

**History 4120 (section #11-941)
WOMEN AND THE CIVIL RIGHTS ERA
Maymester 2009**

**Professor Chana Kai Lee
MTWRF, 9:30-12:15p
101 LeConte**

**History Department
Hours: By Appt. (130 LeConte)
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course traces the development of the civil rights era (1945-1975), that period of mass activism initiated and sustained most significantly by African-Americans in response to decades of racial exclusion and persecution in education, public accommodations, politics, and the economy. Our primary focus is women's activism. The first portion of this course (1945-1965) examines mass protest strategies and philosophies presented by various organizations (e.g. the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, etc.), and articulated by key personalities such as Rosa Parks, Daisy Bates, Septima Clark, Ella Baker and Fannie Lou Hamer. The second section of this course (1965-1975) explores the words and deeds of those who proposed and lived an alternative, more radical vision of black life in America, such as Angela Davis, Assata Shakur, and Elaine Brown.

REQUIRED READING

**Rosa Parks with Jim Haskins. *Rosa Parks: My Story.*
Daisy Bates. *Long Shadow of Little Rock.*
Septima Clark. *Ready From Within.*
Chana Kai Lee. *For Freedom's Sake: The Life of Fannie Lou Hamer.*
Assata Shakur. *ASSATA: An Autobiography.*
Elaine Brown. *A Taste of Power.***

COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

Please consider this class a collaborative effort. The professor's job is to present information in a clear and orderly fashion over a designated period of time and to evaluate your learning of such material. Your task is to demonstrate how well you learn this material.

Examinations. There are three (3) required exams for this course. They will be comprised of two sections. The first section will include a list of terms that students are required to define. The objective is to demonstrate knowledge of historical significance. The second section will include an essay question that will require that students compare and evaluate a particular philosophy, movement organization, event or personality.

Exam #1 May 15 (Friday)
Exam #2 (midterm): May 21 (Thursday)
Final Exam : June 3 (Wednesday)

Class Presentation. At the end of the semester, each student will present an argument (with supporting historical evidence) for or against a particular movement strategy (e.g. nonviolence v. violence). Students will prepare their remarks in writing and submit their presentations in essay format. Additional directions will be handed out as the due date (June 1) approaches.

Class Attendance, Format and Participation. Attendance is mandatory for this course. You may have one (1) absence without an excuse. Students will receive a 10-point deduction for each absence after the first one. Medical excuses must be presented the day upon your return to class, and family death excuses must come from the dean's office. Please **DO NOT** schedule any other meetings (on or off campus) during our class time. This sends the wrong message to the professor. Please avoid perpetual tardiness. This will affect your participation grade.

The format for this course is part lecture and part discussion. There are occasions when the professor will deliver a formal presentation of information, and students are expected to take notes. On most days, we will close with a question or observation for discussion by the entire class. During such time, the instructor will serve as facilitator. Students are encouraged to express their ideas freely. Please consider this class safe space for frank and honest discussion. The objective of discussion is to learn historical substance through interpretations representing a variety of perspectives. Your participation grade depends on how well you engage the readings and the stated ideas of your peers. The guidelines for class participation grades are posted on our WebCT page.

Your final course grade will be calculated accordingly:

Examinations (3)	300 pts
Class Presentation	100pts
<u>Class Participation</u>	<u>100pts</u>
Total	500pts

Scale for Final Course Grade: 500-450 (A); 449-400 (B); 399-350 (C); 349-300 (D); below 300 (F)

May 12 (T) **Introduction: class content and requirements**
Region, Race, Gender and the Origins of Resistance: The Movement as Myth
A Movement Begins: World War II, the Brown Decision, and the Emmett Till Murder
Video : *The Murder of Emmett Till*

13 (W) **Public Accommodations in the U.S. South**
The Montgomery Bus Boycott
READING: Parks, *Rosa Parks: My Story*, pp. 108-188
Video: *Eyes on the Prize #1: AWAKENINGS (1954-1956)*

14 (R) ***Brown v. the Board of Education, Topeka, Kansas***
The Little Rock Central High Crisis
READING: Bates, *The Long Shadow of Little Rock*, pp. 1-160
Video: *Eyes on the Prize #2: FIGHTING BACK (1957-1962)*

Desegregating Higher Education: UGA and Other Case Studies
READING: Hunter-Gault, *In My Place* ,pp. 156-191 (on WebCT)

15 (F) **EXAMINATION #1: on Emmett Till, the Montgomery Bus Boycott, *Brown v. Board of Education*, and the Little Rock Central High Crisis**

18 (M) **The Student Sit-in Movement**
Freedom Rides: Desegregating Interstate Transportation
READING: Griggs-Fleming, *Soon We Will Not Cry* (selected chapters on WebCT); Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement* (selected chapters on WebCT)

Video: *Eyes on the Prize #3: AIN'T SCARED OF YOUR JAILS (1960-1961)*

19 (T) **Voter Registration Efforts and Consequences: "Literacy and Liberation" in South Carolina**
READING: Clark, *Ready From Within* (all)

Voter Registration Efforts and Consequences: Civil Rights in Mississippi
READING: Lee, *For Freedom's Sake* (1-120)

Video: *Eyes on the Prize #5: MISSISSIPPI: IS THIS AMERICA? (1962-1964)*

20 (W) **Civil Rights in Mississippi (cont.)**

READING: Lee, *For Freedom's Sake*, pp. 121-180

Video: on Fannie Lou Hamer

Midterm Review

21 (R) MIDTERM EXAMINATION: on the sit-in movement, the Freedom Rides, voter registration in South Carolina and Mississippi, Septima Clark and Fannie Lou Hamer

22 (F) Malcolm X and Gendered Racial Liberation: A Movement in Transition

READING: Shakur, *ASSATA*, pp. 1-79

Video: *Eyes on the Prize II: THE TIME HAS COME (1964-1966)*

25 (M) HOLIDAY: Memorial Day

26 (T) Women Nationalists: Assata Shakur and Angela Davis

READING: Shakur, *ASSATA*, pp. 99-274

Video: *Eyes on the Prize II: TWO SOCIETIES (1965-68)*

27 (W) Women in the Black Panther Party

READING: Brown, *A Taste of Power (1-155)*

Video: *Eyes on the Prize II: POWER! (1967-68)*

28 (R) Women in the Black Panther Party (cont.)

READING: Brown, *A Taste of Power*, pp. 156-268

Video: *Eyes on the Prize II: A NATION OF LAW? (1968-71)*

29 (F) Women in the Black Panther Party (cont.)

READING: Brown, *A Taste of Power*, pp. 268-450

Decline of Black Radicalism

1 (M) Class Presentations

2 (T) Final Examination Review

3 (W) FINAL EXAMINATION: on women nationalists and black radicalism