History of the Black Experience

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For University of Texas Faculty and Staff  
July 2-August 6, 2020  
Thursdays, 10-11:30 a.m. (CDT) via Zoom

This abbreviated offering will look at the Black experience in America, with a particular emphasis on the period from 1865 to the present. Since we will have just six 90-minute sessions I’ve chosen to highlight the historical issues/themes that best connect to contemporary Black life in America. This will allow us to put recent events into a much-needed historical context.

BOOKS (all available via Kindle)
- Lynch Law in Georgia by Ida B. Wells-Barnett  
- Negroes with Guns by Robert F. Williams
- The Revolt of the Black Athlete: 50th Anniversary Edition by Harry Edwards

COURSE OUTLINE

July 2  
Freedom? (1865-1877)
- The Legacy of Slavery and White Supremacy  
- Making Freedom  
- Constitutional Amendments  
- The Criminalization of Black Life

READ:
1619 by Nikole Hannah-Jones  

WATCH:
Slavery by Another Name  
[https://www.pbs.org/tpt/slavery-by-another-name/themes/black-codes/](https://www.pbs.org/tpt/slavery-by-another-name/themes/black-codes/)
- Laws to Criminalize Black Life  
- The Origins of Black Codes  
- Pig Laws and Imprisonment  
- New Systems of Exploitation
July 9
The Nadir (1877-1940s)
• The Necessity of Jim Crow
• Convict Leasing
• Sharecropping
• Disenfranchisement
• Lynching
• Black Institution Building
• The Lost Cause and Confederate Remembrance

READ:
Lynch Law in Georgia by Ida B. Wells
https://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/webbin/book/lookupid?key=olbp42353

WATCH:
Slavery by Another Name
https://www.pbs.org/ptp/slavery-by-another-name/themes/convict-leasing/
  What it Means to be a Convict
  Reflections on Child Convict Labor
  Reflections on Convict Leasing

WATCH:
Slavery by Another Name
https://www.pbs.org/ptp/slavery-by-another-name/themes/sharecropping/
  Sharecropping as Slavery
  The Complication of Sharecropping

July 16
The Great Migrations and the Transformation of Urban America (1920-1965)
• Push/Pull Migration Factors
• White Flight and the Making of Modern Conservatism
• The Making of a Black Underclass
• Red-Lining and Housing Discrimination
• Employment Bias
• De-Facto School Segregation in the Urban North
• Police Brutality

READ:
“The Case for Reparations” by Ta-Nehisi Coates
https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631/

WATCH:
Redlined: A Legacy of Housing Discrimination
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I_sCS2E8k5g

July 23
The Civil Rights Movement (1954-1965)
• Economic Roots of Black Protest
• Cold War, Civil Rights
• Violent White Resistance
• The Debate over Violence vs. Non-Violence
• Local Movements
• Civil Rights Legislation

READ:
Negroes with Guns by Robert F. Williams

WATCH:
Emmett Till 1955, from Eyes on the Prize
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ie5Jnt_OWVs&list=PL5X0P9-9XhxIXKzOexO2Osc04wJHUWV&index=21&t=0s

WATCH:
Fannie Lou Hamer Interview, 1965
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-a3KqhkPQ-s

July 30
The Black Power Movement (1965-1972)
• Northern Urban Frustration
• The Impact of the Nation of Islam
• The Revolutionary Nature of the Black Panther Party
• Black Power and the College Campus
• COINTELPRO
• The Rise of Black Political Power

READ:
The Revolt of the Black Athlete by Harry Edwards

READ:
“The Rank and File Women of the Black Panther Party and Their Powerful Influence,” by Janelle Harris

WATCH:
Malcolm X, The Ballot or the Bullet
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8zLQLUpNGsc
August 6
Black Life and the Conservative Counterrevolution (1980s-present)
• The Privatization, Segregation, and End of Public Education
• Gentrification
• Mass Incarceration and the New Jim Crow
• Voter Suppression in the Age of Trump

WATCH:
13th
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=krfcq5pF8u8

WATCH AND READ:
Austin's Gentrification Problem: How We Got Here

READ:
“The New Jim Crow,” by Michelle Alexander
https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/new-jim-crow/

READ:
“They Don’t Really Want Us to Vote,” in the New York Times