

# Dr. REID LIT 6358 sec. 22C8: The World of James Baldwin & Critical Race Theory Fall 2021

Office 4318 TUR, Hours W 6<sup>th</sup> (12:50-1:40) by appointment; Tel: 294-2827, email: reid@ufl.edu

The seminar critically surveys James Baldwin's writings, lectures, and selected biographies that explore Baldwin's life in the United States, France, and Turkey. Baldwin was engaged in the sociopolitical world that surrounded and sometimes consumed his artistic and moral energies. He was active in the U.S. Civil Rights movement and international civil justice movements. 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."

## L. 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. *Blues 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 Smathers Library (**West**) Reserve List for this course **Reid** AML 4311 and the section number, to see if any assigned essays, book chapters, and plays are available as PDF files on ARES (ELECTRONIC RESERVE).

## II. COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

### **A. Reaction Papers**

**20 points**

**Due WEEKS 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, [12, 14]**

Students are responsible for all weekly assigned readings and must submit a one to two-page single-space typed critical reaction paper on the weekly readings and film screenings for weeks two through thirteen. Each of the ten weekly reaction papers is due during the class meeting that the reading is listed. **\*Students that have an oral presentation during a class meeting do not submit a reaction paper for that class meeting.** (2pts. for each reaction paper for 10 submissions during weeks 2-13).

### **B. Two Oral Presentations (10pts. each) & Two 1-page Outlines (10pts. each)**

**40 points**

Each student delivers two fifteen-minute oral presentations that explore the literary and sociopolitical aspects of this period in African American creativity. Each 15-minute oral presentation must critically discuss an area of James Baldwin's work. The presentations should include a brief description of the critical methodology used, as Marxism, feminism, psychoanalysis, post-structuralism and Black Atlantic cultural studies, or a combination thereof that is employed to organize the presentation. The instructor will assign the two presentation dates.

**C. 8-page Conference Paper (30pts.) & Annotated Bibliography (10pts.)**

--**Paper Abstract is due Week 10 , Fri, 29 OCT.**

--**Paper (30pts.) & Annotated bibliography Due Week 12, FRI. 12 NOV. (40 points)**

**Oral Presentations on Conference Paper Weeks 13 & 15, Nov. 19, and Dec. 3**

Students deliver a typed 10-page conference paper (30pts.) that reflects the various social and literary issues that James Baldwin engaged with through his writings, lectures, and activism. The reaction papers and conference paper should respond to an area of Baldwin's work that most interest you. Students must explain the critical method(s) they employ and describe how this critical approach assists them in drafting the essay.

Essays must be accompanied by a typed, 1-page, single-space annotated bibliography (10pts.).

**III. LATE WORK**

**Class readings are listed for the day they are due to be discussed.** All late written work and oral presentation, that is, when delivered after the class session meets, will suffer a loss of 5 points for each day it is late. An excused absence for medical reasons does not excuse the tardy delivery of a written work but may excuse a late oral presentation under certain circumstances.

**IV. ABSENCE**

One non-excused absence will lower a student's final grade point average by minus five points. Two non-excused absences will lower the average by minus ten points. More than two non-excused absences are grounds for a failing grade. The only excusable absence is one that results from an illness that is documented by a written letter from a doctor or nurse.

**V. GRADING CRITERIA FOR ORAL PRESENTATIONS**

**The 5-minute oral presentation on an assigned reading and the conference paper's annotated bibliography will be graded on the following criteria:**

A. The importance of the material presented to the class or in the written essay. Students employ a critical racism approach in their analysis of **two of the following issues:** 1) the Harlem community, 2) the Black Family and extended Family, 3) Sexuality, 4) Gender. The paper should make brief references to primary texts or scenes in a work or film to illustrate their arguments.

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 in the written work and, in the oral presentation, to pose questions to the class. Students should introduce the purpose behind their class discussion session and oral presentation (which is the initial statement that describes their central argument).

**VI. GRADING SCALE**

A	100.00-90.00	20.00-18.00	10.00-09.00	2.00-1.80
A-	89.99-87.00	17.99-17.40	08.90-08.70	1.78-1.74
B+	86.99-84.00	17.20-16.80	08.69-08.40	1.72-1.68
B	83.99-80.00	16.60-16.00	08.39-08.00	1.66-1.60
B-	79.99-77.00	15.99-15.40	07.99-07.70	1.59-1.53
C+	76.99-74.00	15.20-14.80	07.69-07.40	1.52-1.48
C	73.99-70.00	14.79-14.00	07.39-07.00	1.47-1.40
C-	69.99-67.00	13.99-13.40	06.99-06.70	1.39-1.34
D+	66.99-64.00	13.39-12.80	06.69-06.40	1.33-1.28
D	63.99-60.00	12.79-12.00	06.39-06.00	1.27-1.20
D-	59.99-57.00	11.99-11.40	05.99-05.70	1.19-1.14
E	56.00	11.39-00.00	05.69-00.00	1.13-0.00
	<b>cumulative</b>	<b>conference paper(30pts.)</b>	<b>oral presentations(2@10pts.)</b>	<b>reactions(10@2pts.)</b>

bibliography(10pts.)

outlines(2@10pts.)

*VII. 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.

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

**WK 1****The Black Family and Harlem**

AUG 27 F --- **READ-- BEFORE CLASS MEETS ON AUGUST 27th: Baldwin, *Go Tell It On the Mountain* (1953).**

**WK 2 COURSE INTRODUCTION**

SEP 03 F --- SCREEN James Baldwin, *THE PRICE OF THE TICKET* (1990 dir. Karen Thorsen) 87mins

**WK 3 THE NORTHERN GHETTO: HARLEM AND CRITICAL RACE THEORY**

SEP 10 F--- NO CLASS HOLIDAY ---READ: Derrick Bell, University of Illinois Law Review “Who’s Afraid of Critical Race Theory?” and James Baldwin, “Transcript: James Baldwin Debates William F. Buckley (1965) | Blog #42”. Both are available on electronic course reserve *ARES LIBRARY WEST*.

**WK 4*****The Pursuit of Heteronormative Middle-Class Respectability***

SEP 17 F--- READ: Baldwin, *Giovanni’s Room* (1956) and Baldwin, *Collected Essays*, p.231 -“The Male Prison”(10); p.269 -“The Black Boy Looks at the White Boy”(13); p.42 -“The Harlem Ghetto”; and p.63-“Notes of a Native Son”.

**WK 5*****Race, Segregation, and the North: HANDS UP: DON’T SHOOT***

SEP 24 F--- READ: Baldwin, *Collected Essays*, p.11-“Everybody’s Protest Novel”(1949); p.19-“Many Thousand Gone” (195); p.137 -“The Discovery of What It Means to Be an American”; p.170 -“Fifth Avenue, Uptown”; and p.187 -“A Fly in Buttermilk”; p.577-“Smaller Than Life”; p.606-“The Curse of Indignation”; p.622-“They Can’t Turn Back”; and p.638-“The Dangerous Road Before Martin Luther King”; p.659-“The New Lost Generation”; p.673-“Color”; “A Report from Occupied Territory”; p.799-“Notes on the House of Bondage”; and p.766-“An Open Letter to Mr. Carter”.

**WK 6*****Race, Segregation, and the South: HANDS UP: DON’T SHOOT***

OCT 01 F--- 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”; and p.247 -“Alas, Poor Richard”; p.353 -“Take Me to the Water”; p.204-“To Be Baptized”; and p.475-“Epilogue: Who Has Believed Our Report?”

**WK 7*****Race, Segregation, and Education***

OCT 08 F---NO CLASS HOMECOMING

-- READ: Daniel Solórzano, Miguel Ceja, and Tara Yosso, “Critical Race Theory, Racial Microaggressions, and Campus Racial Climate: The Experiences of African American College Students”

*The Journal of Negro Education*, Vol. 69, No. 1/2, Knocking at Freedom's Door: Race, Equity, and Affirmative Action in U.S. Higher Education. (Available on electronic course reserve *ARES LIBRARY WEST*.)

ALSO READ: Baldwin, *Collected Essays*, p.678-“A Talk to Teachers”; p.687-“This Nettle, Danger”; and 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-“A Report from Occupied Territory”; p.739-“Negroes Are Anti-Semitic Because They’re Anti-White”; and p.788-“Dark Days”.

**WK 8**      *Tran-sectional Political Activism*

OCT 15 F ---**VIEW**: Stanley Nelson dir. *FREEDOM RIDERS* (120m) - **SCREEN**: You may retrieve this item directly by visiting <https://ares.uflib.ufl.edu/ares.dll?Action=10&Form=50&Value=127775>

--- **READ**: Angela Peoples, “Don’t Just Thank Black Women. Follow Us”. *New York Times*, December 16, 2017. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/16/opinion/sunday/black-women-leadership.html>.

**WK 9**      *On Fluidity, Change, and Multidimensional Sexuality*

OCT 22 F--- **READ**: Campbell, *Talking at the Gates*, Chapters 19 through Chapter 23 and ‘Afterword to the 2002 Edition: Campbell v. US Department of Justice’; 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) and Eldridge Cleaver, *Soul On Ice*, ‘Notes On a Native Son’ pp. 97-111.**

**WK 10**      *In Search of the Postcolonial in Baldwin as an Intersectional Consciousness*

---**Paper Abstract is due Week 10, Fri, 29 OCT.**

OCT 29 F--- **READ**: Baldwin, *Collected Essay* p.85-“Encounter on the Seine: Black Meets Brown”; p.91-“A Question of Identity”; and. p.101-“Equal in Paris”. **READ**: Angela Davis, “Transnational Solidarities” in *Freedom is a Constant Struggle*, pp. 129-145; Baldwin, *Collected Essay* p.117-“Stranger in the Village” (1953); p.143-“Princes and Powers” (1957); and p.808-“Introduction to Notes of a Native Son, 1984”; p.749-“White Racism or World Community?”

---**VIEW**: Raoul Peck (director), *I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO* (2016) 94 mins.

**WK 11**      *In Search of the Postcolonial in Baldwin as a Poetic Muse*

NOV 05 F--- **READ**: Shay Youngblood, *Black Girl in Paris*, pp. 1-39. Chapter “Museum Guide.”

--- **READ**: Shay Youngblood, *Black Girl in Paris*, pp. 43-118. Chapters “Traveling Companion,” “Artist’s Model I: Paris,” ‘Au Pair.’”

**WK 12**      *In Search of the Postcolonial in Baldwin as a Poetic Muse*

**Due Today---Paper (30pts.) & Annotated bibliography (10pts.)**

NOV 12 F--- **READ**: Shay Youngblood, *Black Girl in Paris*, pp. 121-185. Chapters “Poet’s Helper,” “Lover,” and “English Teacher.”

**WK 13**      **Oral Presentations on Conference Paper (Weeks 13 & 15, Nov. 19, and Dec. 3)**

NOV 19 F---**TOPIC 1**: Harlem, Family, and the Extended Families of Sexualities

---**TOPIC 2**: Critical Race Theory-The South and the ‘Other Souths’

---**TOPIC 3**: Sexuality, Gender and Fluidity

**WK 14**

NOV 26 F--- **NO CLASS - THANKSGIVING BREAK**

**LAST CLASS WK 15---Oral Presentations on Conference Paper (Weeks 13 & 15, Nov. 19, and Dec. 3)**

DEC 03 F--- **PRESENTATIONS (15 mins per STUDENT and 5 minutes Q & A)**