

**REID AML4685sec01E/AFA4931secH19 THE WORLD OF JAMES BALDWIN W 6-8 (12:50- 3:50) TUR 2336**

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The seminar will critically survey James Baldwin’s literary work and political essays, as well as review selected biographies that explore Baldwin’s life in the United States, France, and Turkey. Baldwin was engaged in the socio-political world that surrounded and sometimes consumed his artistic and moral energies that brought him to become active in the U.S. Civil Rights movement and international concern the construction of nation, race, and sexuality. One critic wrote of Baldwin in these words: “Following publication of *Notes of a Native Son* and *The Fire Next Time*, James Baldwin's literary star approached its peak during the turbulent 1960s. His burgeoning role as celebrity, prophet, and leader heaped an unsustainable amount of pressure and responsibility onto his slight frame in an American landscape that doubly punished Baldwin for being both black and gay, and he often turned to Turkey for sanctuary.” This seminar reveals the artistry, compassion, and moral commitment of one of America’s greatest writers.

**I. REQUIRED TEXTS:**

Baldwin, James. *Early Novels and Stories*. New York, NY: The Library of America, 1998. ISBN: 9781883011512 or ISBN: 1883011515

Baldwin, James. *Collected Essays*. New York, NY: The Library of America, 1998. ISBN: 9781883011529 or ISBN: 1883011523

Baldwin, James. *Bines for Mister Charlie: A Play*. New York: Vintage, 1964. ISBN: 978-0679761785

Campbell, James. *Talking At The Gates: A Life of James Baldwin*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: U. California Press, 1991. ISBN: 0-520231309

Youngblood, Shay. *Black Girl in Paris*. New York: Riverhead Books, 2001. ISBN: 1573228516

**Note: Assigned and recommended texts and readings are held at the Reserve Desk on the second floor of Library West. Check the Reserve List for this course to see if any assigned essays or plays are available as PDF files on ARES (ELECTRONIC RESERVE) section on the Smathers Library Website. Look under Reid and this course’s section number.**

**II. COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

1) Pop Quizzes on weekly readings as well as film(s) screened in the previous class **30 points**  
(1pt - 3pts each)

2) Individual 5-minute oral presentation and 5-min Q&A. Instructor assigns each student their oral presentation of a required reading Due Weeks 3-11 **20 points**

The assigned reading will be graded on the following criteria:

A. The importance of the material presented to the class. Students must make brief references to primary scenes in a particular literary work (or film) to illustrate important issues as well as to support their argument.

B. The clarity of the written and oral work. Here, "clarity" refers to smooth oral delivery, correct use of descriptive terminology and grammar.

C. The student’s ability to pose important questions to the class during their oral presentation. Students must introduce the argument/thesis of their oral presentation based on their assigned section.

3) 1-page outline Each Student is responsible for a typed outline of their 5-minute discussion. **10 points**  
Due on the day when the student presents her/his 5-minute discussion

4) MIDTERM EXAM **60MINS WEDNESDAY, 24 FEBRUARY** **20 points**

5) Individual Groups 1 - 8 PAPER & PRESENTATIONS **20 points**

The 4-5-page INDIVIDUAL STUDENT PAPERS cover each student’s assigned presentation. Each group member is responsible to submit a 4-5 page critical paper (10pts) and an additional 2-page endnotes and annotated bibliography

(10pts) for their paper. This will be compiled into one group paper. **There is a separate grade for each student’s paper.**

**THERE IS NO GROUP GRADE.** You will have several opportunities to pose questions when I meet with each group on Week 12 in my 4318 Turlington Hall office.

**III. ATTENDANCE**

The only excusable absence is one that results from an illness that is documented by a written and signed physician report. Two non-excused absences lower the student's cumulative grade by minus 10 points, Three non-excused absences give the student an E, a failing grade for the course.

**IV. LATE WORK**

All written work and oral presentations are due during the class period. Students receive minus 2 points for EACH DAY (INCLUDING WEEKENDS AND HOLIDAYS) when any assignment is late. **NOTE:** A medical excuse will not be accepted to explain the late delivery of any written assignment or film/video project.

**V. GRADING SCALE**

A	100.00-90.00	40.00-36.00	20.00-18.00	10.00-09.00	2.00-1.80
A-	89.99-87.00	35.99-34.80	17.99-17.40	08.90-08.70	1.78-1.74
B+	86.99-84.00	34.79-33.60	17.20-16.80	08.69-08.40	1.72-1.68
B	83.99-80.00	33.59-32.00	16.60-16.00	08.39-08.00	1.66-1.60
B-	79.99-77.00	31.99-30.80	15.99-15.40	07.99-07.70	1.59-1.53
c+	76.99-74.00	30.79-29.60	15.20-14.80	07.69-07.40	1.52-1.48

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C 73.99-70.00	29.59-28.00	14.79-14.00	07.39-07.00	1.47-1.40
C- 69.99-67.00	27.99-26.80	13.99-13.40	06.99-06.70	1.39-1.34
D+ 66.99-64.00	26.79-25.60	13.39-12.80	06.69-06.40	1.33-1.28
D 63.99-60.00	25.59-24.00	12.79-12.00	06.39-06.00	1.27-1.20
D- 59.99-57.00	23.99-22.80	11.99-11.40	05.99-05.70	1.19-1.14
E 56.00	22.79-00.00	11.39-00.00	05.69-00.00	1.13-0.00
Cumulative		student paper,	presentation	ten-plus journal entries/quizzes
		presentation, midterm outline 10pts		2-3pts for a total of 30pts

VI. Course Outline and Readings:

READINGS LISTED ON A PARTICULAR DAY SHOULD BE READ BEFORE THAT CLASS MEETS. POP QUIZZES WILL COVER THESE ASSIGNED READINGS AS WELL AS ANY FILMS SCREENED IN THE LAST CLASS. \*

**Readings are held on RESERVE IN LIBRARY WEST AT CHECK OUT DESK OR ON ARES E-RESERVE**

## WK1 COURSE INTRODUCTION

JAN 06 W — SCREEN:

James Baldwin, *THE PRICE OF THE TICKET* (1990 dir. Karen Thorsen) 87m

## WK2 Early Writings From Paris I

JAN 13 W — READ: Baldwin, *Early Novels & Stories-Go Tellli On the Mountain* (1953).

## WK3 Early Writings From Paris II

JAN 20 W — READ: Baldwin, *Collected Essays*, p. 11-“Everybody’s Protest Novel”(1949), p. 19-“Many Thousand Gone” (1951), p.85-“Encounter on the Seine: Black Meets Brown”, p.91-“A Question of Identity,” p.101-“Equal in Paris,” p. 117-“Stranger in the Village” (1953), and p.143-“Princes and Powers” (1957), and p.808-“Introduction to Notes of a Native Son, 1984”.

## WK4 PURSUIT OF HETERONORMATIVE & MIDDLE-CLASS RESPECTABILITY

JAN 27 W — READ: Baldwin, *Giovanni’s Room* (1956).

## WK5 THE NORTHERN GHETTO: HARLEM

FEB 3 W — READ: Baldwin, *Collected Essays*, p.231 -“The Male Prison”, p.269 -“The Black Boy Looks at the White Boy”, p.42 -“The Harlem Ghetto”, p.63-“Notes of a Native Son”, p. 137 -“The Discovery of What It Means to Be an American”, p. 170 -“Fifth Avenue, Uptown”, p. 187 -“A Fly in Buttermilk”.

## WK6 RACE, SEGREGATION AND THE SOUTH I: HANDS UP: DON’T SHOOT

FEB 10 W — READ: Baldwin, *Early Novels & Stories - Blues for Mister Charlie* (1964), Baldwin, *Collected Essays*, p. 197 -“Nobody Knows My Name: A Letter From the South”, p.209 -“Faulkner and Desegregation”, p.215 -“In Search of a Majority”, p.222 -“Notes of a Hypothetical Novel”, p.247 -“Alas, Poor Richard”.

## WK7 RACE, SEGREGATION AND THE SOUTH II

FEB 17 W — READ: Baldwin, *Collected Essays*, p.577-“Smaller Than Life”, p.606-“The Curse of Indignation”, p.622-“They Can’t Turn Back”, p.638-“The Dangerous Road Before Martin Luther King”, p.659-“, p.673-“Color”, “A Report from Occupied Territory”, p.799-“Notes on the House of Bondage”, p.766-“An Open Letter to Mr. Carter”.

## WK8 MIDTERM EXAM 60MINS (20PTS) RACE, SEGREGATION AND THE SOUTH III

FEB 24 W — READ: Baldwin, *Collected Essays*, p.678-“A Talk to Teachers”, p.687-“This Nettle, Danger”, p.773-“If Black English Isn’t a Language, Then Tell Me, What Is It?”, p.707-“Words Of a Native Son”, p.714-“American Dream and American Negro”, p.722-“The White Man’s Guilt”, p.728 p.739-“Negroes Are Anti-Semitic Because They’re Anti-White”, p.749-“White Racism or World Community?”, p.788-“Dark Days”.

## WK9 27 FEBRUARY - 06 MARCH SPRING BREAK

## WK10 SCREENING: RACE, SEGREGATION AND THE SOUTH IV

MAR 09 W — READ: Baldwin, *Collected Essays, No Name in the Street*. p.353-“Take Me to the Water”, p.204-“To Be Baptized”, p.475-“Epilogue: Who Has Believed Our Report?”

VIEW: Stanley Nelson dir. *FREEDOM RIDERS* (120m)

## WK10 BALDWIN ON FLUIDITY, CHANGE, AND MULTIDIMENSIONAL SEXUALITY

MAR 16 W — READ: Campbell, *Talking at the Gates*, Chapters 19 through Chapter 23 and ‘Afterword to the 2002 Edition: Campbell v. US Department of Justice’, and Baldwin, *Collected Essays*, p. 814 -“Freaks and the American Ideal of Manhood”, p. 830 -“The Price of the Ticket”. On ARES, (the electronic-reserves Library West online site) read -Eldridge Cleaver, *Soul On Ice*, ‘Notes On a Native Son’ pp. 97-111.

## WK11 IN SEARCH OF BALDWIN: FLUIDITY, CHANGE, AND MULTIDIMENSIONAL SEXUALITY

MAR 23 W — READ: Shay Youngblood, *Black Girl in Paris*

**Instructor-student-group meetings by appointment in 1318 TUR (12pm-3:50pm)**

## WK12 GROUPS MEET WITH MEMBERS TO ORGANIZE THEIR PAPERS.

MAR 30 W — DISCUSS & SCHEDULE PRESENTATIONS

## WK13 PAPER DISCUSSION & PRESENTATIONS

APR 6 W —

## WK14 27 NOVEMBER - THANKSGIVING BREAK

WK15 APR 13 W — PAPER DISCUSSION & PRESENTATIONS

FINAL CLASS