

PHIL 55 Fall
Class Meetings:
Office Hours:

African American Political Thought

Bernard Boxill

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Required Texts

African American Political Thought edited by Howard Brotz (Brotz)

The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass, by Frederick Douglass

The Souls of Black Folk by WEB DuBois

David Walker's Appeal, and Garnet's Address by David Walker and Henry H. Garnet.

The New Negro edited by Alain Locke

Course Pack at UNC Bookstore

Course Requirements

Regular Attendance and participation in class

Midterm Exam 25%

One Paper 5-7 pages: 25%

Final Exam (Comprehensive) 50%

Objectives

To introduce students to some of the moral issues in the enslavement, oppression, and elevation of blacks in the U.S. through a study of African American political writers like Martin Delany, Alexander Crummell, Frederick Douglass, Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. DuBois and others. For example: Why exactly is slavery wrong? What is meant by the claim that human beings are morally equal? What are natural rights? What is oppression and why it is wrong? Is it a moral duty to protest one's wrongs? What is the ethical significance of race? What is racism, and is it always wrong? What is moral suasion? Is Black Nationalism a moral duty or a moral option? Does the black middle class have special obligations to the black lower classes? Do black artists and intellectuals have special obligations to the black population? Does the nation owe reparations to black Americans? Is Affirmative Action morally justifiable? Is racial segregation always wrong? What is self-respect and why is it so important?

Assigned Readings

Week 1 : ***The American Mind***. Jefferson Declaration of Independence. Selections From Notes on the State of Virginia Course Pack.

Week 2: ***Early Reactions***. David Walker Appeal and Henry Highland Garnet's Address.

Weeks 3& 4: ***Separatism and Nationalism***.

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

Alexander Crummell: From Brotz: The Relations and Duties of Free Colored Men in America to Africa; The Race Problem in America.

Mid term

Weeks 5,6,7,8,9: ***Assimilation***.

Frederick Douglass. Human Nature and Slavery. From Life and Times Chapters 1-20. "An Appeal to the British People," "Lecture on Slavery," from Course Pack. "The Nature of Slavery," from Brotz.

Frederick Douglass. Human Equality. "The Claims of the Negro Ethnologically Considered" from Brotz.

Frederick Douglass. Moral Suasion. "Is it Wise and Right To Kill a Kidnapper?" "Speech on John Brown," from Course Pack. From Life and Times Chapters 24-31.

Frederick Douglass. The US Constitution. "Speech on the Dred Scott Decision," from Brotz. "The Constitution of the United States: Is it Pro-Slavery or Anti-Slavery?" from Course Pack. "The Civil Rights Cases," from Brotz.

Frederick Douglass. Against Emigrationism. From Brotz: African Civilization Society. The Folly of Colonization.

Frederick Douglass. Progress and Assimilation. From Brotz. Letter to Harriet Beecher Stowe; The Present and Future of the Colored Race in America; What the Black Man Wants; The Future of the Negro; The Future of the Colored Race; The Nations Problem. From Life and Times Chapters 32-40.

Papers Due

Weeks 10,11,: **Booker T. Washington and WEB DuBois.**
Washington. From Brotz: Atlanta Exposition Address; Letter to the Louisiana State Constitutional Convention; On Making Our Race Life Count in the Life of the Nation; The Fruits of Industrial Education; The American Negro and His Economic Value. The Intellectuals and the Boston Mob.
W.E.B. DuBois: From Brotz: Of Mr. Booker T. Washington and Others. The Conservation of Races .The Talented Tenth. The Souls of Black Folk.

Week 12: **The Harlem Renaissance.**
Alain Locke The New Negro

Weeks 13-15 **Contemporary Discussions**
From Course Pack. Martin Luther King "Letter From Birmingham City Jail," Laurence Thomas "Rawlsian Self-Respect and the Black Consciousness Movement," Bernard Boxill, "Self-Respect and Protest," Patricia Collins "The Social Construction of Black Feminist Thought," bell hooks, "Shaping Feminist Theory," Kimberly Crenshaw "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex." Bernard Boxill "A Lockean Argument for Black Reparations."

FINAL EXAM: BRING TWO BLUE BOOKS
