

History of the Civil Rights Movement

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Classroom and times: HSSC N1118, TTh, 2:30-3:50 pm

Office hours: MW, 2-4

Course Description

This seminar offers you an opportunity to research and write about the Civil Rights era. We will analyze recent scholarship that challenges fundamental aspects of the Civil Rights Movement in the United States: when it took place, who participated, what it was over, and how the Civil Rights Movement continues to inform modern life in the United States. By the end of the term, you will have produced a 25-30 page research paper that grapples with a fundamental aspect of the Civil Rights movement. The paper will be based on a combination of primary and secondary sources.

Format

Prior to spring break, we will focus on material that the entire seminar will analyze, namely the first ten episodes of the documentary, “Eyes on the Prize,” Moody’s *Coming of Age in Mississippi*, and other reading assignments. We will be watching “Eyes on the Prize” in order to get a sense of the features of the dominant narrative of the Civil Rights Movement. Our subsequent reading assignments compel us to think critically about this dominant narrative. The idea is that the common readings will prepare you to embark on a research project that challenges and/or builds on the dominant narrative of the Civil Rights Movement.

Research Journal

For each class session, I would like you to write in your research journal. If you prefer to use a computer, simply print out and attach your research entry into the physical journal. Sometimes, I will ask you to write ahead of time. Other times, we will write in the journal together during our class session. By consistently writing in your research journal, my hope is that you will have identified some questions to pursue in your research paper. I also encourage you to use your

research journal to keep track of search terms, chats with students, and me about your project. In short, I would like for your journal to serve as a collection bin for anything related to this seminar.

Required Books

Anne Moody, *Coming of Age in Mississippi*

Thur., Jan. 26

Watch: Episodes 1 and 2 of “Eyes on the Prize”

Tue., Jan. 31

Reading:

1) Jill Lepore, “What the January 6th Report is Missing,” *New Yorker*, Jan. 9, 2023.

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2023/01/16/what-the-january-6th-report-is-missing>

Watch:

1) Episodes 3 and 4 of “Eyes on the Prize”

Thur., Feb. 2

Reading:

1) Steven F. Lawson, “Debating the Civil Rights Movement: The View from the Nation,” in Steven F. Lawson and Charles Payne, *Debating the Civil Rights Movement, 1945-1968* (Documents)

Watch:

1) Episodes 5 and 6 of “Eyes on the Prize”

Tue., Feb. 7

Reading:

1) Charles Payne, “Debating the Civil Rights Movement: The View from the Trenches,” in Lawson and Payne, *Debating the Civil Rights Movement* (Documents)

Watch:

1) Episodes 7 and 8 of “Eyes on the Prize”

Thur., Feb. 9

Reading:

1) Anne Moody, *Coming of Age in Mississippi*, Part I: Childhood

Watch:

1) Episode 9 of “Eyes on the Prize”

Tue., Feb. 14

Reading:

- 1) Anne Moody, *Coming of Age*, Part II: High School

Watch:

- 1) Episode 10 of “Eyes on the Prize”

Thur., Feb.16

Reading:

- 1) Moody, *Coming of Age*, Part III: College

Tue., Feb. 21

Reading:

- 1) Moody, *Coming of Age*, Part IV: The Movement

Thur., Feb. 23

Reading:

- 1) Danielle McGuire, *At the Dark End of the Street: Black Women, Rape, and Resistance—A New History of the Civil Rights Movement from Rosa Parks to the Rise of Black Power*, Prologue and Chapter 1. (Documents)

Tue., Feb. 28

Reading:

- 1) McGuire, *At the Dark End of the Street*, Ch. 2 (Documents)
- 2) Patrick Rael, “What Happened and Why?” *History Teacher*, Vol. 39, No. 1 (Nov., 2005), 23-32. (Documents)

Thur., Mar. 2

No class

“Work Differently”

Fri., Mar. 3

Coming of Age Paper due (3-5 pages)

Tue., Mar. 7

Reading:

- 1) Jeanne Theoharis, *A More Beautiful and Terrible History*, Preface, Introduction, Ch.1

Thur., Mar. 9

Reading:

- 1) Theoharis, *A More Beautiful and Terrible History*, Chapters 2 and 3

Tue., Mar. 14

Reading:

- 1) "The Ballot and the Bullet," in *Understanding and Teaching the Civil Rights Movement*, edited by Hasan Kwame Jeffries. (E-Book)

Thur., Mar. 16

Reading:

- 1) "Teaching Malcolm X Beyond the Mythology," in *Understanding and Teaching the Civil Rights Movement* (E-book)

Fri., Mar. 17

Preliminary Statement of Research Interest, due by 5 p.m. via PWeb.

Spring Break: Mar. 18- Apr. 2

Apr. 4 – May 11, Research Group Meetings

Apr. 7

Annotated Bibliography and Preliminary Research Question due via PWeb by 11:59 pm

Mon., Apr. 24

Biographical Sketch due via PWeb by 11:59 pm

Mon., May 8

Paper Draft Due via PWeb by 11:59 pm

Tue., May 9

Student Presentations

Thur., May 11

Student Presentations

Thur., May 18: FINAL PAPER DUE, 11:59 p.m.