

African Diaspora in the Americas

M/W/F 12:50-1:40/Flint 0111

Fall, 2022, AMH 3670 (DRAFT)

Professor Paul Ortiz

Department of History, University of Florida

831-334-0131/portiz@ufl.edu

Keene-Flint 111

*His creed was one of memory, how remembering—though sometimes painful—
can make you strong.*

--Edwidge Danticat, *The Farming of Bones*

Course Description: This course explores freedom movements against slavery, colonialism and oppression in the African Diaspora from the 18th century to present with a special emphasis placed on the development of democratic ideologies among African-descent peoples in the Americas and their connections to broader revolutionary struggles in the Latin America, the Caribbean, the US, Asia and Europe.

Course Objectives/Student Learning Outcomes: We will study anti-slavery, anti-colonial, and revolutionary movements in the African Diaspora from the 18th century to the present, with a focus on the Americas. We will explore connections that people and groups made between movements for black emancipation in the Americas with African freedom struggles and post-colonialism. Using oral testimonies, novels, music, poetry, film, and other types of media, we will explore the creative reconfiguration of Black identities, politics, and cultures in a dynamic and diverse Diaspora.

Students will also gain an enhanced understanding of the diversity of the African Diaspora as well as connections between peoples of the Diaspora with major events of the past three centuries including the development of slavery in Latin America and the Caribbean, the 18th century transatlantic revolutions, the world wars, genocide, and anti-colonial movements among other major topics. “Traditional” American History topics such as the U.S. Civil War and the Civil Rights Movement will be studied in tandem with similar topics abroad. We will also delve into Francophone and Anglophone literatures of the Caribbean and Africa to explore topics such as interethnic relations, cultural differences, and the collective experiences of slavery and abolition. Students will gain a clearer understanding of the emergence and destruction of transatlantic slavery as well as a greater knowledge of the contested development of theories and practices of emancipation and equality in the modern world.

Office Hours Monday and Wednesday, 2:00 to 3:00 at 241 Pugh Hall, Samuel Proctor Oral History Program and/or via Zoom. I am available to meet outside of these times by appointment. My cell phone is 831-334-0131.

Attendance Policy: You are permitted two unexcused two absences without penalty but on the third and each subsequent absence, your final grade for the course will be reduced by a third of a letter grade (i.e., from an A to an A- to a B+, etc.). A medical certificate is needed to excuse absences. If you miss class you are responsible for getting notes and/or assignment instructions from one of your peers or instructor during regular office hours. Here is a [link](#) to general UF attendance policies.

Academic Honesty: UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of integrity by abiding by the [Honor Code](#).”

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: Students requesting classroom accommodations should register with the [Disability Resource Center](#) (352-392-8565). Students will then receive an accommodation letter to present to the instructor when requesting accommodation as early as possible in the semester.

Counseling and Mental Health Resources: Students facing difficulties completing the course or who are in need of counseling or urgent help should call the on-campus [Counseling and Wellness Center](#) (352-392-1575);

Current UF Grading Policy: Review current UF Grading policy [here](#).

Canvas Site: Check our Canvas site regularly for course updates, reading assignments, essay prompts and study guides for papers & exams.

Online Course Evaluations: Your candid feedback on the quality of instruction in this course is greatly appreciated and integral to improving the structure and delivery of this course. Please be on the lookout for an email from [GatorEvals](#) for opportunities to provide course evaluation.

COURSE FORMAT

Synthesis Essays: You will write 3 synthesis essays that synthesize, compare, and contrast readings across weeks. The synthesis essays will each be 4-5 pages in length. The final synthesis essay will focus on Earl Lovelace’s novel *Salt* and will analyze the book using the major themes of the course. Each essay will be a comparative analysis of peoples and ideas in the Diaspora.

Comparative Slavery Study: The class will compile a booklet focusing on comparative slavery and resistance in the French, Spanish, and Portuguese empires. The booklet will be published via social media by the Samuel Proctor Oral History Program and submitted for consideration for UF’s Anti-Racism [website](#).

Mid-Term Exam: Will be a 4-5 page take-home essay on Aimé Césaire, [Discourse on Colonialism](#)

Class Participation: Participation in discussion seminars is an important element of the course because it is a place where significant learning occurs. Discussions will be run as research seminars. Your participation grade will be based on your engagement during discussion seminars, attendance, and a class presentation.

Leading Discussion In general, Fridays will be reserved for group discussions. Each student will lead at least one discussion in tandem with a 2 or 3 student team.

Grading: Synthesis essays 50%; Mid-term exam, 20%; Comparative Slavery Study 10%; Leading Class discussion, 10%; Class participation 10%. Here is a [link](#) to UF grading policies.

Required Texts: Earl Lovelace, Salt: A Novel; Caryl Phillips, Cambridge; C.L.R. James, The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution; Edwidge Danticat, The Farming of Bones; Paul Ortiz, An African American and Latinx History of the United States; Aimé Césaire, Discourse on Colonialism; Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth. All books are accessible at Library West course reserves.

Syllabus and Reading List

PART I: STRUGGLES AGAINST SLAVERY

WEEK OF AUGUST 24: BLACK HISTORY'S GLOBAL VISION

Wednesday: *Syllabus Review*;

Listen, Interact: Malcolm's X's Final [Speech](#), February 14, 1965

Friday: Photographic Essay: *A New Emancipation Day in Trinidad, 2009*

Earl Lovelace, Salt (read the opening page on the slave rebellion in Trinidad).

Robin D.G. Kelley, "'But a Local Phase of a World Problem': Black History's Global Vision, 1883-1950," Journal of American History, 86, 1045-1079. (CA=Canvas)

Niara Sudarkasa, "The 'Status of Women' In Indigenous African Societies," *Feminist Studies*, Vol. 12, (Spring 1986), 91-103. CA

Johan Huizinga, *Terror & Social Violence in European Culture in the High Middle Ages* (CA)

WEEK OF AUGUST 29, SLAVERY AND THE EMERGENCE OF CAPITALISM

Monday: Presentation: *The Haitian Revolution, the Mexican War of Independence and African Freedom Struggles in the Americas*

Wednesday: *Reading Discussion:* Paul Ortiz, *An African American and Latinx History of the United States* (author's note, introduction, chapters 1-2)

P. Sterling Stuckey, "Reflections on the Scholarship of African Origins and Influence in American Slavery," The Journal of African American History (Fall 2006), 425-443. CA

Reading discussion: C.L.R. James, The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution, preface, 1-61.

Malcolm X, "[On Afro American History](#),"

In Pictures: *Picasso and Africa*

Friday: *First Class Discussion*

WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 5: GENDER AND THE AFRICAN DIASPORA

Monday: *(Labor Day! No class.)*

Wednesday: C.L.R. James, The Black Jacobins, 62-117.

[The Story of the Fearless Women Warriors of Dahomey](#), The Guardian (2020)

[Dahomey's Women Warriors](#), Smithsonian Magazine (2011)

Reading discussion: M. Bahati Kuumba, "African Feminisms in Exile: Diasporan, Transnational and Transgressive," CA

Edward Baptist, "Cuffy," "Fancy Maids," and "One-Eyed Men": Rape, Commodification, and the Domestic Slave Trade in the United States," The American Historical Review (2001) CA

Michael Tadman, "The Demographic Cost of Sugar: Debates on Slave Societies and Natural Increase in the Americas," The American Historical Review (2000) CA

Friday: *Class Discussion*

WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 12: Comparative Slavery & Cultures of Resistance

Monday *Reading discussion:* C.L.R. James, The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution (117-223)

GROUPS SELF-ORGANIZE FOR COMPARATIVE SLAVERY PRESENTATIONS ON 9/21

Wednesday: Rehearse Friday group presentations on Comparative Slavery

Friday: *(Class Divides up in three groups, prepares group oral and individual 2-page reports on Spanish Colonial Florida or French Colonial Louisiana or Portuguese Brazil including basic enslaved African cultures,, economic base of each colony, global political rivalries, and slave resistance. Compare and contrast. Bring extra copies for dissemination, please!*

Each Student Chooses **TWO** of the following readings: 1) Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, Africans in Colonial Louisiana: The Development of Afro-Creole Culture in the Eighteenth Century 201-236. CA

2) Jane Landers, "Gracia de Santa Teresa de Mose: A Free Black Town in Spanish Colonial Florida," American Historical Review, (February 1990), 9-30. CA.

3) Michael A. Gomez, "Brazilian Sambahas," in Black Crescent: The Experience and Legacy of African Muslims in the Americas, 91-127. CA

GROUP I: **French Louisiana**; GROUP II: **Brazil**; GROUP III: **Spanish Florida**

WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 19: THE HAITIAN REVOLUTION

Monday Reading discussion: C.L.R. James, *The Black Jacobins* (From *Toussaint Seizes the Power to the War of Independence*)

Wednesday 10-minute *Group Presentations on Comparative Slavery and Cultures*

Friday: *Class Discussion*

WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 26: LITERATURE & LIBERATION

Monday: September 26, Synthesis Essay on the Haitian Revolution Due, 8pm

Monday: Reading discussion: Caryl Phillips, Cambridge

Wednesday Reading discussion: Caryl Phillips, Cambridge

Friday: Class discussion: Caryl Phillips, Cambridge

Derek Walcott, "The Antilles: Fragments of Epic Memory," *The Nobel Prize in Literature Acceptance Speech*, 1992. Speech [link](#).

PART II: UNDERSTANDING GENOCIDE IN THE MODERN WORLD

WEEK OF OCTOBER 3: EUROPE, COLONIALISM & GENOCIDE

Turn in 2-pagers for Comparative Slavery Booklet this week

Monday: Reading Discussion: complete Cambridge

Film: "Aimé Césaire: Une Voix pour L'histoire (A Voice for History)"

Wednesday: Class Discussion, : Aimé Césaire, Discourse on Colonialism, (Introduction); 31-78

W.E.B. Du Bois, "[The African Roots of War](#)," Atlantic Monthly, 115 (May 1915), 707-14. (CA)

Hannah Arendt, *Origins of Totalitarianism*, "Race and Bureaucracy" chapter (CA)

Friday: UF Homecoming

WEEK OF OCTOBER 10: DISCOURSES ON COLONIALISM

Monday: Reading Discussion, Aimé Césaire, Discourse on Colonialism (Finish book)

Wednesday: Reading discussion, Paul Ortiz, *An African American and Latinx History*, Chaps. 3-5

Take Home Exam Distributed, End of Class (on Discourse on Colonialism)

Take Home Exam Due Friday, October 21, 8 pm, 241 Pugh Hall
African Diaspora Seminar: 5

Friday: Class Discussion

WEEK OF OCTOBER 17: WORLD WARS & AFTERMATH

Monday: Reading Discussion: Discourse on Colonialism, concluded

Robeson Taj Frazier, The East is Black: Cold War China in the Black Radical Imagination, 117-158

Paul Ortiz, An African American and Latinx History of the United States (Chapter 7)

Wednesday Reading discussion:

Reading discussion: C.L.R. James, “Black Studies and the Contemporary Student,” in The C.L.R. James Reader, CA)

Friday: Class Discussion

(Take-Home Exam Due, 9 pm, 241 Pugh Hall)

PART III: WARS OF LIBERATION

WEEK OF OCTOBER 24: THE PROBLEM OF VIOLENCE & ANTI-COLONIALISM

Monday Reading Discussion, Frantz Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, 1-96.

Patrice Lumumba, Speech at the Ceremony of the Proclamation of the Congo’s Independence, June 30, 1960.

Caroline Elkins, Listening to the Voices from Kenya’s Colonial Past The Guardian, 2013

Marc Parry, “Uncovering the Brutal Truth About the British Empire,” The Guardian, 2016

Film: Frantz Fanon, “Black Skin, White Mask”

Wednesday Reading Discussion: Frantz Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, “The Trials and Tribulations of National Consciousness”

Friday: Class Discussion

WEEK OF OCTOBER 31: BLACK INTERNATIONALISM

Monday: Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth, “On National Culture and Liberation Struggles” 145-180.

Walter Rodney, “African History in the Service of Black Revolution,” 1969

Wednesday: Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth “Colonial War and Mental Disorders” (Finish book)
African Diaspora Seminar: 6

Film: “Battle for Algiers” (The Algerian War of Independence)

Friday: *Class Discussion*

WEEK OF NOVEMBER 7: THE LIBERATION OF MEMORY IN THE CARIBBEAN

Monday: *Reading discussion, Edwidge Danticat, The Farming of Bones*

Edwidge Danticat and Junot Diaz [interview](#), *The Dominican Republic and Haiti: A Shared View from the Di*

Film: Julie Dash, *Daughters of the Dust*

Wednesday: *Class Discussion, Edwidge Danticat, The Farming of Bones*

Friday: Veterans Day (No Class)

PART IV: THE GLOBAL ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT & MEANINGS OF FREEDOM

WEEK OF NOVEMBER 14: THE FARMING OF BONES

Monday: Synthesis Essay, II Due, 8pm, my office, 2nd floor Pugh Hall

MONDAY *Reading Discussion, Edwidge Danticat, The Farming of Bones*

“I Speak As a Woman Person,” Interview with Emma Mashinini, founder of the Catering and Commercial Allied Workers Union of South Africa and anti-Apartheid movement leader, (1994) CA

“A Lifelong Fight for Labor Rights,” [Emma Mashinini](#), *The Christian Science Monitor*, 1991

Film, *Euzhan Palcy’s Sugar Cane Alley, Part II*

WEDNESDAY: *Reading Discussion: The Farming of Bones*

FRIDAY: *Class Discussion*

WEEK OF NOVEMBER 21: OUT OF PLACE: THE POST-COLONIAL CONDITION

Monday *Reading discussion: Earl Lovelace, Salt, 3-93. Getting to know the characters.*

Interview with Comrade Chris Hani, 1993 (CA)

Wednesday: *Thanksgiving Break*

African Diaspora Seminar: 7

Friday: Thanksgiving Break

WEEK OF NOVEMBER 28: GENDER, INTERETHNIC SOCIAL RELATIONS

Monday: *Reading discussion* Lovelace, Salt, 44-93. Educating for Freedom

Film, “Cry Freedom” on Anti-Apartheid Struggle in South Africa

The Global Anti-Apartheid Movement, [For Educators: Anti-Apartheid Movement.](#)

Wednesday: *Reading Discussion:* Earl Lovelace, Salt, 94-133, Florence.

Conversation with [Wangari Matthai](#), Nobel Laureate, Founder of the Green Belt Movement (2008) (CA)

Wangari Maathai, [Nobel Peace Prize Acceptance Speech](#) (2004)

Friday: *Class Discussion:* Earl Lovelace, Salt, 134-165, Miss Myrtle’s Story

WEEK OF DECEMBER 5: A NEW KIND OF EMANCIPATION DAY

Monday: *Reading Discussion:* Earl Lovelace, Salt. *Florence & Independence Day*

Wednesday: *Last Class*

DANTICATDANTICAT & /LOVELACE ESSAY DUE FINALS WEEK

(Wednesday)