



Martin, Malcolm, &
Masculinity
RELIGION 1566
HDS 3260

Course Description

The Civil Rights and Black Power movements (narrowly defined) were principally struggles for racial equality and economic justice. The public ministries of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X have come to signify these movements respectively and have remained at the center of debates concerning competing trajectories of response. But though prevailing views often portray the philosophies of Malcolm and Martin as incommensurate, their philosophical and theological commitments led them to a similar place of aligning with the poor and oppressed on a global scale. This is not their only similarity. Both Martin and Malcolm extend from religious traditions where notions of social respectability and hyper-masculinity are inextricably linked to gendered conceptions of racial progress. The aim of this course, then, is to engage the theological, philosophical and social thought of these men while unmasking normative assumptions about race, domesticity, and sexuality that informed their outlooks and animated their gendered moral frameworks and masculinist organizing strategies. We will critically unpack the gender ideologies that underlay the thought and praxis of Malcolm X and Martin King while assessing ethical implications for contemporary politics and faith.

Instructor

Jonathan L. Walton, PhD

Plummer Professor of Christian

Morals and Professor of Religion and

Course Requirement & Grade Distribution

Midterm Examination	25 points
Attendance/Discussion Participation	20 points
Critical Review Essays	30 points
Final Examination	25 points

Required Texts

Betty Collier-Thomas and V.P. Franklin (editors), *Sisters in the Struggle: African American Women in the Civil Rights-Black Power Movement*, NYU Press, 2001.

Steve Estes, *I Am a Man!: Race, Manhood, and the Civil Rights Movement*, The University of North Carolina Press, 2005.

Troy Jackson, *Becoming King: Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Making of a National Leader*, University Press of Kentucky, 2003.

Martin Luther King, Jr. (author) and James M. Washington (editor), *A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings of Martin Luther King, Jr.* HarperOne, 2003.

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Martin Luther King, Jr. (author) and Cornel West (editor), *The Radical King*, Penguin Random House, 2015.

Manning Marable, *Malcolm X: A Life of Reinvention*, Penguin Books 2011

Manning Marable and Garrett Felber (editors), *The Portable Malcolm X Reader: A Man Who Stands for Nothing Will Fall for Anything*, Penguin Classics, 2013.

Tommie Shelby and Brandon Terry (editors), *To Shape a New World: Essays on the Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr.* Harvard University Press, 2018.

Ula Yvette Taylor, *The Promise of Patriarchy: Women and the Nation of Islam*, The University of North Carolina Press, 2017

Week 1 Introduction

January 23rd – January 25th

Readings:

Week 2 Race, Honor and Manhood

January 30th – February 1st

Readings:

Estes, *I Am a Man*, Introduction, chapters 1-3

Beryl Satter, “Marcus Garvey, Father Divine, and the Gender Politics of Race Difference and Race Neutrality,” in *African American Religious Thought*, eds. Eddie Glaude and Cornel West, (uploaded in Canvas)

“Interview of Earl Little” in *The Portable Malcolm X Reader*

Ted Vincent, “The Garveyite Parents of Malcolm X,” printed in *The Portable Malcolm X Reader*

Week 3 Women at Work! The Seeds of Civil Rights Activism

February 6th – February 8th (**Review Essays Due**)

Readings:

V.P. Franklin and Bettye Collier-Thomas, *Sisters in the Struggle*, chapters 2-3

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Lashawn Harris, “Marvel Cooke: Investigative Journalist, Communist and Black Radical Subject,” *Journal for the Study of Radicalism*, Vol. 6, No. 2, 2012.

(uploaded in Canvas)

Ella Baker and Marvel Cooke, “The Slave Market,” *The Crisis Magazine*, 1935.

(uploaded in Canvas)

Marvel Cooke, “The Bronx Slave Market,” *New York Compass*, 1950. (uploaded in Canvas)

Week 4 Young Martin: The Making of a Leader

February 13th February 15th

Readings:

Troy Jackson, *Becoming King*, chapters 1-3

Rosa Parks, “Tired of Giving In”: The Launching of the Montgomery Bus Boycott” chapter 4 in *Sisters in the Struggle*

James Baldwin, “The Dangerous Road Before Martin Luther King, Jr.” *Harpers Magazine*, 1961

Week 5 Young Martin: The Making of a Leader

February 20th February 22nd (Review Essays Due)

Readings:

Troy Jackson, *Becoming King*, chapters 4-6

Martin Luther King, Jr. from *A Testament of Hope*. Chapter 19 “An Address Before the National Press Club”

King, “The Violence of Desperate Men,” chapter one in *The Radical King*

Robert Gooding-Williams “The Du Bois Washington Debate and the Idea of Dignity” chapter 1 in *To Shape a New World*

Week 6 From MSTM to ATOI to NOI

February 27th March 1st

Readings:

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Manning Marable, *Malcolm X: A Life of Reinvention*

Ula Yvette Taylor, *The Promise of Patriarchy*, chapters 1-4

Malcolm X, "[Malcolm X Speech](#)" the Digital History Project

Malcolm X, "[The House Negro and the Field Negro](#)" (youtube)

Malcolm X, "[Interview at UC Berkeley](#)" (youtube)

Malcolm X, "[King James and the Bible](#)" (youtube)

Recommended Reading: Susan Nance, "Mystery of the Moorish Science Temple Movement: Southern Blacks and American Alternative to Spirituality in 1920s Chicago," *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation*, Vol. 12, No. 2, 2002.

Week 7 Malcolm: The Making of an Organic Intellectual

March 6th – March 8th (Review Essays Due)

Readings:

Manning Marable, *Malcolm X: A Life of Reinvention* (Read through Spring Break!)

Week 8 Spring Break

Week 9 From Civil Rights to Human Rights

March 20th – 22nd (Review Essays Due)

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Readings:

[Malcolm X debate with James Baldwin](#) (youtube)

Malcolm X, "[The Ballot or the Bullet](#)"

Malcolm X, "Its Ballot or the Bullet" in *The Portable Malcolm X Reader*

"Malcolm X Debates Louis Lomax" and "MMI FBI File, Summary Report, Chicago Office, June 19, 1964" in *The Portable Malcolm X Reader*

Martha C. Nussbaum, "From Anger to Self-Love: Self-Purification and Political Resistance," chapter 5 in *To Shape a New World*

King, "Nonviolence and Social Change," chapter 13 in *The Radical King*

Week 10 The Radical King & International X

March 27th March 29th

Readings:

West, "The Radical King We Don't Know," introduction to *The Radical King*

King, "The World House" chapter six in *The Radical King*

King, "Black Power," chapter seventeen in *The Radical King*

Brandon Terry, "The Requiem for a Dream: The Problem Space for Black Power," chapter 14 *To Shape a New World*

"Formation of the Organization of Afro-American Unity" and "OAAU Statement of Basic Aims and Perspectives, OAAU FBI File, June 24, 1964" in *The Portable Malcolm X Reader*

Week 11 Pawns of Neoliberalism?

April 3rd April 5th (Review Essays Due)

Readings:

David Halberstam, "The Second Coming of Martin Luther King, Jr. *Harpers Magazine*, 1967 (uploaded in Canvas)

Manning Marable, "Rediscovering Malcolm's Life: A Historian's Adventure" in *The Portable Malcolm X Reader*

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King, “Beyond Vietnam: Time to Break the Silence,” in *The Radical King*

Ronald R. Sundstrom, “The Prophetic Tension between Race Consciousness and the Ideal of Color-Blindness,” chapter 6 in *To Shape a New World*

Week 12 The Appeal of Patriarchy

April 10th – April 12th

Readings:

Estes, *I Am a Man!*, chapters 5-6

Ula Yvette Taylor, *The Promise of Patriarchy*, chapters 9-10

Daniel Patrick Moynihan, “The Negro Family: The Case for National Action” (uploaded in Canvas)

Lawrie Balfour, “Living in the Red”: Time, Debt, and Justice in *To Shape a New World*

Week 13 The Price of Patriarchy

April 17th – April 19th (Review Essays Due)

Readings:

Farah Jasmine Griffin, “Ironies of the Saint: Malcolm X, Black Women, and the Price of Protection” in *The Portable Malcolm X Reader* (but also in *Sisters in the Struggle*)

Tracye A. Matthews, “No One Ever Asks What a Man’s Role in the Revolution Is” Gender Politics and Leadership in the Black Panther Party, 1966-1971” in *Sisters in the Struggle*

Shatema Threadcraft and Brandon M. Terry, “Gender Trouble: Manhood, Inclusion and Justice,” chapter 10 in *To Shape a New World*

Week 14 Recap

April 24th

Assignments

CRITICAL REVIEW ESSAYS

Critical review essays provide an opportunity to respond thoughtfully to the readings. You will be required to write six analytical review essays. They should be one page single-spaced. Essays are to be uploaded to Canvas on the designated dates above.

The following questions should guide your discussion:

1. What is the author's historical and political context?
2. What is the general argument of the book?
3. How is religion employed as a tool for political engagement?
4. How are debates about class, gender and race negotiated?
4. What major themes connect this work with other works in our readings?
5. How is the intersection of religion and politics understood?
6. Who is the audience and why has this audience been chosen?
7. With what intellectuals (or schools of thought) is this author engaged?

The above questions do not form a rigid template for your review essays. You may want to address other issues and some will not be particularly relevant for specific texts. These questions, however, should help structure your reading, note-taking in class, and your essays. Critical review essays are compulsory! Failure to submit three of the six analytical essays will result in an automatic F in the course.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Fundamental to learning is full participation in the classroom experience. It is here where questions are raised and discussion brings about clarity, though not necessarily agreement on all issues. Your participation is not only crucial to your growth, but also that of your classmates. Thus absence from the class should be avoided at all costs. Nevertheless, emergencies do arise. In light of this, you are permitted one excused absence. After this, your grade will be affected. Full participation in the classroom dynamic is expected at all times.

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We have entered into a contract of reciprocity where we learn from one another. Let us enjoy and respect the process.

Moreover, though we require critical interpretations of the assigned readings and each other's perspectives, all conversation MUST remain collegial. Always err to the side of generosity! You never know when you will need liberality reciprocated. Being rude and "going hard" in order to perform your intelligence is not a sign of intelligence. It is a sign of being an @\$#!

Academic Integrity

Using the ideas of others without giving appropriate credit is plagiarism. You are expected to cite your work (including electronic/internet/media sources). I suggest the Chicago humanities style of documentation. For examples of appropriately cited sources according to the Chicago Manual of Style see:

<http://www.press.uchicago.edu/Misc/Chicago/emosfaq/tools.html>

Moreover, any other form of intellectual dishonesty is unacceptable. Academic integrity is expected at all times. This is not a matter of getting caught (though you will be punished according to University guidelines) but a matter of your own personal integrity. You owe yourself nothing less than your best. Do not compromise your most valuable assets: your name and character.