

**AA310/ HI299**  
**Civil Rights History**  

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**Boston University, Spring 2017**

**Professor Ashley D. Farmer**  
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**Office: 226 Bay State Road, #210**

**Office Hours: Tuesday 1-3pm & by appointment**  
**\*\* sign up via Slotted on course website\*\***

**Course Description**

In the 1950s and 1960s the Civil Rights Movement filled news headlines across the country. No one could turn on a television, open a newspaper, or listen to the radio without hearing new reports about sit-ins, riots, massive demonstrations, Supreme Court decisions, or the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts. These events had an enormous impact on American life. Looking back sixty years later, what has changed? What hasn't? What has become part of the "official" narrative of the movement and what has been left out? And, how are these events connected to the Black Lives Matter movement of today? This course seeks to answer these questions through an examination of the rise of the Modern Civil Rights Movement. Students will explore the origins of the movement, well-known and lesser-known protests and activists of the 1950s and 1960s, and examine how the movement intersected with the contemporaneous feminist, gay rights, and anti-war movements.

**Required Texts:**

1. Dayo Gore, Jeanne Theoharis, & Komozi Woodard, *Want to Start a Revolution?* **(WTSR)**
2. Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*
3. Carson et. al, *The Eyes on the Prize Civil Rights Reader* **(EPR)**
4. Other Readings available via Blackboard **(BL)**

**Grading:**

Class Attendance and Participation	20%
2 Quizzes (15% each)	30%
Midterm	15%
Final Exam	20%
Black at BU Virtual Tour Project	15%

**Class Attendance:**

Regular attendance in class is absolutely necessary. Furthermore, you are expected to come to class having read the material and prepared to engage with the assigned texts. Please notify me in advance (if possible) if you know that you will need to be absent from class. ***After one unexcused absence, I will begin deducting 1/3 of a letter grade off your final grade for every missed class.***

**Quizzes:**

There will be two scheduled quizzes over the course of the semester based on material in the lectures and reading. Each quiz will consist of a set of identifications and a textual analysis or short answer question.

## **Black at BU: Civil Rights Virtual Project**

For the final project, you will collectively construct a virtual tour of the long civil rights movement at Boston University on the website historypin.org.

### **A. Creating Virtual Tour on Historypin**

You will work with BU librarians and university archives to document a list of civil rights “sites” or individuals on campus. These may include buildings, spaces where students protested; sites where important “firsts” happened, or information on the “first” African American man or woman to make a notable contribution to BU’s history.

Once you have identified, submitted and approved your site/historical figure you will find a photo, write a short paragraph (approx. 500 words) summarizing the importance of the site/figure and upload it to the class historypin.org site (username and password can be found on blackboard page).

### **B. Reflection Paper**

At the end of the semester, you will write a short 4-5 page reflection paper, that offers your thoughts on: the process of public history and what you learned about civil rights at Boston University.

### **C. Final Project Grade Breakdown**

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| 1. Visit to Archives and submission of 5 possible “pins”                     | 25 Points |
| 2. Submission of final choice of individual pin with rationale on Blackboard | 25 Points |
| 3. Posting of individual pin (photo and paragraph) on class site             | 25 Points |
| 4. Reflection Paper  | 25 Points |

### **Late Assignments:**

Please contact me well in advance of an assignment’s due date if you think that you will have difficulty meeting a particular deadline. *All papers submitted late without my permission will automatically be marked down one half grade per day.*

### **Plagiarism Policy:**

Each student is expected to complete all stages of their own work. Taking the words of others, or presenting the ideas of others as your own, is a violation of the University’s Academic Conduct Code. *Your penalty for such offenses is to fail the assignment; the more common penalty is to fail the course.*

### **Accessibility:**

If you are a student requiring accommodations for a disability, please let me know as soon as possible. The Office of Disability Services is available to assist you and may be contacted at 353-3658.

### **Email and Electronics Policy:**

Email communication with the instructor should be considered formal, similar to other business-style correspondence. You should remember to include a proper salutation and sign your name at the end of the email. I will usually be able to answer emails within 24 hours except for weekends and holidays. ***I typically will not respond to email between 8pm and 8am.***

You are permitted to use electronic devices and laptops to take notes during the lecture portion of our class. I reserve the right to ask you to discontinue the use of devices during class discussion or ban them if students are caught engaging in non-academic activity.

## Course Schedule

### Week 1: Introductions and Overview

Thursday January 19<sup>th</sup>:

- What do we mean by Civil Rights?
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### Week 2: Mapping the Field and the Origins of Movements

Tuesday January 24<sup>th</sup>:

- Nkhil Pal Singh, “Civil Rights, Civic Myths,” in *Black Is a Country* (BL)

Thursday January 26<sup>th</sup>: **Jim Crow and Responses**

- W.E.B. Du Bois, “The Talented Tenth” (BL)
  - Booker T. Washington, “Atlanta Exposition Address” (BL)
  - “The National Association of Colored Women” (BL)
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### Week 3: The New Negro Movement

Tuesday January 31<sup>st</sup>: **Radical Solutions**

- Marcus Garvey, “An Appeal to the Consciousness of the Black Race to See Itself” (BL)
- Amy Jacques Garvey, “Women as Leaders” (BL)
- Cyril Briggs, “What the African Blood Brotherhood Stands For” (BL)

Thursday February 2<sup>nd</sup>:

- Introduction to Black at BU Civil Rights Project
  - Group Discussion - **Bring readings in print or electronic version**
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## Week 4: Depression Era Activism and the New Deal

### Tuesday February 7<sup>th</sup>: The Great Depression

- LaShawn Harris, “Running with the Reds: African American Women and the Communist Party During the Great Depression” (BL)
- “The Scottsboro Trials” (BL)

### Thursday February 9<sup>th</sup>: New Deal for Blacks?

- Adam Clayton Powell Jr, “The Fight for Black Employment in Harlem” (BL)
  - Mary McLeod Bethune, “Breaking the Bars to Brotherhood” (BL)
  - SYNC, “Southern Negro Youth Congress” (BL)
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## Week 5: Double V: Democracy at Home and Abroad

### Tuesday February 14<sup>th</sup>: Double V Campaign

- Beth Bates, “‘Double V for Victory’ Mobilizes Black Detroit, 1941-1946” in *Freedom North* (BL)
- Cheryl Mullenbach, “War Workers: Negroes Cannot be Accepted” in *Double Victory: How African American Women Broke Race & Gender Barriers to Help Win World War II* (BL)

### Thursday February 16<sup>th</sup>: Organizing During Wartime

- A. Phillip Randolph, The Negro March on Washington Movement, 1941 (BL)
  - Claudia Jones, “An End to the Neglect to the Problems of Negro Women” (BL)
  - Erik S. McDuffie, “‘No Small Amount of Change Could Do’: Esther Cooper Jackson and the Making of a Black Left Feminist” (WTSR)
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## Week 6: Cold War/ Civil Rights

### Tuesday February 21<sup>st</sup>: Quiz # 1

- Discussion – **Bring Eyes on the Prize Reader**

### Thursday February 23<sup>rd</sup>: African Americans’ Cold War Activism

- Mary Dudziak, “Josephine Baker, Racial Protest, and the Cold War” (BL)
- Dayo F. Gore, “From Communist Politics to Black Power: The Visionary Politics and Transnational Solidarities of Victoria “Vicki” Ama Garvin” (WTSR)

## Week 7: A Movement Forming

### **Tuesday February 28<sup>th</sup>: Brown v. Board; Emmett Till, and Montgomery**

- “I Wanted the Whole World to See,” in *Voices of Freedom* (BL)
- “Rosa Parks, Jo Ann Robinson, and the Montgomery Bus Boycott, 1955-1956” (BL)
- Jeanne Theoharis, “A Life History of Being Rebellious: The Radicalism of Rosa Parks,” (WSTR)

### **Thursday March 2<sup>nd</sup>: Local Level Civil Rights and Black Power Activism**

- Martin Luther King, “The Social Organization Non-Violence” (EPR)
  - Robert F Williams, “Is Violence Necessary to Combat Injustice” (EPR)
  - Jeanne Theoharis, “I’d Rather Go to School in the South’: How Boston’s School Desegregation Complicates the Civil Rights Paradigm” in *Freedom North* (BL)
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## Week 8: Spring Break

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## Week 9: Civil Rights Insurgency

### **Tuesday March 14<sup>th</sup>: SNCC**

- “Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee Statement of Purpose” (EPR)
- Ella Baker, “Bigger than a Hamburger” (EPR)
- Leigh Raiford, “Come Let Us Build a New World Together: SNCC and the Photography of the Civil Rights Movement” (BL)

### **Thursday March 16<sup>th</sup>: In-Class Midterm**

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## Week 10: Civil Rights Insurgency- continued

### **Tuesday March 21<sup>st</sup>: Marching and Riding for Freedom**

- Martin Luther King Jr. “Letter from Birmingham Jail” (BL)
- Dorothy Height, “‘We Wanted the Voice of a Woman to Be Heard’: Black Women and the 1963 March on Washington” in *Sisters in the Struggle* (BL)
- Diane McWhorter, “The Enduring Courage of the Freedom Riders” (BL)

### **Thursday March 23<sup>rd</sup>: Freedom Summer**

- **Submission of 5 possible pins due**
- Fannie Lou Hamer, “To Praise our Bridges” (EPR)
- William Sturkey, “I Want to Become a Part of History: Freedom Summer, Freedom Schools, and the *Freedom News*” (BL)

## **Week 11: Freedom Now!**

### **Tuesday March 28<sup>th</sup>:**

- Fannie Lou Hamer, “‘I Don’t Mind My Light Shinning’: Speech Delivered at a Freedom Vote Rally in Greenwood, Mississippi (BL)
- Vicki Crawford, “African American Women in the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party,” in *Sisters in the Struggle* (BL)

### **Thursday March 30<sup>th</sup>: Selma and Voting Rights**

- David Garrow, “Bridge to Freedom” (EPR)
  - Martin Luther King, “A Letter from a Selma, Alabama Jail,” (EPR)
  - SNCC- SCLC Relations (EPR)
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## **Week 12: Grassroots and Black Empowerment**

### **Tuesday April 4<sup>th</sup>: Grassroots Radicalism**

- Malcolm X, “Message to the Grassroots” (EPR)
- Sharon Hartley, “‘Chronicle of a Death Foretold: Gloria Richardson, the Cambridge Movement, and the Radical Black Activist Tradition” in *Sisters in the Struggle* (BL)

### **Tuesday April 6<sup>th</sup>: LCFO, SNCC, and Black Power**

- Lowndes County Freedom Organization Pamphlet (EPR)
  - Stokely Carmichael and Charles V. Hamilton, “Black Belt Election: New Day Coming (EPR)
  - Cynthia Griggs Fleming, “Black Women and Black Power: The Case of Ruby Doris Smith and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee,” in *Sisters in the Struggle* (BL)
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## **Week 13: Black Power**

### **Tuesday April 11<sup>th</sup>: Black Power**

- “The Founding of the Black Panther Party” (EPR)
- Robyn Ceanne Spencer, “Inside the Panther Revolution” in *Groundwork*(BL)
- Amiri Baraka “Its Nation Time” (EPR)
- Komozi Woodard, “Its Nation Time in NewArk: Amiri Baraka and the Black Power Experiments in Newark New Jersey” in *Freedom North* (BL)

### **Thursday April 13<sup>th</sup>: Black Power**

- Premilla Nadasen, “We Do Whatever Becomes Necessary: Johnny Tillman, Welfare Rights, and Black Power,” (WTSR)
  - Joshua Guild, “To Make that Day Come: Shirley Chisholm’s Radical Politics of Possibility” (WTSR)
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## Week 14: Black Power- continued

### Tuesday April 18<sup>th</sup>: Black Feminism

- **Submission of individual pin to Blackboard Due**
- Sherie Randolph, “‘Women’s Liberation or Black Liberation You’re Fighting the Same Enemies’: Florynce Kennedy, Black Power, and Feminism, in **(WTSR)**
- Stephen Ward, “The Third World Women’s Alliance: Black Feminist Radicalism and Black Power Politics,” in *The Black Power Movement (BL)*

### Thursday, April 20<sup>th</sup>: Quiz # 2

- Discussion – **Bring Eyes on the Prize Reader**
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## Week 15: Student Movements and Coalition Politics

### Tuesday April 25<sup>th</sup>: Student Movement, Pan-Africanism

- Peniel E. Joseph, “Black Studies, Student Activism, and the Black Power Movement,” in *The Black Power Movement (BL)*

### Thursday April 27<sup>th</sup>: Coalition politics

- “Address by Reverend Jessie Jackson, Democratic National Convention” **(EPR)**
  - Chapters 1-3, *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*
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## Week 16: From Coalition Politics to Black Lives Matter

### Tuesday May 2<sup>nd</sup>:

- **Last Day to Post Individual Pin to Historypin**
- Chapter 5-7, *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*

**\*\*\* Final Exam and Reflection Paper Due During Exam Period\*\***