

AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNICATION

CSS 4354 and PSC 4340

Spring 2011

T/R 9:30-10:45

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Office Hours: T/R 12:30-2:00;
W: 2:00-5:00 and by appt.

Course Description: This course is a survey of the place of African American rhetoric in American political life, from the Founding period to the present. We will be looking for important themes that recur in the rhetoric, topics that are of abiding concern, argumentative strategies employed, stylistic markers, other indicators of the literature of a people, and their political significance. Speeches can be studied both as a kind of rhetorical literature—spoken rather than written, prose rather than poetry, factual rather than fictive—and as a kind of rhetorical history, significant landmarks of responses to particular political developments. We will be interested in the various ways in which African Americans have tried to cope rhetorically with the political circumstances they have faced, including slavery, prejudice, discrimination, laws, mores, habits, beliefs, and cultural differences. We will also examine the role that faith has played in the lives and rhetorical responses of many of these African American public leaders, including orators, statesmen, lawyers, teachers, ministers, and businesspeople. How has faith affected their rhetoric and what place does it have in the politics of a liberal polity?

Required Texts: Juan Williams and Quinton Dixie, *This Far by Faith: Stories from the African American Religious Experience* (New York: William Morrow, 2003)

Philip S. Foner and Robert James Branham, eds., *Lift Every Voice: African American Oratory, 1787-1900* (University of Alabama Press, 1998)

Davis W. Houck and David E. Dixon, eds., *Rhetoric, Religion, and the Civil Rights Movement, 1954-1965* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2006)

Course Evaluation: If you are an undergraduate, the course evaluation will be as follows:

Attendance and Classroom Participation:	10%
Oratorical Biography Paper	30%

Article Report:	20%
Mid-Term Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%

If you are a graduate student, the course evaluation will be as follows:

Attendance and Classroom Participation	10%
Two Article Reports	20%
Research Bibliography	20%
Research Paper	30%
Book Review	20%

Attendance and Participation: Much of this course will involve discussion of speeches and other documents. It is imperative that you complete each day's readings and come to class prepared to discuss them. Plan to participate in each day's class discussion. I will keep detailed notes each day concerning classroom attendance and participation.

Oratorical Biography Paper: This is a 6-9 page paper in which you discuss the oratorical career of a particular African American orator. It may be any person from any time period as long as that person had a notable career as a speaker. He or she could be a minister, a politician, a statesman, an educator, a lawyer, or any other profession in which speaking was a central part of the job. The paper should outline the person's career, talk about their important speeches, the themes they regularly developed, the kind of style they used, the audiences they reached, and anything else that was unique about their speaking. **Due April 19.**

Book Review: If you are a graduate student, you should select a book from the list below and write a 5-7 page review of it. I will provide an example of what an academic book review looks like and what it should accomplish. All reviews should be typed, double-spaced, with one inch margins all around. **Due March 29.**

Books For Review:

Jacqueline Bacon, *The Humblest May Stand Forth: Rhetoric, Empowerment, and Abolition* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2002)

Celeste Condit and John Louis Lucaites, *Crafting Equality: America's Anglo-African Word* (Chicago, 1993)

Suzanne Pullon Fitch and Roseann M. Mandziuk, *Sojourner Truth as Orator: Wit, Story, and Song* (Westport: Greenwood, 1997)

Gregory A. Lampe, *Frederick Douglass: Freedom's Voice, 1818-1845* (Michigan State, 1998)

Richard Lischer, *The Preacher King: Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Word that Moved America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995)

Dwight McBride, *Impossible Witnesses: Truth, Abolitionism, and Slave Testimony* (New York UP, 2001)

William McFeely, *Frederick Douglass* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1991)

Keith D. Miller, *Voice of Deliverance: The language of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Its Sources* (New York: Free Press, 1992)

Adolph L. Reed, Jr., *W.E.B. Du Bois and American Political Thought: Fabianism and the Color Line* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997)

Gary S. Selby, *Martin Luther King and the Rhetoric of Freedom: the Exodus Narrative in America's Struggle for Civil Rights* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2008)

Robert E. Terrill, *Malcolm X: Invention and Radical Judgment* (Michigan State, 2004)

Henry Wienczek, *An Imperfect God: George Washington, His Slaves, and the Creation of America* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003)

William Wiethoff, *The Insolent Slave* (South Carolina, 2003)

Kirt H. Wilson, *The Reconstruction Desegregation Debate: The Politics of Equality and the Rhetoric of Place, 1870-1875* (Michigan State, 2002)

Article Reports:

Starting the third week of class, we will have one or two article reports each week on a significant piece of communication scholarship that is directly related to the topic for the week. Each report should be a one-page, typed outline that is duplicated for distribution to the class. Each person will have 10 minutes to report orally, followed by 5 minutes of Q and A. Graduate students will do two article reports.

Research Bibliography:

This is a comprehensive bibliography in which graduate students try to find all the extant pieces of rhetoric--written or oral--from one of the following African American leaders.

Alexander Crummell
Henry Highland Garnet
Maria W. Stewart
Henry McNeal Turner
Booker T. Washington
W. E. B. Du Bois
A. Philip Randolph
Whitney Young
Mary McLeod Bethune
Thurgood Marshall
James Farmer

I suggest that you begin by making an inventory of everything the person has written—speeches, sermons, tracts, pamphlets, etc. Then find out where this material is located and order it through interlibrary loan. Once a copy is in your possession, read it and add it to the bibliography. I am especially interested in your ability to find and catalogue as many speeches and/or sermons as possible. The more the better. **Due April 12.**

Mid-Term Exam

This will be a blue book examine over the speeches we have read in the first part of the course. All undergraduates must take this exam. **Thursday, March 3.**

Final Exam

Thursday, May 5, 2:00-4:00. Bluebooks will be provided.

Research Paper

All graduate students must turn in a research paper of 20-30 pages, typed and double-spaced. This paper should grow out of the research bibliography and should make a significant argument about the rhetoric of the person under study. All topics must be cleared with me. **Due, May 5.**

Syllabus

Week 1: Tuesday, January 11: Introduction to Course

Thursday, January 13: Slavery in North America

READ: *This Far by Faith* (TFBF), pp. 1-41.

George W. Bush, "Speech at Goree Island, Senegal, July 8, 2003," online

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/07/20030708-1.html>

Week 2: Tuesday, January 18: Barack Obama as an African American Orator

READ: Barack Obama, "Announcement Speech, Springfield, Illinois, February 10, 2007," online at

<http://washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/02/10/AR2007021000879.html>

Barack Obama, "A More Perfect Union, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, March 18, 2008," online at

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2008/03/18/obama-race-speech-read-th_n_92077.html

Barack Obama, "Victory Speech, Chicago, Illinois, November 4, 2008," online at

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2008/11/04/obama-victory-speech_n_141194.html

Thursday, January 20: President Obama's Inaugural Ceremony and Address

READ: Barack Obama, "Inaugural Address."
Rev. Rick Warren, "Prayer of Invocation."
Rev. Joseph Lowery, "Prayer of Benediction." All online—use Google search.

Week 3: Tuesday, January 25: African Americans and the American Revolution
The Slavery Debate in the Constitutional Convention

READ: *Lift Every Voice* (LEV), pp. 1-19.

Thursday, January 27: Free Men in an Un-Free Land, 1787-1799

READ: LEV, pp. 20-58.

Week 4: Tuesday, February 1: Free Men in an Un-Free Land, 1800-1827

READ: LEV, pp. 59-79; 104-109.

TFBF, pp. 43-73

Thursday, February 3: Seeds of Protest, 1828-1833

READ: LEV, pp. 110-130; 135-143.

Week 5: Tuesday, February 8: Organizing Protest, 1833-1841

READ: LEV, pp. 154-165; 168-177.

Thursday, February 10: African American Abolitionists

READ: LEV, pp. 189-217.

Week 6: Tuesday, February 15: Early Frederick Douglass, 1841-1860

READ: LEV, pp. 246-268; 308-312; 354-357.

Thursday, February 17: Later Frederick Douglass, 1861-1888

READ: LEV, pp. 567-577; 687-707.

Week 7: Tuesday, February 22: Sojourner Truth

READ: LEV, pp. 226-229; 269-271; 463-467; 503-506.

TFBF, pp. 75-99.

Thursday, February 24: The Building Storm, 1850-1860

READ: LEV, pp. 220-226; 273-287; 313-321

Week 8: Tuesday, March 1: Civil War, 1861-1865

READ: LEV, pp. 340-354; 357-377; 392-397; 407-410; 426-428

Thursday, March 3: **MID-TERM EXAM**

Week 9: **SPRING BREAK: March 5-13**

Week 10: Tuesday, March 15: Reconstruction, 1865-1877

		READ: LEV, pp. 432-445; 460-462; 467-472; 536-549.
	Thursday, March 17:	Reconstruction Statesmen, 1871-1880
		READ: LEV, pp. 506-511; 520-536; 549-563.
Week 11:	Tuesday, March 22:	Post-Reconstruction & Radical Reform, 1884-1889
		READ: LEV, pp. 623-633; 640-645; 665-660; 676-680; 708-713
		TFBF, pp. 101-123.
	Thursday, March 24:	Education & Self-Improvement, 1890-1895
		READ: LEV, pp. 745-760; 775-790; 800-805.
		TFBF, pp. 125-147.
Week 12:	Tuesday, March 29:	Emerging Radicalization, 1896-1900
		READ: LEV, pp. 805-815; 840-857.
		TFBF, pp. 149-169.
	Thursday, March 31:	The Rhetoric of White Racism, 1900-1945
		READ: LEV, pp. 868-885; 905-908.
		TFBF, pp. 171-197.
Week 13:	Tuesday, April 5:	The Crucial Decade, 1945-1955

- READ:** TFBF, pp. 199-229.
RRCRM, pp. 19-31; 49-64
- Thursday, April 7: The System Challenged: Montgomery 1955
- READ:** RRCRM, 99-107; 131-145;
216-224
- Week 14: Tuesday, April 12: “Fighting Back, 1957-1962”
- READ:** RRCRM, 356-362; 368-377;
430-436
- Thursday, April 14: **Diadeloso—No Class Today**
- Week 15: Tuesday, April 19: The Movement Hits Full Stride, 1963
- READ:** RRCRM, 533-543; 584-587;
631-637
- Tuesday, April 21: King’s “Letter” and “Dream”
- READ:** “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” at www.americanrhetoric.com. Go to “A” and click on “Afro-American Almanac.” Then find MLK’s “Letter from Birmingham Jail” and click on it.
- Week 16: Tuesday, April 26: The Rhetoric of Black Nationalism: Malcolm X
- READ:** “The Ballot or the Bullet”
“Message to the Grassroots”

“Address at UC Berkeley”
All on www.americanrhetoric.com. Look
under the letter “M” on the main menu.

TFBF, pp. 255-299.

Thursday, April 28: The Rhetoric of Black Empowerment, 1970-
1996

Jesse Jackson, “The Rainbow Coalition, July
18, San Francisco, California,” online at
<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/jessejackson1984.dnc.htm>

Jesse Jackson, “Save the Dream March on
the Capital,” Sacramento, California,
October 27, 1997,” online at
<http://www.inmotionmagazine.com/jjsave.html>

Minister Louis Farrakhan, “Speech at the
Million Man March, Washington, D.C.,
online at
<http://www-cgi.cnn.com/US/9510/megamarch/10-16/transcript/>

May 5: **Graduate Research Papers Due Today**

May 5: **Final Exam: 2:00-4:00**

Articles for Oral Reports:

All of these articles can be found in one of two electronic databases—“Communication and Mass Media Complete” or “Project Muse.” If you have difficulty finding your article, please let me know *before* the day of your presentation.

Week 3: Angela G. Ray, “In My Own Handwriting”: Benjamin Banneker
Addresses the Slaveholder of Monticello,” *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 1
(1998): 387-406.

Week 4: Stephen Howard Browne, "This Unparalleled and Inhuman Massacre": The Gothic, the Sacred, and the Meaning of Nat Turner," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 3 (2000): 309-331.

Week 4: Jacqueline Bacon, "'God and a Woman': Women Abolitionists, Biblical Authority, and Social Activism," *Journal of Communication and Religion* 22 (1999): 1-39.

Week 5: Jennifer Rose Mercieca, "The Culture of Honor: How Slaveholders Responded to the Abolitionist Mail Crisis of 1835," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 10 (2007): 51-76.

Week 5: James Jasinski, "Constituting Antebellum African American Identity: Resistance, Violence, and Masculinity in Henry Highland Garnet's (1843) 'Address to the Slaves,'" *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 93 (2007): 27-57.

Week 6: Gary S. Selby, "Mocking the Sacred: Frederick Douglass's 'Slaveholders Sermon' and the Antebellum Debate over Religion and Slavery," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 88 (2002): 326-341.

Week 6: Angela G. Ray, "Frederick Douglass on the Lyceum Circuit: Social Assimilation, Social Transformation?" *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 5 (2002): 625-648.

Week 7: Roseann M. Mandziuk, "Commemorating Sojourner Truth: Negotiating the Politics of Race and Gender in the Spaces of Public Memory," *Western Journal of Communication* 67 (2003): 271-291.

Week 8: Kirt H. Wilson, "The Paradox of Lincoln's Rhetorical Leadership," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 3 (2000): 15-32.

Week 10: Kirt H. Wilson, "The Contested Space of Prudence in the 1874-1875 Civil Rights Debate," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 84 (1998): 131-149.

Week 10: Kirt H. Wilson, "The Racial Politics of Imitation in the Nineteenth Century," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 89 (2003): 89-108.

Week 11: Richard W. Leeman, "Speaking as Jeremiah: Henry McNeal Turner's 'I Claim the Rights of a Man,'" *Howard Journal of Communications* 17 (2006): 223-243.

Week 11: Andrew A. King, "Booker T. Washington and the Myth of Heroic Materialism," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 60 (1974): 323-327.

Week 12: Eric King Watts, "Cultivating a Black Public Voice: W.E.B. Du Bois and the 'Criteria of Negro Art'," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 4 (2001): 181-202.

Week 12: Aric Putnam, "Ethiopia Is Now: J. A. Rogers and the Rhetoric of Black Anticolonialism during the Great Depression," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 10 (2007): 419-444.

Week 13: Kirt H. Wilson, "Interpreting the Discursive Field of the Montgomery Bus Boycott: Martin Luther King Jr.'s Holt Street Address," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 8 (2005): 299-326.

Week 13: Christine Harold and Kevin Michael DeLuca, "Behold the Corpse: Violent Images and the Case of Emmett Till," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 8 (2005): 263-286.

Week 14: John M. Murphy, "Domesticating Dissent: The Kennedys and the Freedom Rides," *Communication Monographs* 59 (1992): 61-78.

Week 14: Davi Johnson, "Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birmingham Campaign as Image Event," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 10 (2007): 1-26.

Week 15: Edward Berry, "Doing Time: King's 'Letter from Birmingham Jail,'" *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 8 (2005): 109-131.

Week 15: Mark Vail, "The 'Integrative' Rhetoric of Martin Luther King Jr.'s 'I Have a Dream' Speech," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 9 (2006): 51-78.

Week 16: Robert E. Terrill, "Colonizing the Borderlands: Shifting Circumference in the Rhetoric of Malcolm X," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 86 (2000): 67-85.

Week 16: Mark Lawrence McPhail, "Passionate Intensity: Louis Farrakhan and the Fallacies of Racial Reasoning," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 84 (1998): 416-429.
