the Sons of Masters and Men 475; Careers Open to College Bred Negroes 827; and The Talented Tenth 842; all stress the importance of liberal education for a part of the black population and the importance of the leadership of that talented part. This is the basis for DuBois's well known elitism and his endorsement of an aristocracy. Note that the aristocracy he endorses is one of talent and education, not wealth.

The Conservation of Races 815. Race and elitism.

Of Alexander Crummell 512; and Of the Coming of John 521; these argue that even elitism of talent will fail if the elite do not identify with those that they lead.

The Sorrow Songs 536; this suggests that DuBois is a leader who does identify with those he would lead.

Of Our Spiritual Strivings 363; and The Souls of White Folk 923; these present DuBois's famous idea of double consciousness.

The Plot 555 (Chapter 1 of *Dusk of Dawn*); Concept of Race 625 (Chapter 5 of *Dusk of Dawn*); The White World 652 (Chapter 6 of *Dusk of Dawn*); The Colored World Within (Chapter 7 of *Dusk of Dawn*) 681; The Negro College 1010; On Being ashamed of oneself 1020; The Revelation of St. Orgne the Damned 1048 may indicate a possible rethinking of his earlier views.

The Negro in Literature and Art 862; and Criteria of Negro Art 993; present DuBois's views on art. Compare these to the views expressed in the earlier *The Sorrow Songs*.

Final

