Black Lives Matter

IST 1015 1 ⏹ Fall 2016 ⏹4.30P-5.30P⏹Tuesdays ⏹Online⏹ Iliff School of Theology

JOURNEY: 10-12, 14-15 OCTOBER 2016 ⏹8.00A-12.30P

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**Black Lives Matter**

This course invites first-year students at Iliff to consider the intersection of theological education and the contemporary movement for Black lives as an iteration of a long history of Black struggle for liberation within the United States. Through this class, students will be invited to explore existential questions regarding humanity and the theological doctrine thereof, race, gender, sexuality, and class. Students will be encouraged to creatively engage diverse resources and will be introduced to activists who have been and continue to be engaged in the movement for Black lives. Students will begin to answer the following central question: How is this iterative movement for Black lives helping us to rethink or reconsider a Black theology, Black religiosity, and/or ministry?

**Objectives**

* Learning and engaging with the movement for Black lives.
* Creatively engage and participate in social justice thought and praxis.
* Explore the movement for Black lives as a contextualized struggle that intersects with history, social analysis, sacred texts, ethics, religious practice, and comparative religion.
* The development of critical thinking, reading, and writing skills. Specifically, students will learn how to identify (in the writing of others) and articulate (in their own writing) a thesis, methodological approaches, context, argument contours, and the broader implications of the scholarship. Students will also learn how to cite diverse print and media resources.
* Students will hone library and online research skills in order to address a particular subject. Specifically, students will learn how to curate and discern resources that are helpful and appropriate to given genres.
* Students will learn how to engage in constructive academic dialogue rooted in religious & social scholarship in online, classroom, and broader public forums.
* Students will be introduced to cutting edge religious thought to nurture their interest in religious and theological study.

**Class Meeting Format**

* One pre-recorded lecture every other week.
* One meeting time every other week that focuses on the week’s assigned readings and previous week’s lecture (1 hour). Students will be responsible for facilitation and engagement during this time. The instructor will be available for questions and may interject, but the conversation guidance and content will primarily be in the students’ hands; the instructor will often be a silent participant. These sessions will be recorded in-case students are not able to attend (and additional supplementary work qua 300-word blog post required), but every effort should be made to attend.
* Five in-person class meetings at Iliff
	+ 8.00 AM – 12.30 PM on 10-12 October 2016
	+ 8.00 AM – 12.30 PM on 14-15 October 2016

**Assignments**

**Microblog Review** (10%): Microblogs such as Twitter, Tumblr, Jaiku, Hictu, and certain features of Facebook (i.e., a brief text/image/video updating and publishing form of blogging; usually less than 200 characters) are an important contemporary form of communication and organization. Identify one microblog forum through which to trace the treatment of the movement for Black lives. Specify a timeframe that will constrain your review of this microblog. Identify a central trend of the microblog’s treatment of the movement. Construct a thesis and build an argument around this trend that specifies: why you do or do not agree with the perspective expressed in the central trend and the merits and/or limitations of that trend with respect to both theory and praxis. Identify, cite, and utilize at least two (2) books not included in the syllabus and at least two (2) additional sources of different types (i.e., book, web press, audiovisual material, and/or microblog resources) that support your thesis. 4-5 pages, double-spaced, 1-inch margins, standard font. **(Due 26 September 2016)**

**Web Press Review** (15%): Identify one web press through which to trace the treatment of the movement for Black lives. Specify a timeframe that will constrain your review of this web press. Identify a central trend of the microblog’s treatment of BLM. Construct a thesis and build an argument around this trend that specifies: why you do or do not agree with the perspective expressed in the central trend and the merits and/or limitations of that trend with respect to both theory and praxis. Identify, cite, and utilize at least two (2) books not included in the syllabus and at least two (2) additional sources of different types (i.e., book, web press, audiovisual material, and/or microblog resources) that support your thesis. 4-5 pages, double-spaced, 1-inch margins, standard font. **(Due 3 October 2016)**

**Seven Last/New Words Presentations** (20%): Write a sermon or address that engages and/or redacts the last words of a Black person who has been the victim of extrajudicial killing in the past five (5) years. 4-5 pages, double-spaced, 1-inch margins, standard font. **(Due 10 October 2016)**

**Researched Book Review** (20%): Identify one book from the syllabus (that you are not presenting/facilitation class discussion on) through which to trace the treatment of the movement for Black lives. Identify a central trend in the treatment of the movement for black lives in the book you have selected. Construct a thesis and build an argument around this trend that specifies: why you do or do not agree with the perspective expressed in the central trend and the merits and/or limitations of that trend with respect to both theory and praxis. Identify, cite, and utilize at least five (5) books not included in the syllabus and at least two (2) additional sources of different types (i.e., book, web press, audiovisual material, and/or microblog resources) that support your thesis. 4-5 pages, double-spaced, 1-inch margins, standard font. **(Due 7 November 2016)**

**Class Discussion Facilitation** (15%): Facilitation should provide other students with (1) a summary of the week’s readings, (2) guiding questions adequate to sustain conversation through the class session, (3) additional readings, and (4) at least one thoughtfully selected multi-media resource that deepens engagement with the assigned readings.

**Class Participation** (20%): You are responsible for the completion of reading assignments prior to Monday of the week for which the readings are assigned. This is indicated by:

* A 100-word weekly blog post that identifies a theme of the week’s reading and specifies one question you have of the authors and/or texts engaged. (**Due on each Monday**)
* A response to at least one classmate’s post for the week. (**Due on each Tuesday by 12.00 PM**)

Active participation in class discussion and at meeting times, and punctual attendance for the class sessions, is also expected.

**Weekly Reading Assignments**

**Week 1. 12 September 2016 – Genealogies of Black Theology & Movement**

* Cornel West
* Tasbeh Herwees

**Week 2. 19 September 2016 – Activism Expanded**

* Cathy Cohen

**Week 3. 26 September 2016 – Theology Expanded**

* Kelly Brown Douglas
* Leah Gunning Francis
* Sue Edwards & Duchess Harris
* Ron Williams

**Week 4. 3 October 2016 – Ferguson & The Significance of Regions to the Movement**

* Jamala Rogers & Matt Nelson

**Week 5. 10-12, 14-15 October 2016 (BLM Denver Panel)**

* **Seven Last Words Presentations**
* **“Called” through BLM Panel**
* **BLM 5280 & SURJ**

**Week 6. 17 October 2016 – BLM Peripheries, Critics & Detractors**

* Ta-Nehisi Coates
* <http://www.blackagendareport.com/wheres-the-blacklivesmatter-critique-of-black-political-class>
* <http://www.cosmopolitan.com/politics/a45930/misconceptions-black-lives-matter-movement/>

**Week 7. 24 October 2016 – Prisons to the Movement**

* Michelle Alexander
* Beth Ritchie

**Week 8. 1 November – Theoretical Frameworks**

* Joy James

**Week 9. 8 November 2016 – BLM & Sexuality**

* Andrea J. Ritchie, Joey L. Mogul, and Kay Whitlock

**Week 10. 15 November 2016 – Activist Futures**

* Angela Davis

**Primary Texts**

Alexander, Michelle. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. The New Press, 2012.

Coates, Ta-Nehisi. *Between the World and Me*. 1 edition. New York: Spiegel & Grau, 2015.

Cohen, Cathy J. *Democracy Remixed: Black Youth and the Future of American Politics*. 1 edition. Oxford; New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 2012.

———. “Deviance As Resistance: A New Research Agenda for the Study of Black Politics.” *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race* 1, no. 01 (2004): 27–45. doi:10.1017/S1742058X04040044.

———. *The Boundaries of Blackness: AIDS and the Breakdown of Black Politics*. 1 edition. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 1999.

Davis, Angela, and Cornel West. *Freedom Is a Constant Struggle: Ferguson, Palestine, and the Foundations of a Movement*. Edited by Frank Barat. Chicago, Illinois: Haymarket Books, 2016.

Douglas, Kelly Brown. *Stand Your Ground: Black Bodies and the Justice of God*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2015.

Edwards, Sue Bradford, and Duchess Harris JD PhD. *Black Lives Matter*. Minneapolis, MN: Essential Library, 2015.

Francis, Leah Gunning. *Ferguson and Faith: Sparking Leadership and Awakening Community*. St. Louis, Mo: Chalice Press, 2015.

Herwees, Tasbeeh. “The Motivating Forces Behind Black Lives Matter.” *GOOD Magazine*. Accessed October 13, 2015. <http://magazine.good.is/features/black-lives-matter-feminism-history>.

<http://www.blackagendareport.com/wheres-the-blacklivesmatter-critique-of-black-political-class>

<http://www.cosmopolitan.com/politics/a45930/misconceptions-black-lives-matter-movement/>

Hutchinson, Sikivu. *Godless Americana: Race and Religious Rebels*. Los Angeles, Calif.: Infidel Books, 2013.

James, Joy. *Resisting State Violence: Radicalism, Gender, and Race in U.S. Culture*. Minneapolis  Minn.: University of Minnesota Press, 1996.

Mogul, Joey L., Andrea J. Ritchie, and Kay Whitlock. *Queer (In)Justice: The Criminalization of LGBT People in the United States (Queer Ideas/Queer Action)*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2012.

Richie, Beth E. *Arrested Justice: Black Women, Violence, and America’s Prison Nation*. New York: NYU Press, 2012.

Rogers, Jamala, and Matt Nelson. *Ferguson Is America: Roots of Rebellion*. Jamala Rogers, 2015.

West, Cornel. *Prophesy Deliverance!: An Afro-American Revolutionary Christianity*. 1st ed. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1982.

Williams, Ron. *Black Lives Matter: How to Effect Change and Make Your Voice Heard*, n.d.

**Secondary & Supplemental Texts**

“10 Micro-Blogging Tools Compared.” *ReadWrite*. Accessed October 13, 2015. <http://readwrite.com/2007/09/06/10_micro-blogging_tools_compared>.

**Other Required Readings Will Be Distributed Over the Course of the Class Via Email/Web Link. These Will Be Announced Weekly.**