

Black Women in the Black Freedom Struggle
Hist 27521-01
Kauke Hall, 034
TR, 2:30-3:50pm
Spring 2019
sking@wooster.edu

Shannon King
Kauke hall 114
M, 1:30-3pm
W, 10:30am-noon



Course Description:

Black Women in the Black Freedom Struggle (BFS) spans the period from the late nineteenth century to the present. The course centers the activism of black women in the US and the multiple ways they challenged inequality and injustice in the arenas of race, class, gender, and, to a lesser extent, sexuality. Centering mainly historical scholarship on black women activists as an entryway, students will learn about black women activism on a range of issues, stretching various eras and ideological perspectives, including the anti-lynching movement, the civil rights and black power eras, and presently during the Movement for Blacks Lives. To do this, students examine black feminism as it has evolved over the course of time, specifically how black women have formulated and reformulated notions of *black feminism* as a lens to spotlight black women's experiences as different from black men's but also white women's in the US. Students will write a final paper that will reflect their historical understanding of black women in the BFS showcasing their expertise in historical knowledge, critical reasoning skills, and clear communication.

Format: Attendance and participation during class meetings and discussion section are mandatory (35%). Students might also enhance their class participation grade through blogging. To receive full credit for attendance and participation, students must post at least 5 blogs (at least 200). The blogs must relevant to the themes of the course and can engage topics directly from the class readings or even current topics. More than **three** unexcused absences, as well as a **pattern** of tardiness, will result in a lowered final grade. As part of your attendance and participation grade, beginning *around* week six, two or more students will lead discussion on assigned readings. Each student will write two essays of 3-5 pages worth 20% each (40% of the final grade). I will

provide the essay questions for the first short essay a week or more before the paper is due; the second essay (3-5 pages) will be due a week after you lead discussion on assigned readings. The final paper (25%) will be 12-15 pages (at least 15 sources, five of which must be secondary and the remainder primary), and based on topics chosen by students. This final paper might be based on material covered in discussion, articles, and the primary sources or topics not covered (though related to black women in the black freedom struggle) in the course (due May 8th@2pm). Students can either write a research paper or a historiographical essay (at least 5 secondary sources). All essay must be double spaced, 1" margins, and in 12 font (Times New Roman), using the *Chicago Manual of Style*.

The last two weeks, we'll devote to workshopping your final papers. Workshops will provide each student an opportunity to share their work with and receive feedback from your classmates. During the workshop, students will introduce their work, including the kind of essay (research/historiographical), source material, major themes, and thesis or overall findings and conclusions.

Writing Assignments:

Students will write a proposal for their final paper (choose 3 potential topics and devote one paragraph to each, include and 2 to 3 sources per topic). For the final papers, each student will be partnered; with your peer, you will exchange and review each other's work. Using your historical understanding of the past, students are expected to have a thesis (major point/position), evidence or support (source material), and an analysis of the evidence that proves or substantiates their position. All assignments must be submitted on time; failure to do so will result in a lowered grade for the assignment.

Students are expected to use lectures, primary sources, and other source material from our class for their essays. Additional scholarly material can be used, but it must derive from scholarly journals and books. Information from Wikipedia and history.com are *not* acceptable. Students are, however, permitted to use primary documents from websites. If this is the case, students must properly cite the website. This course will be run by an honor system, by which I trust you will abide. However, if I am given cause to believe that you have presented me with work that in good faith cannot be called your own, I will adhere strictly to the procedures listed under "The Wooster Ethic" (<http://www.wooster.edu/students/dean/ethic>) as specified on The College of Wooster's website. If you are unclear about how to cite sources properly, you should make an appointment to meet with me or work with someone in the Writing Center on campus.

Short Paper /blog 1	February 14
Proposal	March 4th
Blog 3	April 5th
Second Short Paper	(a week after you lead discussion)
Final Paper/blog 5	May 8 th @2pm

Readings: Charlene Carruthers, *Unapologetic: A Black, Queer, and Feminist Mandate for Radical Movements*; Premilla Nadasen, *Household Workers Unite: The Untold Story of African American Women Who Built A Movement*.

Schedule:

W1

Jan 15

Introductions

Jan 17

Black Women's History and Historiography

Readings: Elsa Barkley Brown, "What Has Happened Here" and Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, "African American Women's History and the Metalanguage of Race" and Higginbotham, "Metalanguage of Race" Then and Now

W2

Jan 22

Blacks Gender Politics during the Nadir

Readings: Ida B. Wells, Southern Horrors

Angela Davis, "Rape, Racism, and the Myth of the Black Rapist"

Darlene Clark Hine, "Rape and the Inner Lives of Black Women in the Middle West"

Jan 24

The Great Depression and World War II

Reading: LaShawn Harris, "Running with the Reds: African American Women and the Communist Party during the Great Depression"; Claudia Jones, "An End to the Neglect of the Problems of Negro Woman!"; and Keisha Blain, "For the Rights of Dark People in Every Part of the World"

W3

Jan 29

Black Left and the Cold War

Readings: Dayo F. Gore, "From Communist Politics to Black Power: The Visionary Politics and Transnational Solidarities of Victoria 'Vicki' Ama Garvin" and Gerald Horne and Margaret Stevens, "Shirley Graham DuBois: Portrait of the Black Woman Artist as a Revolutionary"

Civil Rights Movement

Jan 31

Readings: Belinda Robnett, "African American Women in the Civil Rights Movement, 1954-1965: Gender, Leadership, and Micromobilization" and Charles Payne, "Ella Baker and Models of Change"

W4

Feb 5

Readings: Nancy MacLean, "Woman Challenge 'Jane Crow'" and Yvette Richards, "Race, Gender, and Anticommunism in the International Labor Movement: The Pan-African Connections of Maida Springer"

Feb 7

Readings: Tiffany M. Gill, ““Black Beauticians Were Very Important”: Southern Beauty Activists and the Modern Black Freedom Movement” and Jeane Theoharis, “A Life History of Being Rebellious”: The Radicalism of Rosa Parks

W5

Feb 12

Readings: Frances Beale, “Double Jeopardy: To Be Black and Female” in *The Black Woman: An Anthology*; Kimberley Springer, Black Feminists Respond to Black Power Masculinism in *Black Power Movement*

Feb 14

Readings: Ashley Farmer “All the Progress to Be Made Will Be Made by Maladjusted Negroes”: Mae Mallory, Black Women’s Activism, and the Making of the Black Radical Tradition” and Diane C. Fujino, “Grassroots Leadership and Afro-Asian Solidarities”

W6

Feb 19

Shola Lynch’s *Free Angela Davis and All Political Prisoners*

Feb 21

Free Angela Davis con’t

W7

Feb 26

Readings: Combahee River Collective Statement, 1977; Audre Lorde “An Open Letter to Mary Daly”; “The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House”; and June Jordan “Don’t You Talk About My Momma!” in *Technical Difficulties: African American Notes on the State of the Union*

Feb 28

Readings: Kimberle Crenshaw, “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex” and “Mapping the Margins”

W8

March 5

Shola Lynch’s *Chisholm ’72, Unbought and Unbossed*

March 7

Chisholm ’72, Unbought and Unbossed cont’d

W9&W 10 Spring Break

start reading Premilla Nadasen, *Household Workers Unite & Carruthers’s Unapologetic*

Week 11

March 26

Readings: Premilla Nadasen, *Household Workers Unite*, TBA

March 28

Readings: Premilla Nadasen, *Household Workers Unite*

W12

April 2

Readings: Premilla Nadasen, *Household Workers Unite*

April 4

Readings: Premilla Nadasen, *Household Workers Unite*

W13

April 9

Readings: Cathy Cohen, “Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens: The Radical Potential of Queer Politics?”; The Color of Violence, The Introduction; Andrea Ritchie, “Law Enforcement Violence Against Women of Color”; “Gender Violence and the Prison Industrial Complex” and “Trans Action for Social and Economic Justice”

April 11

Readings: Alicia Garza, “A Herstory of the #BlackLivesMatter Movement”; Say Her Name: Resisting Police Brutality Against Black Women; and Coming Out of Concrete Closets: A Report on Black and Pink’s National LGBTQ Prisoner Survey; and skim, Barbara Ransby, “Ella Baker’s Radical Democratic Vision,” *Jacobin*, June 18, 2015.

W14

April 16,

Readings: Charlene Carruthers, *Unapologetic: A Black, Queer, and Feminist Mandate for Radical Movements*

April 18

Readings: Charlene Carruthers, *Unapologetic*

W15 (workshop)

April 23

April 24

W 16 (workshop)

April 30

May 2

W 17, Finals Week

May 8th @2pm