

TH-2743: Frederick Douglass

Fall 2021

Mondays 1:00 – 4:00 PM

Professor Scott C. Williamson

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Office hours: Mondays 12:30-1:00 PM and 4:00-4:30 PM

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/5028942284>

Course rubric: [Reading VALUE rubric.pdf](#)

YouTube videos: [\(117\) Black American History - YouTube](#)

Course Description

This course is designed to introduce students to the mind of Frederick Douglass, and to the times in which he lived. Douglass was one of the most important and influential figures of the nineteenth century. Remembered primarily as a dynamic abolitionist orator, prolific autobiographer, and candid editor, Douglass was also an important thinker. He was among the nineteenth century's foremost advocates for social, racial and gender equality. Douglass is also among the first generation of black thinkers to synthesize the disparate elements of Protestantism, Black Nationalism, moral and political abolitionism, and cultural assimilation into a program of social progress for African Americans. His ideas have influenced generations of black scholars, most notably, Booker T. Washington and W. E. B. Du Bois.

Second, this course focuses on reading as “the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language” (Snow et al., 2002). The course rubric, the *Reading VALUE Rubric*, designed by the Association of American Colleges and Universities, provides a framework for students to evaluate their relationship to particular texts and to the range of texts introduced by the course. The framework will help students to attend to the following elements of academic reading: (1) reader's voice; (2) interpretation; (3) analysis; (4) the text in the context of scholarship; (5) genres; and (6) comprehension.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's)

MDIV SLO's

- **SLO 3:** Students will be able to think theologically and ethically in relation to particular traditions and contemporary needs.
- **SLO 4:** Students will demonstrate the ability to reflect critically and self-critically on relationships between Christian faith and various forms of systemic injustice.

MA(R) SLO's

- **SLO 4:** Students will be able to think theologically, strategically, imaginatively, and contextually about ethical issues.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Place Frederick Douglass in a historical and literary context
- Recognize possible implications of Douglass's writings for contexts and issues beyond his explicit message.
- Evaluate the scholarly significance of Frederick Douglass's thought

Course Requirements:

- Preparation and Participation: Students will submit a 500-word reflection, approximately 2-pages, double-spaced, on some aspect of your engagement with the course reading materials for each class between September 20 and December 6, with the exception of the week that you submit your midterm essay (10 reflections).
 - All reflections are due no later than 1-hour prior to the start of class. Late reflections (after 1:00 PM) will not be accepted and will receive 0 points. In accordance with the course rubric, each reflection will receive up to 6-points. The following six elements will receive up to 1-point apiece: (1) *Reader's Voice*; (2) *Interpretation*; (3) *Analysis*; (4) *Relationship to Text*; (5) *Genres*; and (6) *Comprehension*. Regular attendance, timely reading, 500-word reflections, and thoughtful participation in class discussions are crucial to student learning. (10 reflections, **60 points**)
- Midterm Essay: Students will write an essay between 1,250 and 1,750-words, double-spaced (roughly 5 to 7-pages), that demonstrates how they read Douglass and Josiah Priest in the 1840's, guided by the course rubric. (Due 10/25 @ 1:00 PM, **20 points**)
- Final Essay: Students will write an essay between 1,250 and 1,750-words, double-spaced (roughly 5 to 7-pages), that demonstrates how they read Douglass in conversation with *Frederick Douglass: A Critical Reader*. (Due 12/13, @ 1:00 PM, **20 points**)

Required Books

1. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., and John Stauffer, editors, *The Portable Frederick Douglass* (New York: Penguin Books) 2016.
2. Bill E. Lawson and Frank M. Kirkland, editors, *Frederick Douglass: A Critical Reader* (Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley-Blackwell) 1999
3. Josiah Priest, *Slavery as it Relates to the Negro, or African Race ...* (London: Forgotten Books) 2017.

Use of Inclusive Language

In accordance with seminary policy, students are to use inclusive language in class discussions and in written and oral communication by using language representative of the whole human community in respect to gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, and physical and intellectual capacities. Direct quotations from theological texts and translations of the Bible do not have to be altered to conform to this policy. In your own writing, however, when referring to God, you are encouraged to use a variety of images and metaphors, reflecting the richness of the Bible's images for God. More discussion about inclusive language can be accessed from the Academic Support Center and from the section of the LPTS web site with information for current students.

Academic Honesty

All work turned in to the instructors is expected to be the work of the student whose name appears on the assignment. Any borrowing of the ideas or the words of others must be acknowledged by quotation marks (where appropriate) and by citation of author and source. Use of another's language or ideas from online resources is included in this policy and must be attributed to author and source of the work being cited. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism and may result in failure of the course. Two occurrences of plagiarism may result in dismissal from the Seminary. Students unfamiliar with issues related to academic honesty can find help from the staff in the Academic Support Center. For more information, see the Policy for Academic Honesty in the Student Handbook.

Special Accommodations

Students requiring accommodations for a documented physical or learning disability should be in contact with the Director of the Academic Support Center during the first two weeks of a semester (or before the semester begins) and should speak with the instructor as soon as possible to arrange appropriate adjustments. Students with environmental or other sensitivities that may affect their learning are also encouraged to speak with the instructor.

Citation Policy

Citations in your papers should follow Seminary standards, which are based on these guides:

American Psychological Association. *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. 7th ed. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2020.

Turabian, Kate L., Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*. 9th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020.

The Chicago Manual of Style. 17th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017.

Copies of these guides are available at the library and in the Academic Support Center.

See also the library's citation help page:

<https://lpts.libguides.com/digitalresources/citingsources>

Attendance Policy

According to the Seminary catalog, students are expected to attend class meetings regularly. In case of illness or emergency, students are asked to notify the instructor of their planned absence from class, either prior to the session or within 24 hours of the class session. Further, in the case of illness, students who are able to attend a Zoom session are permitted to turn off the camera. Please use the CHAT to confirm your engagement with the class.

Etiquette for Digital Meetings

- *Timeliness*: Plan to sign on to the meeting at least a couple of minutes before the scheduled start-time.
- *Audio*: Please mute your microphone unless you are speaking or about to speak. If the discussion gets lively, virtually raise your hand to be recognized by the moderator before speaking or use the "chat" function.
- *Online presence*: • **Keep your camera turned on** unless you must step away for a moment. • Close the door, turn off your phone, Twitter alerts, etc. Do not multitask. • If you use a virtual background, test it first to make sure it is not distracting. • Do not eat, walk around, or move in other distracting ways. (Sipping a beverage is fine.)

Other Items Relating to Instruction, Learning, and Technology at LPTS

- To access the library and its resources, visit: <https://lpts.edu/library/>
- To request a library laptop loan, contact library@lpts.edu
- For a summary of information related to accessing Outlook, Canvas, CAMS, and the Intranet, see: [Accessing LPTS Resources](#)
- For general help with campus network access, Outlook (email), contact support@lpts.edu
- For information on Student Assistance Funds to help with costs associated with learning technology and access (\$300 maximum), contact Gina Kuzuoka at gkuzuoka@lpts.edu

Schedule of Topics

September 13

Introduction to Slavery, Douglass studies and Critical Reading

- Read: [Williamson intro to FD's Narrative](#) and evaluate according to the course rubric
- Read: *What Is an African American Classic?* in the Portable Douglass text
- Read: *Introduction* in the Portable Douglass text

- September 20 Reading the *Narrative* in historical context with Josiah Priest
- Read Josiah Priest (1843), Preface, and sections 1-3
 - Read Douglass, *Narrative* (1845) chapters 1-5
 - Write a 500-word reflection
- September 27 Reading the *Narrative* and Josiah Priest
- Read Josiah Priest sections 4-6
 - Read Douglass, *Narrative* chapters 6-11 & Appendix
 - Write a 500-word reflection
- October 4 Reading *My Bondage, Life and Times*, and Josiah Priest
- Read Josiah Priest sections 7-9
 - Read Douglass, *My Bondage* (1855) chapters 22-24
 - Read Douglass, *Life and Times* (1881) chapters 1 & 16
 - Write a 500-word reflection
- October 11 Reading *My Bondage* and Josiah Priest
- Read Josiah Priest sections 10-12
 - Read Douglass, *The Heroic Slave*
 - Write a 500-word reflection
- October 18 **Research and Study: No class session**
- Read Josiah Priest sections 13-15
 - Read Douglass: “What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?”
 - “The Claims of the Negro Ethnologically Considered”
 - “The Dred Scott Decision”
 - “The Significance of Emancipation in the West Indies”
 - (Write a 1,250-word midterm essay, double-spaced, on your reading of Priest, and/or Douglass as an autobiographer, guided by the rubric. Due 10/25)
- October 25 Racial Assimilation and Emigration
- Read: *Critical Reader* Part I
 - Read Douglass: “The Trials and Triumphs of Self-Made Men”
 - “The Day of Jubilee Comes”
 - **Midterm essay due @ 1:00 PM**
- November 1 Douglass and “Original Intent”
- Read *Critical Reader* Part II
 - Read Douglass: “The Proclamation and the Negro Army”
 - “The Mission of the War”
 - Write a 500-word reflection

November 8

Enlightenment and Enslavement

- Read *Critical Reader* Part III
- Read Douglass: “Pictures and Progress”
 - “Our Martyred President”
- Write a 500-word reflection

November 15

Moral Suasion and Rebellion

- Read *Critical Reader* Part IV
- Read Douglass: “The Freedman’s Monument to Abraham Lincoln”
 - “Lessons of the Hour”
- Write a 500-word reflection

November 22

Incarcerating and Lynching Black Bodies

- Read *Critical Reader* Part V
- Read Douglass: “To My Old Master”
 - “Prejudice Against Color”
 - “F.D.”
 - “The Word ‘White’ “
 - “Is It Right and Wise to Kill a Kidnapper?”
 - “Our Plan for Making Kansas a Free State”
 - “The Doom of the Black Power”
 - “Captain John Brown Not Insane”
 - “To the *Rochester Democrat and American*”
- Write a 500-word reflection

November 29

Douglass and African American Social Progress

- Read *Critical Reader* Part VI
- Read Douglass: “The Chicago Nominations”
 - “The Inaugural Address”
 - “A Trip to Haiti”
 - “The Fall of Sumter”
 - “Fremont and His Proclamation”
 - “The President and His Speeches”
 - “Men of Color, to Arms!”
 - “Valedictory”
 - “Woman Suffrage Movement”
- Write a 500-word reflection

December 6

“The Future of the Colored Race”

- Read Douglass: “Letter from the Editor”
 - “Give Us the Freedom Intended for Us”
 - “The Color Line”
 - “The Future of the Colored Race”
 - “Introduction to *The Reason Why the Colored American Is Not in the World’s Columbian Exposition*”

- “*Toussaint L’Ouverture*”
- Write a 500-word reflection

(December 13

Final Essay due @ 1:00 PM)