Malcolm & Martin

The Political Thought of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, Jr. and the American Civil Rights Movement 1954–1968

PS 150	Prof: Barbara Allen
Tues Thurs	
Weitz 233	Mon – Thurs by appointment
10:10- 11:55	Sign up ON MOODLE

The Course

This seminar will examine the speeches, sermons, and writings of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X. We will study both activists' ideas as part of the larger discourse of civil rights, liberation, non-violence, and social justice. Our goal will be to draw out the complexities of these ideas to see how they challenge democratic political practice in the United States and, more generally, the tradition of liberal political theory on which much of that practice is based.

Readings are on e-reserves with password POSC or hyperlinked in Moodle

Course Requirements

The lives and works of Martin Luther King and Malcolm X are said to reflect two traditions of African American thought: an "integrationist" approach to civil rights with the goal of inclusion in the public and political life of a liberal democracy (ML King) and a "separatist" or "nationalist" ideal of liberation from what would be considered an inevitably oppressive, hegemonic Euro-American culture and political regime (Malcolm X). The actions inspired by ML King and Malcolm X are furthermore placed in contrast according to their core beliefs (philosophy, religion, and ontology informing their course of action) and their strategies for confronting injustice, especially their positions on non-violence and self-defense. Yet, if we look beyond these obvious dimensions of contrast, we find several significant perceptions — sources of hope and despair — shared by the two activists. In fact, the differences in their experiences and actions might be seen as part of a larger matrix of response — ideas and initiatives raising questions about citizenship and self-government in the context of American democracy. We will take up the complex ideas and questions raised by King and X in class discussion and individual writing assignments. Both activists emphasized thinking and doing in community, and our examination of their work will likewise stress the importance of preparation (by reading, listening, and speaking) and participation (by writing and taking part in the larger discourse of campus life). In addition to coming to class prepared to talk about the reading assignments and events in the world, I ask you to write two (3-5 page) essays, one focusing on King's ideas and the second focusing on the views of Malcolm X. In each case the assignment is simply to write about some specific aspect of each "philosophy" of interest two you. The third assignment will ask you to take these ideas "beyond the books" to look at the legacy and contemporary meaning of the Civil Rights activism in the U.S., particularly as these ideas are represented in popular culture (e.g. in

music and in the films we have screened).

Grades will be computed as follows

Seminar Participation	10%
Essays 30% each	90%
Total	100%

Topics for Discussion and Reading Assignments:

Part 1 The Cultures of Jim Crow

Tues Sept 15 — Introductory Overview of American Democracy and Legal Impediments to Equality
Presentation covers the following documents
Declaration of Independence (1776), U.S. Constitution Art. I, Sect. 2; Art. II, Sect. 9; Art. IV, Sect. 2 (1789), Fugitive Slave Act (1793), *Dred Scott* (1856), Reconstruction Amendments, Civil Rights Act (1866 & 1875), Black Codes, *Slaughterhouse Cases* (1873), *Civil Rights Cases* (1883), *Plessy* (1896), *Brown* (1954)

Thurs Sept 17 — Slavery, Segregation, the Black Church and the Social Gospel Movement
Read Taylor Branch. 1988. *Parting the Waters*. New York: Simon & Schuster. Ch.1 and 3
Richard Allen [1833]. "The Origins of the African Methodist Episcopal [AME] Church," (on line in Richard Allen, *The Life, Experience, and Gospel Labours of the Rt. Rev. Richard Allen*) and e-reserve in Bracey et al. 4–10 and Bishop Daniel Payne. 1970. [1891] "Contributions of the Negro Church," in John H. Bracey, Jr. et al. *Black Nationalism in America*. New York: Bobbs-Merrill. 11–13.

Part 2 King's Political Thought

Tues Sept 22 — Civil Disobedience, Constitutionalism, and Christianity
Read MLK "Letter from the Birmingham Jail"
Eight Alabama Clergymen, "Go Slow, Dr. King!"
Dale Kussakoff. September 9, 2001. "Lessons of Might and Right," *Washington Post Magazine* 23-39.

Taylor Branch. *Parting the Waters*. Ch 18, 19
Optional: from Reinhold Niebuhr. 1944. *The* C*hildren of Light and the Children of Darkness.* Charles Scribner's Sons. 16–23.

Thurs Sept 24 — Civil Disobedience and Federalism
Read B. Allen "MLK's Civil Disobedience and …Covenant"
B Taylor Branch. *Parting the Waters*. 4

Tues Sept 29 — Montgomery and Nonviolent Direct Action

Read MLK *Stride Toward Freedom*, "Nonviolence and Racial Justice," "The Most Durable Power," "The Power of Non-Violence," "An Experiment in Love," "Our Struggle," "Walk for Freedom" "My Trip to The Land of Gandhi," "Love, Law, and Civil Disobedience," "The Social Organization of Nonviolence"
Taylor Branch. *Parting the Waters*. Ch. 5
Optional (we discuss again Nov 10 and 12):
Mary Fair Burks, "Trailblazers: Women in the Montgomery Bus Boycott" in Vicki Crawford, et al. eds. *Women in the Civil Rights Movement: Trailblazers & Torchbearers*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

WED Sept 30 Film Screening
Freedom on My Mind, 1994, Connie Field, Marilyn Mumford
Documentary 110 min

Thurs Oct 1 King and Media Representations
Read MLK and James Kilpatrick Guests on "The Nation's Future" 26 Nov 1960
King on Equality, Justice, and Political Liberty
Read MLK "A Testament of Hope," "Equality Now: The President Has the Power," "The Case Against Tokenism," "If the Negro Wins, Labor Wins," "The Ethical Demands for Integration"
Read MLK "Facing the Challenge of a New Age," "The Rising Tide of Racial Consciousness," "Give Us The Ballot," "Remaining Awake Through a Great Revolution," "Black Power Defined"
Taylor Branch. *Parting the Waters*. Ch. 10

Listen:
Martin Luther King New York City on the 100th Anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation 12 September 1962

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N0Jzqiqwo5A

Mon Oct 5 Film Screening
Selma, 2014, Ava DuVernay, 128 min

Tues Oct 6 King on History, "Race," the Individual, and Social Progress — and Obstacles
Read MLK "Bold Design for a New South," "Behind the Selma March," "The Current Crisis in Race Relations," "Who Speaks for the South," "Next Stop: The North," Where do We Go From Here?" "Transcript of

'Meet the Press'"
Taylor Branch. *Parting the Waters*. Ch. 12

WATCH: Martin Luther King at Stanford University, April 14, 1967
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m3H978KlR20

Thurs Oct 8 Love as Power
Read MLK "Suffering and Faith," "A Gift of Love,"
"I see the Promised Land" From *Strength to Love*, "Love in Action," "Love Your Enemies," "Three Dimensions of a Complete Life," "What is Man?" "Shattered Dreams"
Branch Ch 14

Tues Oct 13 The Beloved Community as Political Community—Beyond Desegregation, beyond America
"I Have a Dream," "Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech," "A Time To Break Silence" "I've Been to the Mountaintop"
Taylor Branch. *Parting the Waters*. 22–23

Part 3 Malcolm X's Political Thought

Thurs Oct 15 Jim Crow in the North and Black Nationalism
Read: Malcolm X with Alex Haley. 1964. *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. New York Ballentine Books
Intro, Ch 1–9,
http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/ows/seminars/aahistory/MalcolmX.pdf

Frederick Douglass, "Our Elevation as a Race, Is Almost Wholly Dependent Upon Our Own Exertions"
A Leader of the Kansas Exodus, "We Wanted to Go,"
Marcus Garvey, "Ethiopia Shall Once More See the Day of Glory"
W.E.B. Du Bois, "The Negro People as a Race Have a contribution to Make to Civilization … Which No Other Race Can Make."

********** Essay One Due in Class **********

MONDAY Oct 19 MIDTERM BREAK

Tues Oct 20 The Nation of Islam and American Democracy
Read *Autobiography* 10-19, epilogue, "Ossie Davis on Malcolm X," Elijah Muhammad, "Separation of the So-Called Negroes From their Slavemasters' Children is a Must" and "Minister Malcolm X Enunciates The Muslim Program," both in John H. Bracey, Jr. et al. Eds. *Black Nationalism in America*.

Watch:

Chicago NBC Affiliate WMAQ, Malcolm X interviewed by Jim Hurlbut, Floyd Kalber, Len O'Connor, and Charles McCuen on the program
"City Desk," March 17, 1963
http://chicagoist.com/2013/08/23/video_malcolm_x_grilled_by_chicago.php

WED Oct 21 Film Screening
Malcolm X His Own Story as it Really Happened 1972, Arnold Perl, 91 min.

Thurs Oct 22 Malcolm X on Equality, Justice, and Political Liberty
Read from *Malcolm X Speaks*: "A Message to the Grassroots," "A Declaration of Independence" "With Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer," "To Mississippi Youth," "Prospects for Freedom in 1965," "After the Bombing,"
See text on line (below) "When the Chickens Come Home to Roost"

LISTEN
A Message to the Grassroots 10 November 1963
Text:
http://xroads.virginia.edu/~public/civilrights/a0147.html
Audio:
https://ia801400.us.archive.org/21/items/100-Best--Speeches/MX_19631010.mp3

A Declaration of Independence 12 March 1964
Text:
http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/a-declaration-of-independence/
Audio:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bdWvQrTOMZU

After the Bombing 14 February 1965
Text:
http://www.malcolm-x.org/speeches/spc_021465.htm
Audio:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HRZV9zbOces

WATCH
God's Judgment of White America 12/04/1963 (The Chickens Come Home to Roost, Comment on the assassination of John F. Kennedy)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SzuOOshpddM

Optional Performance of When the Chickens Come Home to Roost Pts 1 and 21982. Written by Lawrence Holder, starring Denzel Washington. at

Carleton Carleton OnLine Video
http://search.alexanderstreet.com.ezproxy.carleton.edu/view/work/2072565

https://carleton.mnpals.net/vufind/Record/.b38824206

Tues Oct 27 Malcolm X on History, "Race," the Individual, Society, and Political Institutions
Read from *Malcolm X Speaks*: "The Ballot or the Bullet," "The Black Revolution," "The Harlem 'Hate-Gang' Scare," "Confrontation with an Expert;" from *By Any Means Necessary*: "Answers to Questions at the Militant Labor Forum," "Harlem and the Political Machines," "Founding Rally of OAAU," "Second Rally of OAAU," "Homecoming Rally of OAAU;" from *Last Speeches*: "20 Million Black People …," "America's Gravest Crisis Since the Civil War"

LISTEN:

The Ballot or the Bullet
http://americanradioworks.publicradio.org/features/blackspeech/mx.html
12 April 1964

Another version of Ballot or the Bullet 29 March 1964 (Easter) Carleton OnLine Videos, First 8 min of "The Turbulent 60s"

http://digital.films.com.ezproxy.carleton.edu/PortalViewVideo.aspx?xtid=6923#

WATCH: Democracy is Hypocrisy 2 February 1965 Carleton OnLine Video
https://carleton.mnpals.net/vufind/Record/.b39696340/Holdings#tabnav

Founding Rally of OAAU 28 June 1964
Text:
http://www.blackpast.org/1964-malcolm-x-s-speech-founding-rally-organization-afro-american-unity

Video:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WBS416EZsKM

Thurs Oct 29 Self Defense
Read from *Malcolm X Speaks*: "At the Audubon (Dec 13 & 20);" from *By Any Means Necessary*: "Interview by A.B. Spellman," "Young Socialist Interview," "Short Statements," *From Last Speeches*: "Whatever is Necessary to Protect Ourselves"

WATCH IN CLASS Excerpts from *Malcolm X: Make It Plain*,

David McCullough, 150 min
Mike Wallace and Louis Lomax. 1959. *The Hate that Hate Produced*. CBS. News 94 min.
https://archive.org/details/PBSTheHateThatHateProduced

Tues Nov 3 Beyond America — Black Nationalism, Pan-Africanism
Read from *Malcolm X Speaks*: "Letters from Abroad," "Appeal to African Heads of State," "Last Answers and Interviews;" from *By Any Means Necessary*: "A Letter from Cairo," "A Meeting in Paris," "An Exchange of Casualties in the Congo," "On Being Barred From France;" from *Last Speeches*: "Our People Identify with Africa," "There's a Worldwide Revolution Going On," "Not Just an American Problem, but a World Problem"

Watch:
After Travels Abroad, Malcolm X on Front Page Challenge, January 5, 1965, CBC Interview
https://vimeo.com/67400751

WED Nov 4 Film Screening
Malcolm X, 1992, Spike Lee, 202 min
Read: D. Quentin Miller. 2013. "Lost and…Found?" James Baldwin's Script and Spike Lee's Malcolm X," *African American Review*. 46(4) 671–685.

Part 4 Powerful Perceptions, Deficiencies, and Legacies

Thurs Nov 5 Media Representations and Movement Responses
No reading assignment V 1 "Eyes on the Prize: Ain't Scared Of Your Jails, Fighting Back (1957-62)," V 3 "No Easy Walk (1962-65);" Mike Wallace and Louis Lomax. 1959. "The Hate that Hate Produced; The American Experience: Malcolm X" CBS News.
Bring contemporary media examples to class for discussion (any medium, including music)

**********Second Essay Due in Class********

Tues Nov 10 Movement Organization — Hierarchy and Grass Roots —The Black Church and early Black Political Associations, Participatory Democracy and "Organization" as Response to Government (In)action
Read Mamie Locke "Is this America?" Mary Fair Burks, "Trailblazers: Women in the Montgomery Bus Boycott;" Carol Mueller, "Ella Baker;" Grace J. McFadden "Septima Clark," all in Vicki Crawford, et al. eds. *Women in the Civil Rights Movement: Trailblazers & Torchbearers*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
Watch "Eyes on the Prize V3, Mississippi: Is this America?"

Thurs Nov 12	Gender & Class in Nationalist and Civil Rights Movements James Cone "Nothing but Men," *Martin and Malcolm In America*. Charles Payne, "Men Led, but Women Organized" and Vicki Crawford, "Beyond the Human Self," both in Vicki Crawford, et al. eds. *Women in the Civil Rights Movement: Trailblazers & Torchbearers*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
Tues Nov 17	Significance of Martin & Malcolm Today Read Cornel West "Malcolm X and Black Rage"

**********Third Essay Due in Class**********