

The African Diaspora

Spring 2001, Sequence 3 (MWTh 10:30-11:35)

Prof. Patrick Manning

Office: 263 Holmes Hall (World History Center)
Hall

Office hours: MWTh 9:15–10:15, or by appointment

Phone: 373-4453

e-mail: manning@neu.edu

Ms. Stacy Tweedy

Office: 274 Holmes Hall

e-mail: tweedys@yahoo.com

- * Five centuries of life in the African homeland and the African diaspora, 1500-2000.
- * Black peoples in the making of the modern world – connections and contributions under slavery and freedom.

Major themes:

Culture –language and literature, religion, music and dance

Politics – enslavement, emancipation, nationhood, globalization

Society – class, family, education

The African homeland – 500 million people on the second-largest continent, with immense differences in language and lifestyle, but a long history of interconnection.

The African diaspora – 150 million black people in South America, the Caribbean, North America, and Europe. A diaspora initiated by enslavement, but sustained by migration all around the Atlantic to maintain cultural and political connections

Course activities:

Readings from major authors of Africa and the African diaspora in the eighteenth,

nineteenth and twentieth centuries

Creative work in visual art, music, film

Readings:

- * W. E. B. DuBois, *The Negro*
- * Patrick Manning, *Slavery and African Life*

- * Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of Olaudah Equiano*
- * Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*
- * Buchi Emecheta, *Joys of Motherhood*
- * Richard Powell, *Black Art and Culture in the Twentieth Century*
- * A packet of brief but stimulating selections

Films:

- * "Song of Freedom" (with Paul Robeson)
- * "Mandabi" (Ousmane Sembene, Senegal)
- * "Sugar Cane Alley" (Euzhan Palcy, Martinique)
- * "Daughters of the Dust" (Julie Dash, U.S.)

Assignments:

- 10% Attendance and participation
- 25% Quizzes on readings (top 5 scores of 7 quizzes on readings)
- 5% Map exercise
- 10% Midterm exam — take-home
- 15% Group work
- 10% Term project — on a medium in popular culture throughout the diaspora
- 10% Book review — from a list of suggestions to be handed out
- 15% Final exam — comprehensive essay exam

Class format:

Mondays will usually center on a lecture by the instructor on the topic for the week. Wednesdays will center on experiencing popular culture of the African diaspora, including three films. Thursdays will usually begin with a quiz on the reading for the week, and will continue with a discussion and presentation of that reading led by a student group.

Group work:

The class will divide, for certain purposes, into groups of four to six persons. Each group will lead a discussion on one of the assigned books (on Thursday), and it will make one or more presentations on an aspect of popular culture (on Wednesday). In addition, it is possible for a group to collaborate in completion of a term project.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1. Africa and the African diaspora: demography, language, culture

March 28 (Wed.)

March 29 (Thurs.)

Week 2. Popular culture in Africa and the diaspora

April 2 (Mon). Lecture (PM)

April 4 (Wed). Popular culture medium of the week: Visual art (PM)

April 5 (Thurs). Discussion

Week 3. Early times and Colonialism.

April 9 (Mon). Lecture (PM)

April 11 (Wed). Popular culture medium of the week: Print (ST)

April 12 (Thurs). Quiz and discussion on DuBois (PM)

Reading: W. E. B. DuBois, *The Negro*

Week 4. Enslavement: its impact in Africa and the diaspora

April 16 (Mon). Lecture (PM)

April 18 (Wed). Popular culture medium of the week: Dance

April 19 (Thurs). Quiz and discussion on Manning

Reading: Patrick Manning, *Slavery and African Life*

Film: "Mandabi" (Ousmane Sembene, Senegal)

Week 5. The Atlantic World

April 23 (Mon). Lecture (ST)

April 25 (Wed). Popular culture medium of the week:

April 26 (Thurs). Quiz and discussion on Equiano

Reading: Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of Olaudah Equiano*

Week 6. Creating post-slavery communities in the diaspora

April 30 (Mon). Lecture (ST) [PM – jury duty]

May 2 (Wed). Popular culture medium of the week: Music and dance

May 3 (Thurs). Quiz and discussion on Powell

Reading: Richard Powell, *Black Art and Culture in the Twentieth Century*

Film: "Sugar Cane Alley" (Euzhan Palcy, Martinique)

Week 7. Creating new African communities in the global age

May 7 (Mon). Lecture (ST)

May 9 (Wed). Popular culture medium of the week:

May 10 (Thurs). Quiz and discussion on Emecheta

Reading: Buchi Emecheta, *Joys of Motherhood*

Week 8. Black popular culture: from survival to leadership

May 14 (Mon). Lecture (ST)

May 16 (Wed). Popular culture medium of the week:

May 17 (Thurs). Quiz and discussion on Gilroy

Reading: Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*

Week 9. Connection: Africa, the African diaspora, and beyond

May 21 (Mon). Lecture (PM)

May 23 (Wed). Popular culture medium of the week:

May 24 (Thurs). Field trip "Heads and Tales"

Reading: review earlier reading

Film: "Song of Freedom" (starring Paul Robeson)

Week 10. Presentation of term projects

May 30 (Wed).

May 31 (Thurs).

FINAL EXAM.