

History 295 Spring 2022
HISTORY OF THE BLACK PRESS NEWS AND MEDIA
Grinnell College
Professor Alexandra Odom
MWF 1:00-1:50pm HSSC N1160
Zoom Classroom: <https://unc.zoom.us/j/93247594262>
Library Liaison: Professor Chris Jones

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Office Hours: MWF 12pm-1pm, Tuesdays 12pm-2pm

Since the creation of the first black owned newspaper, *Freedom's Journal* in 1827, the black press has been key to elevating the voices of African Americans. From abolition to civil rights and the digital turn, the black press has been committed to telling stories that have often been left out of mainstream media. In this short course, we will explore key moments in the black press in order to develop a deeper understanding of how it has grown, evolved, and changes over time. We will also learn to use primary and secondary sources in order to craft strong historical arguments.

Course Objectives:

By the end of this course students will be able to:

- Map significant changes in the black press from 1827 to the present.
- Identify key moments in African American history and how it was represented in black owned media publications
- Write historical arguments based on primary source materials
- To be able to identify the larger themes, trends, and ideas in American History more broadly
- Learn to think critically about 20th century American history from different perspectives
- To learn to analyze and interpret historical evidence
- Become familiar with historical writing and crafting a historical argument
- Become familiar with relevant digital archives and databases for primary source research

Because this is a short course purchasing these books is not required. Both texts are on reserve at Burling Library and relevant readings from these texts will be posted on blackboard

Grading

The focus of this three week course will be a 4 page paper investigating relevant primary source material. All graded assignments will be leading up to this final paper and are an important part of your final grade

Forum Post #1 – 20%

Forum Post #2 – 20%

Primary Source Document Worksheet – 20%

Final Paper - 30%

Participation – 10%

Late Work:

Because this is a short course there is little flexibility with assignment due dates. Given the quick pace of the course it is imperative that any required extensions or accommodations be discussed with the course instructor as soon as possible.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Monday February 28, 2022 – Introduction and the Founding of the Black Press

Key topics: Abolition, the antebellum period

Read:

- Barrow, Lionel C. (1977). "Our own cause": "freedom's journal" and the beginning of the black press. *Journalism History*, 4(4), 118.

Virtual Class

Wednesday March 2, 2022 – Reconstruction to the Great Migration

Key topics: Southern politics, Chicago Defender, Ida B Wells, lynching, great migration

Read

- DeSantis, Alan D. 1997. "A Forgotten Leader: Robert S. Abbott and the Chicago "Defender" from 1910-1920." *Journalism History* 23 (2): 63.
- Kelley, Blair. 2021. "Silencing a Generation." in *Journalism and Jim Crow : White Supremacy and the Black Struggle for a New America*. Champaign: University of Illinois Press. Accessed February 20, 2022. ProQuest Ebook Central.
- Brundage, W. Fitzhugh. 2021 "The Press and Lynching" in *Journalism and Jim Crow : White Supremacy and the Black Struggle for a New America*. Champaign: University of Illinois Press. Accessed February 20, 2022. ProQuest Ebook Central.

Virtual Class

Friday March 4, 2022 – Library Visit

Library Information Session- Second Floor Classroom

Monday March 7, 2022 – World Wars I and II

Key Topics : Double V campaign, post war advertising, market segmentation

Read

- Detweiler, Frederick G. "The Negro Press Today." *American Journal of Sociology* 44, no. 3 (1938): 391–400. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2770129>.
- ~~Finkle, Lee. 1975. *Forum for protest: the Black press during World War II*. Rutherford, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press.~~
- Cohen, Lizabeth. 2003. *A consumers' republic: the politics of mass consumption in postwar America*. New York: Knopf. **Chapter 7**

Wednesday March 9, 2022 – Civil Rights and Black Power

Key topics: southern press, the race beat

Read

- Roberts, Gene, and Hank Klibanoff. 2006. *The race beat: the press, the civil rights struggle, and the awakening of a nation*. New York: Knopf.

- Clark, Benjamin Franklin, Sr. 1989. "The Editorial Reaction of Selected Southern Black Newspapers to the Civil Rights Movement, 1954-1968." Order No. 9006612, Howard University.

Friday March 11, 2022 – Global Black Press and the ANP

Key topics: Claude Barnett, Associated Negro Press, pan Africanism

Read

- Horne, Gerald. 2017. *The rise and fall of the Associated Negro Press: Claude Barnett's Pan-African news and the Jim Crow paradox.*

Monday March 14, 2022 - Gender and Sexuality

Key topics: masculinity

Read

- Haywood, D'Weston. 2018. *Let us make men: the twentieth-century black press and a manly vision for racial advancement.*

Wednesday March 16, 2022 - The Black Family

Key topics

Read

- Odom, Alexandra. 2019. "Depictions of Black Love in Ebony Magazine." Order No. 22585458, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Friday March 18, 2022 – Decline of the Black Press?

Key topics: turn of the century, digital media, social media

Read

- Bernstein, Margaret. 1989. "Pressing on." *Black Enterprise*, 06, 142.