

HIS 3304
Blacks in Paris

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Office and Office Hours,
LC 323 MW 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.



Course Description: In his unpublished essay, “I choose exile,” Richard Wright declared, “To live in Paris is to allow one’s sensibilities to be nourished by physical beauty... I love my adopted city. Its sunsets, its teeming boulevards, its slow and humane tempo of life have entered deeply into my heart.” James Baldwin on the other hand, saw himself as a “stranger in the village.” This course will explore the relationship that African Americans, Caribbeans, and Africans have had with France during the colonial and postcolonial eras. We will analyze the history of art, literature, music and political protests that were generated in the “City of Lights.” We will examine the lives of Blacks who left their countries of birth expressly to escape the burden of discrimination and came to Paris as self-conscious refugees from racism and colonialism, even while France practiced (post)colonial exploitation of Africans and Caribbeans in the Francophone world. We also will delineate the experiences of French born Blacks as they sought intellectual and cultural engagement and connection with the wider African diaspora.

As Simone C. Drake explains in *Critical Appropriations: African American Women and the Construction of Transnational Identity*, the “transnational flow of culture” is transmitted not only through the immigrants, but also through “the movement of ideas, independent of actual bodies”. Students will evaluate and map out the ways in which ideas specific to national identity and racist and anti-racist discourse permeate popular culture throughout the Atlantic and, more specifically, the Francophone world. Students also will compare and contrast national and transnational political and media related institutions.

Students also will identify and describe global perspectives of the development of anti-imperialist social movements from multiple perspectives. Students will explore the ways revolutionary ideologies, though often articulated through a presumably unified transnational discourse, also are informed by particular national, regional, and cultural contexts. In doing so, students will be able to conduct a multi-perspective analysis of local, global, international, and intercultural problems.

Major Curriculum Objectives:

Goal I. Global Awareness:

Learning Outcome: Students will compare and contrast the experiences of Africans, Caribbean, and African Americans in Paris. In doing so, students will be able to discuss world conditions associated with local, global, and international trends and systems as they relate to the generation of ideas about race relations and socioeconomic disparities.

Goal II. Global Perspectives.

Learning Outcome: Students will identify and describe the different perspectives of blacks from regions in the Atlantic world who live in Paris.

Goal III. Global Engagement

Learning Outcome: Students will engage in problem solving activities in which they examine the responsibilities communities of African descendant in the Atlantic World share in questioning ideas about racial and gendered identity, citizenship, democracy, and colonialism as they inform socioeconomic inequities, as well as the part they play as individuals. In doing so, students will write a personal manifesto and evaluate the extent to which the pieces challenge or affirm their ideas about racial identity and governance.

Required Texts

Claire de Duras. *Ourika*. Translated by John Fowles. New York: The Modern Languages Association. 1994.

Hayes, Brent Edward. *The Practice of Diaspora: Literature, Translation, and the Rise of Black Internationalism*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003.

Oyono, Ferdinand. *Houseboy*. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, Inc., 2012. (Paris 1956)

Sharpley-Whiting, T. Denean. *Bricktop's Paris: African American Women in Paris between the Two World Wars*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2015.

Stovall, Tyler. *Paris Noire: African Americans in the City of Light*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1996.

Active Learning and Participation.

Students are expected to read the material assigned for each week. Success in the course will be dependent upon your ability to secure the required text **before the end of the first week** of the semester.

The best classes often are those in which students express a diversity of ideas, thoughts, and opinions. The classroom is a space in which students should feel free to challenge each other intellectually, yet respectfully. Participants will be expected continually to support their arguments and opinions with references to texts. Read the texts *critically*. Try to make your posts meaningful. **While you are reading, take notes articulating both negative and positive reactions to the texts. In your notes be sure to write down the author's thesis.** Underline, highlight, and note the page numbers in places where you were particularly struck by the merit of an author's argument or lack thereof. Students also should be prepared to share via their discussion posts the ways in which authors use language, rhetoric, and tone to articulate their ideas. Be prepared to analyze the ways that the authors are persuasive as well as the ways in which the arguments falter. Other questions for consideration include: Who is the author's intended audience? In what ways does the author support his/her thesis? Are the author's assumptions valid or problematic? In what ways can the author's thesis be challenged? How does the author's work challenge or support others' you have read in the course?

Because the student body is quite diverse in its make-up, FIU is an ideal environment in which students may examine their assumptions about racial and gendered differences. Students will demonstrate an understanding of their own national, cultural and class based identities as they are different and similar to that of others in values, beliefs, and practices. They also will identify and describe global perspectives regarding presumed gendered differences as they are influenced by nation states. Using readings, debates, lectures, and films, students will consider from various angles the ways in which the intersection of ethnicity, nationality, race, class, informed social movements.

PLEASE NOTE: LATE BLACKBOARD ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE NOT BE ACCEPTED

Grading Policy

In Class Attendance/Participation Discussion (You must demonstrate that you have read And/or viewed the material.)	10%
Classroom Facilitation	10%
1-2 Page Short Assignments/ Discussion Posts	20%
Assignment I Identifying a Paper Topic	5%
Assignment II Locating Primary and Secondary Sources	10%
Assignment III. Working Thesis, Outline, and Annotated Bibliography of Primary and Secondary Sources	20%
Final Paper/Historiography	20%
Personal Manifesto (Required but ungraded.)	5%

Grade Scale:

Letter Grade	Range	Letter Grade	Range	Letter Grade	Range
A	93 <	B-	81 - 83	D+	67 - 70
A-	91 - 92	C+	77 - 80	D	64 - 66
B+	87 - 90	C	74 - 76	D-	61 - 63
B	84 - 86	C-	71 - 73	F	< 61

Active Participation: Submissions to Blackboard Discussion Sections

In an effort to gauge your understanding of the material, I have required active participation via Discussion posts. Discussions are worth 30% of your final grade.

Hybrid Format: Assignments/Discussion Posts (20 points)

Assignments and/or Discussion Posts will be due on a weekly basis. Assignments must be submitted by Sunday 11:55 p.m. (close to midnight) on the week assigned. Due to the quick pace of the course, **late assignments will not be accepted.**

Students should submit discussion posts that demonstrate that you have read the material. In order to receive credit, you must answer all parts of the questions. Discussion posts should each be a minimum of 1 page long and no more than 2 pages long.

Other Requirements

Facilitations:

Class facilitation is *not* busy work! It is an important exercise to develop verbal skills. You will find in your adult lives that being able to articulate your position on controversial issues (such as racism, sexism, classism, and heterosexism) will be an important skill for your maturation and psychic health. When you are responsible for facilitating class discussion, you must come prepared with one to two pages of *thought provoking* questions to help the class understand the assigned readings better. This is a time to be creative. You may bring in audio or video tapes, poetry, magazines, or any other visual or print media. Although this assignment is fun, it should be taken very seriously because its purpose is to demonstrate not just that you understand the material, but how well you can *explain* it! What follows are basic guidelines for reading well and making good presentations. The goal is to insure a rich and critical approach to class materials.

Content

- ♥ What is being said? What is the argument?
- ♥ What are the premises and the hypothesis of the piece? What are the conclusions? (What is conveyed, how is it put together?)
- ♥ What is highlighted/hidden in the piece?
- ♥ What was the historical, political, social, and cultural situation at the time of writing the piece (industrial revolution, enlightenment, cold war, apartheid, holy war, etc).
- ♥ What is the theoretical orientation or lens of the piece (conservative, Marxist, etc.)
- ♥ Do you agree with what is being said? Why or why not?

Assignment I. Choose a Paper Topic. 1 page. Choose a paper topic that explores some aspect of the Black Diasporic Relationship with France

Assignment II: Identifying Primary Sources Materials. (2-3 pages)

Locate **5** primary sources and **5** secondary specific to your chosen paper topic. From: <http://www.princeton.edu/~refdesk/primary2.html>

A primary source is a document or physical object which was written or created during the time under study. These sources were present during an experience or time period and offer an inside view of a particular event. Some types of primary sources include:

- ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS (excerpts or translations acceptable): Diaries, speeches, manuscripts, letters, interviews, news film footage, autobiographies, official records
- CREATIVE WORKS: Poetry, drama, novels, music, art
- RELICS OR ARTIFACTS: Pottery, furniture, clothing, buildings

Examples of primary sources include:

- Diary of Anne Frank - Experiences of a Jewish family during WWII
- The Constitution of Canada - Canadian History
- A journal article reporting NEW research or findings
- Weavings and pottery - Native American history
- Plato's Republic - Women in Ancient Greece

What is a secondary source?

A secondary source interprets and analyzes primary sources. These sources are one or more steps removed from the event. Secondary sources may have pictures, quotes or graphics of primary sources in them. Some types of secondary sources include:

- PUBLICATIONS: Textbooks, magazine articles, histories, criticisms, commentaries, encyclopedias

Examples of secondary sources include:

- A journal/magazine article which interprets or reviews previous findings
- A history textbook
- A book about the effects of WWI

Search by keyword for Primary Sources in the Main Catalog

You can search the Main Catalog to find direct references to primary source material.

Perform a keyword search for your topic and add one of the words below:

(these are several examples of words that would identify a source as primary)

- charters
- correspondence
- diaries
- early works
- interviews
- manuscripts
- oratory
- pamphlets
- personal narratives

- sources
- speeches
- letters
- documents

Assignment III. Thesis and Annotated Bibliography of Primary and Secondary Sources (Specific details forthcoming on separate document.)

Assignment IV: Final Paper/Historiography (7 to 10 pages).

A historiography is paper that analyzes the major articles and books that historians have completed about a specific topic. For example, a historiography of the Civil Rights Movement might include Penny M. Von Eschen, Race against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957 (1997); Jacqueline Dowd Hall, “The ‘Long’ Civil Rights Movement,” and Nikhil Singh’s *Black is a Country: Race and the Unfinished Struggle for Democracy*, 2005. Your historiography must include a review of at least 4 secondary sources on your topic of choice. **A late paper will be penalized half a letter grade for every day that it is late.** Papers should be 7-10 pages in length. Your paper must use Chicago style formatting for footnotes and bibliography. Each paper also must have a clearly defined thesis statement that appears in the first or second paragraph of the paper. A thesis statement succinctly provides the reader with the argument and the subject of the paper. For the purposes of this paper, the thesis must provide a summary of your assessment of the texts that you have chosen.

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- **For more guidance on how to write a thesis statement view:**
- http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/thesis_statement.shtml
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- **Please Note:** For the purposes of writing papers, the use of Wikipedia, answers.com, and other similar non-scholarly websites is prohibited. You may refer to scholarly books and articles secured via the online databases JSTOR and Project Muse.

Personal Manifesto 2 pages (5 points)

In addition to content specific essays, students will be asked to write a personal manifesto at the beginning of the term in which they describe their thoughts and ideas on gendered and racial differences. They will submit at the end of the term another personal manifesto in which they articulate the ways in which the course material and class discussions have either affirmed or challenged their willingness to engaged global citizens

Attendance Policy

More than two absences will be reflected in your grade.

Course Outline

Week I: Aug. 24th –Aug 30th

Bonjour!

Introduction to Course. Lucille Davis, Sept. Sarah Baartman: At Rest at Last.

http://www.southafrica.info/about/history/saartjie.htm#.Vdp2J_IViko

Diana Ferrus, “A Poem for Sarah Bartman

<http://peacebenwilliams.com/a-poem-for-sarah-baartman-by-diana-ferrus-read-the-poem-that-helped-bring-her-home/>

Elizabeth Alexander, The Venus Hottentot

<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/182775>

Due Aug. 30th In one to two pages, analyze Elizabeth Alexander’s poem, The Hottentot Venus (Submit Via Blackboard Due Sunday. Aug. 30th 11:55 p.m. Submit via blackboard

Week II. Aug. 31st- Sept. 6

John De Jean and Margaret Waller, Introduction to *Ourika*, vii-xxi.

Ourika, an English Translation 3-47.

Week III. Sept. 7th – 13th .

Doris Y. Kadish, “Ourika’s Three Versions: A Comparison.” In *Translating Slavery: Gender and Race in French Women’s Writing, 1783-1823*. Co-Editor Francoise Massardier-Kenny Kent: Kent State University Press 1994. 1-10.

<http://slavery.uga.edu/texts/criticalessays/threeversions.pdf>

Frantz Fanon, excerpt from *Black Skins White Masks*

David O’Connell, “Ourika: Black Face, White Mask.” *French Review* 47 (1974): 47-56.

Assignment I One Page Description of Paper Topic Due Sept. 13th.

Week IV Sept. 14th- 20th

Stovall, *Paris Noir: African Americans in the City of Light*,

Chap 1: “Freedom Overseas: African American Soldiers Fight the Great War”, 1-16.

Chap 2. “Bringing the Jazz Age to Paris,” 25-68.

Sharpley-Whiting, *Bricktop’s Paris*,

Introduction, “The Other Americans, 1919-1939,” 5-15.

Paper Topic Due. Submit 1 Page Description of your Paper Topic. Due Sept. 27th.

Week V. Sept 21st - Sept. 27th

Sharpley-Whiting, *Bricktop’s Paris*,

Chap 1 Les Dames Grand and Small and Chap. II. The Gotham-Montparnasse Exchange. 17-72.

Chap III. Women of the Petit Boulevard: The Artists' Haven; Chap IV. Black Paris Cultural Politics and Prose; Epilogue: Homeward Tug at a Poet's Heart. 115-158.

Week VI. Sept 28th -- Oct. 4th

Sharpley-Whiting, *Bricktop's Paris*,

Foreword: Alice Randall, "Gained in Translation"?

Preface, "History's Marginalia, Autofictional Mysteries and a Fondness for Matters French

The Autobiography of Ada "Bricktop" Smith. 177-228.

Assignment II. 5 Primary and 5 Secondary Sources Due.

Week VII. Oct. 5th- Oct. 11th

Sharpley-Whiting, *Bricktop's Paris*

The Autobiography of Ada "Bricktop" Smith. 229-345.

Week VIII. Oct. 12- Oct. 18th

Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora*

"Prologue" 1-15.

"Chapter I. Variations on a Preface, 16-68

Assignment III, Thesis and Annotated Bibliography Due

Week IX Oct. 19th – 25

Stovall, *Paris Noir: African Americans in the City of Light*,

Chap 3. Depression and War, Paris in the 1930s, 82-129.

Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora*

Chap 3. Feminism and L'Internationalisme Noir: Paulette Nardal, 119-186.

Week X Oct 26- Nov. 1

Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora*

Chap 5. Inventing the Black International: George Padmore and Tiemkp Garan Kouyate, 241-305.

Film: "Africa to America to Paris: The Migration of Black Writers;" a film by Jacques Goldstein and Blaise N'Djehoya

Week XI Nov. 2- Nov. 8

Senghor, "The Spirit of Civilization or the Laws of African Negro Culture," *Presence Africaine*, 1956.

<http://www.freedomarchives.org/Documents/Finder/Black%20Liberation%20Disk/Black%20Power!/SugahData/Journals/Presence.S.pdf>

Ta-Nehisi Coates, "Acting French" *The Atlantic* Aug 20th 2014

<http://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2014/08/acting-french/375743/>

Week XII Nov. 9 –Nov. Nov. 15

Stovall, *Paris Noir: African Americans in the City of Light*,

Chap 5, The Golden Age of African American Literature and Chap 6. New Perspectives on Race 182-228.
James Baldwin, "Equal in Paris,"
http://www.sas.upenn.edu/~cavitch/pdf-library/Baldwin_Equal.pdf
Maboula Soumahoro, "On the Test of the French Republic as Taken (and Failed)" *Transition* 98 (2008): 42-66.
<http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.fiu.edu/stable/pdf/20204246.pdf>
Personal Manifesto Due. Nov. 29th

Week XIII. Nov. 16- Nov. 22

Ferdinand Oyono, *Houseboy*

Helen Harrison, "Myths and Metaphors of Food in Oyono's *Une Vie de boy*" *The French Review* 74 (April 2001): 924-933.

Week XIV Nov. 23- Nov. 29

View Clip on Ousman Sembene's *Black Girl*

<http://www.nytimes.com/video/movies/10000001031476/black-girl.html>

Jean Paul Sartre, Preface to Franz Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*

<https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/sartre/1961/preface.htm>

View, Frantz Fanon

Assignment IV: Final Paper/ Historiography Due.