

# **HISTORY (HSTA) 416: Race, Class, & Jazz in American History**

Professor Billy Smith (one with a beard) & Mr. Bryan Sciulli (a goatee)

Class Meets: MSF 11-11:50, Reid Hall 402, Spring 2013

**Office & Office Hours:** Sciulli: Wilson 2-169; by appointment

**Office & Office Hours:** Smith: Wilson 2-166; **M 1-2:15; F 9-10**

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Race, class, and gender are three of the most crucial forces that have shaped and continue to shape the history of the United States, the nature of American society, and our own personal lives. This course focuses on two of those variables—race and class—in America's past, although race will be emphasized considerably more than class. The course considers related specific themes that have permeated American history, particularly in terms of race relations between whites and blacks, as well the history of African Americans. The class includes the following topics: (1) slavery and the origins and development of racism; (2) the development of jazz within a racial and class context; (3) the Civil Rights movement; and (4) race and class in modern America.

The course is different from any other history course you have taken because of its emphasis on jazz. If you do not like jazz, or if you even *think* that jazz gives you a headache, then *please* do not take this course since it will be painful. We will play, and you will have to listen to and learn to identify many jazz tunes. If you like or want to learn about jazz, then this is your course.

Why jazz? Because it developed out of conditions of racial oppression, because it was sustained and developed primarily by black and lower-class Americans, and because it is such a spectacularly wonderful expression of the joy and sorrow of an oppressed (as well as non-oppressed) group of humans. It is not only a beautiful art form but also one of America's premier contributions to world culture and civilization. Many of America's musical and artistic geniuses, like Louis Armstrong, have belonged to the genre of jazz.

**Class Quizzes & Attendance:** To keep students actively involved in the class, we use the new technology of Clickers to have a quiz at **most class** meetings. Most times, the quiz will be on the assigned readings; other times, it will be on the lecture or films in the class. Most questions will be a straight-forward test of whether you have done the reading and understand the material in the class. This will push you to attend class; after all, it's very hard to learn if you are not there. The total quizzes will count about 20% **of your course grade**. A few items of interest:

- **I-Clickers:** All of our quizzes will be done in class with you using your I-clicker, so please buy one at the bookstore and **register it immediately** at <https://www3.montana.edu/iclicker/>, otherwise you can't get credit for the quizzes
- We will automatically drop your lowest grade on 2 quizzes in the course. If you are sick or simply don't have a brain that day, no worries, no need to contact us, we'll just drop those grades at the end of the course.
- The first several quizzes in the second week of class are for "extra-credit" only, to encourage you to register and bring your I-Clickers to class.

**Discussions on D2L:** To encourage you to express your ideas, questions, or puzzlement, we will require you to participate in the discussions on D2L. To get full credit, you will need to post a comment 6 times and also to respond to someone else’s comment 6 times during the semester. Six of the twelve comments need to be done before the Spring Break. Commenting on the readings, lectures, or other matters related to race, class, and jazz are all encouraged. The quantity and quality of your comments will count 30 points (9% of grade).

**Mid-Term Essay Exam:** A mid-term essay exam about slavery and the jazz age will count 100 points (29% of your course grade). You will write your essay in class.

**Mid-Term Multiple-Choice Test:** This test, which will focus primarily on the required music, the book by Mezzrow, and the history of jazz, will count 30 points (14% of your course grade).

**Final Exam:** The final exam, which will likely be comprised of several essays and perhaps a multiple-choice test, will count 100 points (29% of your grade).

**Grading Summary:**

Graded Items	Points	% of Total Grade
Clicker quizzes, Class attendance, and discussions in Class	70	20%
Discussions on D2L (6 posts and 6 responses during semester; need to make 6 of the 12 total comments by time of Spring Break, the other 6 after the Break)	30	9%
Mid-Term Essay	100	29%
Mid-Term Multiple-Choice Test (mostly on jazz)	50	14%
Final Exam	100	29%
Total Points	350	100%

**I-Clickers:** I-Clickers are available for purchase at the MSU bookstore. (They are pricey, but you can sell them back at the end of the semester). **Please ring your I-Clicker to class each day; first, please register it** at <https://www3.montana.edu/iclicker/> before you can use it.

**Paperless:** We are trying to go mostly paperless in this class; everything is on D2L <https://ecat.montana.edu/>. Help for using D2L: <http://eu.montana.edu/btc/tlt/support/D2L/>.

**Required Books:** the first 3 are on sale at student bookstore:

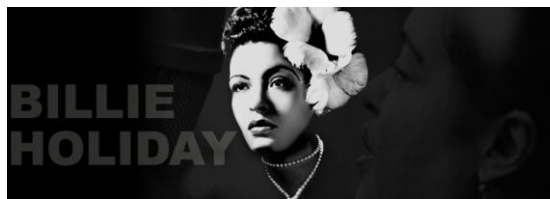
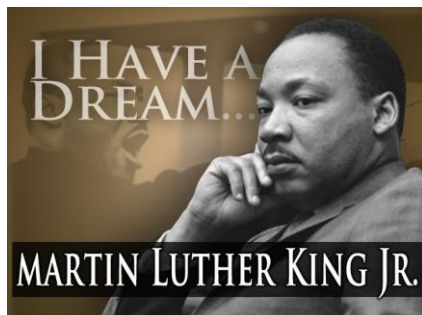
1. Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*
2. Harvard Sitkoff, *The Struggle for Black Equality 1954-1980 (2008 revised edition)*
3. Travis Smiley & Cornel West, *The Rich And The Rest Of Us: A Poverty Manifesto*
4. Mezz Mezzrow, *Really the Blues* (this book is free on D2L and **not** for sale at the bookstore; it can be bought on many sites like amazon, if you don’t want to read it on D2L)

**Required Reading of Short Essays available on D2L:**

1. Martin Luther King, “Letter from Birmingham Jail Edited”
2. Charles Blow, “Escaping Slavery”
3. “White Skin”
4. “On the Job: Bias in Hiring and Mentoring”
5. “Muslims: Willful Ignorance”
6. “Jazz 101”
7. “Anti-Semitism in the U.S.”
8. Jason DeParle, “American Dream Today”

**Required Jazz Listening:** There are 14 great jazz classics that you will need to listen to several times and be able to indentify on a test. They are all available to download (or simply play them) from D2L <https://ecat.montana.edu/>.

1. Louis Armstrong: (1926, New Orleans jazz, scat singing) *Heebie Jeebies*
2. Louis Armstrong: (1928, New Orleans jazz, fabulous Armstrong solos) *West End Blues*
3. Fats Waller: (1929, Broadway show tune jazz) *Ain't Misbehavin'*
4. Mezz Mezzrow: (1934, marijuana tune) *Sendin' the Vipers*
5. Django Reinhardt: (1936, French gypsy jazz) *Limehouse Blues*
6. Duke Ellington (1938, swing music, Billy Strayhorn composer) *Take the A Train*
7. Benny Goodman: (1937, swing music) *Sing Sing Sing*
8. Billie Holiday: (1939, jazz ballad, racial protest) *Strange Fruit*
9. Billie Holiday (1939, blues & swing) *Fine and Mellow*
10. Charlie Parker: (1947, bebop) *Scrapple from the Apple*
11. Dizzy Gillespie: (1942, bebop) *Salt Peanuts*
12. Miles Davis: (1959, cool jazz, John Coltrane on tenor sax) *So What?*
13. Dave Brubeck & Paul Desmond: (1959, West Coast cool jazz) *Take Five*
14. Weather Report: (1977, jazz fusion) *Birdland*



**SCHEDULE FOR SPRING 2013**

WEEK 1 (1/9 – 1/11): Introduction: Begin Reading for Week 2

WEEK 2 (1/14-1/18): Beginnings of Slavery & Racism

**Please Bring your clicker every day to take the quizzes**

Monday **Quiz** (Extra Credit): “White Skin and Race” **and** “Escaping Slavery”

Wednesday **Quiz** (Extra Credit): “On the Job: Bias in Hiring and Mentoring” **and** “Muslims: Willful Ignorance”

Friday **Quiz**: Martin Luther King, “Letter from Birmingham Jail Edited”

WEEK 3 (1/21-1/25): Slavery

**Monday: Martin Luther King Holiday**

Wednesday **Quiz**: *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, first half of book

WEEK 4 (1/28-2/1): Slavery & the Blues

Wednesday **Quiz**: *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, 2<sup>nd</sup> half of book

WEEK 5 (2/4-2/8): Beginnings of Jazz, Harlem Renaissance, & the Jazz Age

Wednesday **Quiz**: “Anti-Semitism in U.S.” and “Jazz 101” **and** Required Jazz Listening Tunes #1-3

WEEK 6 (2/11-2/15): Swing Era

Wednesday **Quiz**: Mezzrow, *Really the Blues*, pages v–viii & chapters 1, 2, 4, 7, 8, and 9 **and** Required Jazz Listening Tune #4

WEEK 7 (2/18-2/22): Bebop

Monday: President’s Day Holiday

Wednesday **Quiz**: Mezzrow, *Really the Blues*, chapters 10, 12, 15, 16, and 17

WEEK 8 (2/25-3/1): Jazz: 1950s and 1960s & Fusion

Wednesday **Quiz**: Required Jazz Listening Tunes #5-11

WEEK 9 (3/4-3/8): **Exam & Test**

Monday: Multiple-Choice Test –**Bring Clickers**

Wednesday: **Essay Exam and Multiple-Choice Test**

WEEK 10 (3/11-3/15): SPRING BREAK

WEEK 11 (3/18-3/22): Civil Rights Struggle: I

Wednesday **Quiz**: Sitkoff, *Struggle for Black Equality*, chapters 1 & 2

WEEK 12 (3/25-3/29): Civil Rights Struggle: II

Wednesday **Quiz**: *Struggle for Black Equality*, chapters 3, 4, and 5

Friday: Holiday

WEEK 13 (4/1-4/5): Civil Rights Struggle: III

Wednesday **Quiz:** *Struggle for Black Equality*, chapters 6 to the end

WEEK 14 (4/8-4/12): Black and White People and the American Dream

Wednesday **Quiz:** “American Dream Today”

WEEK 15 (4/15-4/19): Poverty, Class & Race

Wednesday **Quiz:** *The Rich And The Rest Of Us*, pages 1-116

WEEK 16 (4/22-4/26): Poverty, Class & Race

Wednesday **Quiz:** *The Rich And The Rest Of Us*, pages 177 – end of book

**FINAL EXAM: Monday, April 29, 4:00 – 5:50 pm**