

Malcolm, Martin and Masculinity
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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 the philosophies of Malcolm and Martin are often portrayed 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.

Course Requirements:

Attendance; Completion of assigned reading; one in-class group presentation; critical reading journals due at assigned dates (1 page per reading date; i.e. 2 pages per week); and **your choice between a.)** a critical essay to be submitted at the end of the semester based on a contemporary issue facing communities of faith wherein the intersection of race/ gender/ and class is central to the conflict, **b.)** three sermons (4 pages double-spaced per sermon) that address from a theological/ethical perspective the implications of masculine performance/privilege on local communities (feel free to select your own particular contexts!), or **c.)** four editorials addressing a pressing/relevant topic with the intent of publication (One per week beginning at week 7. Each editorial should be 700-1200 words.)

Grade Distribution:

In-Class Group Presentation	25 points
Attendance/Discussion Participation	10 points
Critical reading journals	25 points
Final Critical Essay/Sermons/Editorials	40 points

Required Texts:

Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917*

Steve Estes: *I am a Man! Race, Manhood and the Civil Rights Movement*, The University of North Carolina Press, 2006

Louis Decaro, *On the Side of My People: A Religious Life of Malcolm X*, New York University Press, 1997

Michael Eric Dyson, *I May Not Get There With You: The True Martin Luther King, Jr.*

Martin Luther King, Jr. *A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings and Speeches*

Bettye Collier-Thomas and V.P. Franklin, *Sisters in the Struggle: African American Women in the Civil Rights-Black Power Movements*, New York University Press, 2001.

Malcolm X, *By Any Means Necessary: Malcolm X Speeches*

Suggested Readings:

Martin Luther King, Jr. and Clayborne Carson, *The Autobiography of Martin Luther King, Jr.*

Malcolm X and Alex Haley, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*

Reading Schedule: (Reading should be completed by assigned weekend!)

Week 1

Devon W. Carbado, "Men, Feminism and Male Heterosexual Privilege," in *Critical Race Theory*, eds. Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic

Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization*, chapters 1-3

Week 2

Susan Nance, "Mystery of the Moorish Science Temple: Southern Blacks and American Alternative Spirituality in 1920s Chicago," *Religion and American Culture*, Vol 12, No 2. Summer 2002, p 123-166

Louis Decaro, *A Religious Life of Malcolm X*, Chapters 1-9

Week 3

Beryl Satter, "Marcus Garvey, Father Divine and the Gender Politics of Race Difference and Race Neutrality," *American Quarterly*, 48 no 1, March 1996, p 43-76

Richard B. Turner, The Ahmadiyya Mission to Blacks in the United States in the 1920s, *Journal of Religious Thought*, Winter/Spring88 Vol. 44 Issue 2

Week 4

Louis Decaro, *A Religious Life...Chapters 10-15*

Read chapters 1, 4, 6-8 & 10 from *By Any Means Necessary: Malcolm X's speeches*

Louis DeCaro, *A Religious Life... Chapters 15-20*

Week 5

Farah Jasmine Griffin, "Ironies of the Saint: Malcolm X, Black Women and the Price of Protection, in *Sisters in the Struggle*

Robin D. G. Kelley, "House Negroes on the Loose: Malcolm X and the Black Bourgeoisie"

Clayborne Carson, "Martin Luther King, Jr. and the African American Social Gospel"

Week 6

Steve Estes, *I am a Man! Race, Manhood and Civil Rights Movement*, Introduction-Chapter 3

Estes, *I am a Man!*, Chapters 4-6

Week 7

Barbara Diane Savage, Benjamin Mays, Global Ecumenism and Local Religious Segregation, *American Quarterly*, Sept 2007, Vol. 59, Issue 3, p 785-806

Devon Carbado and Donald Weise, *The Civil Rights Identity of Bayard Rustin*, *Texas Law Review*, Vol 82, No 5, April 2004

Week 8

Michael Eric Dyson, *I May Not Get There With You*, Introduction-Chapter 3

Read Martin Luther King in *A Testament of Hope*, 24: Facing the Challenge of a New Age; 33: Give Us the Ballot—We Will Transform the South; 49: Kenneth B. Clark Interview

Week 9

Dyson, *I May Not Get There With You*, Chapters 4-7

King, 46: Letter from a Birmingham Jail; 47: Black Power Defined
Dyson, *I May Not Get There With You*, Chapters 8-11

James Baldwin, "The Dangerous Road Before Martin Luther King, Jr." *Harper's Magazine*, February, 1961.

Week 10

Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, Religion, Politics and Gender: The Leadership of Nannie Helen Burroughs, *Journal of Religious Thought*, Winter/Spring 1988 Vol. 44 Issue 2, p. 7-22.

Barbar Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement*., Introduction –Chapter 3

Week 11

Ransby, Ella Baker, Chapters 6-9

Ransby, Chapters 10-12

Week 12

Vicki Crawford, African American Women in the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party,” in *Sisters in the Struggle*

Chana Kai Lee, “Anger Memory and Personal Power: Fannie Lou Hamer and Civil Rights Leadership, in *Sisters in the Struggle*

Week 13

In-Class Presentations

Final Class Presentations:

I am looking for groups to “Go Big!” This is to say, think imaginatively about a project that speaks to the contemporary moment that will have legs beyond this course. A short film documentary, a colloquium with policy implications, an educational curriculum targeting a specific community of faith, an oral history project...

The point here is for students to capture and apply the moral courage and spiritual genius of these towering figures of the previous century to the present moment, while offering the appropriate correctives to their moral blind spots and spiritual shortcomings.

If hindsight is 20/20, what insight and foresight do you have concerning the intersections of class, race, gender and sexual hierarchies in a postmodern, post-industrial, “post-civil rights,” “post-racial,” and “post-feminist” moment?

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/cmosfaq/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.