



**AMERICAN LITERATURE & CULTURE II**

# NARRATING RACE IN LITERATURE & FILM

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This course is a study of Black American literature, film, & culture from 1900 to today based on a New Historicism methodology—the idea that understanding texts (literature and film) is dependent on understanding the historical context in which they were created. As such, each week will include a discussion of the texts as well as lectures based on the history and culture of the era. Grades will be based on a continual assessment model that includes:

**Brief Written Assignments:** Four (800–1000 words each) covering different writing styles. 15% each—60% total.

**Exams:** Midterm and End of Term Exams covering the lecture content and readings. 15% each—30% total.

**Attendance & Participation:** Class attendance and participation mandatory—come prepared to discuss. 10%.

### Readings (all texts will be supplied online or as PDFs):

- Booker T. Washington, excerpts from *Up From Slavery* (1901)
- W. E. B. Du Bois, excerpts from *The Souls of Black Folks* (1903)
- James W. Johnson, *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man* (1912, novella)
- W.E.B. Du Bois, “The Comet” (1920, short story)
- Marcus Garvey, “If You Believe the Negro Has a Soul” (1921, essay)
- Alain Locke, “Enter the New Negro” (1925, essay)
- Zora Neale Hurston, “Muttys” (1926, short story)
- Martin Luther King Jr. “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” (1963, essay)
- Malcolm X, “The Ballot or the Bullet” (1964, speech)
- Stokely Carmichael (Kwame Ture), “What We Want” (1968, essay)
- Toni Morrison, *The Bluest Eye* (1970, novel)
- Octavia Butler, *The Parable of the Sower* (1993, novel)
- Amanda Gorman, “The Hill We Climb” (2021, poem)

### Films:

- *Within Our Gates* Oscar Micheaux, (1920, silent film, 1:15)
- *St. Louis Blues* Bessie Smith (1929, short film, 16 min)
- *Black & Tan* Duke Ellington (1929, short film, 18 min)
- *Rhapsody in Black and Blue* Lois Armstrong (1932, short film, 10 min)
- *Emperor Jones*, Eugene O’Neill, Paul Robeson (1933, film, 1:13)
- *Native Son*, Richard Wright’s 1940 novel adapted (1951, film, 1:48)
- *In the Heat of the Night*, starring Sidney Poitier (1967, film, 1:50)
- *Uptight* (1968, film, 1:44)
- *Bad Asssss Cinema* (2002, documentary, 55 min)
- *The Spook Who Sat by the Door* (1973, film, 1:42)
- *The Color Purple*, Alice Walker’s 1982 novel adapted (1985, film, 2:34)
- *Do the Right Thing*, Spike Lee (1989, film, 2:00)
- *Boyz n the Hood*, John Singleton (1991, film, 1:52)
- *Get Out*, Jordan Peele (2017, film, 1:44)
- *The Hate U Give*, Angie Thomas’s novel, adapted (2018, film, 2:13)