

Marxism and the Black Experience

AFRO 298 C

(a course outline)

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OVERVIEW: This course is generally about one of the main tendencies in the Black liberation movement (BLM) and specifically about its development during the 1970's. If in the 1960's the more militant aspects of the BLM were in the midst of mass struggle, then during the 1970's these activists sought to develop a revolutionary vanguard. Not only was there considerable theoretical-rhetorical development, there was also a considerable variation of political practice. This course is an opportunity to subject these activities of the 1970's to scholarly study.

OBJECTIVES:

1. to study the theory of Marxism as applied in the U.S. context
2. to study some radical aspects of the Black liberation movement
3. to study current aspects of currents of Black intellectual thought in the 1970's and 80's in relationship to Marxism.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. attend class and read assigned material
2. midterm exam, final exam and research paper
3. participation in class discussions

GRADING:

1. paper = 60%
2. exams = 40%

TEXTS: will be discussed in class

OVERALL COURSE OUTLINE

Part 1: Background

1. fundamentals of Marxism (Marx, Engels, Lenin, Mao)
2. Old Left (CPUSA, SWP)
3. New Left (SDS, NCM)
4. Civil Rights Movement (SNCC)
5. Black liberation movement (Black Panther Party)

Part 2: Search for a Vanguard

1. league of Revolutionary Black Workers
2. Black Workers Congress
3. Congress of African People
4. Revolutionary Communist League
5. Youth Organization for Black Unity
6. Malcolm X Liberation University
7. African Liberation Support Committee
8. Revolutionary Workers League

Part 3: Variations

1. Polemics between Nationalists and Marxists
2. Intellectuals and Collectives

PART ONE

Course Calendar, lecture Topics and Required Readings

(* = handouts in class, some free, some cost)

Jan 19th	Introduction to Course	Course Outline
Jan 21	1. <u>Fundamentals of Marxism</u>	1. Lenin, <u>Karl Marx</u> 2. Marx and Engels, <u>Communist Manifesto</u> 3. Mao, "On Practice" and "On Contradiction"
Jan 23	Continuation	
Jan 26	2. <u>Old Left (CPUSA and SWP)</u>	Peoples College, <u>Intro</u> Vol. II, Chapter 17 "Marxism and Black Liberation" pages 466-532 *1928-30 Theses on the Negro Question of the Communist International
Jan 28	3. <u>New Left (SDS and NCM)</u>	*James O'Brien, "A History of the New Left 1960-68" *Paul Costello, "A Critical History of the New Communist Movement, 1969-1979"
Jan 30	Continuation	
Feb 2	4. <u>Civil Rights Movement (SNCC)</u>	Peoples College, <u>Intro</u> Vol. II, Chapter 15 "Civil Rights and the Struggle for Democracy" pages 321-385 James Foreman, <u>Making of a Black Revolutionary</u> (pages 234-386, skim the whole book) Selections from Stanford University SNCC Anthology (to be assigned)
Feb 4	Continuation	
Feb 6	Continuation	

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Feb 9 5. Black Liberation Movement (Black Panther Party)

Sections from Black Panther Speaks edited by Philip Foner
(to be assigned)

Bobby Seale, Seige the Time: The Story of Black Panther Party and Huey Newton
(pages 59-197 skim the whole book)

Feb 11 Continuation

Feb. 13 Continuation

LECTURE OUTLINE: #1.

Fundamentals of Marxism

1. Philosophy and Method

- (a) Materialism
- (b) Dialectics

2. Historical Materialism

- (a) Origin and Structure of Society
- (b) Socio-Economic Formations

3. Political Economy

- (a) Surplus Value
- (b) Classes and the Class Struggle

Exchange
Price
Labor

Comm. manifesto

4. Revolution

- (a) Strategy and Tactics
- (b) Dictatorship of Proletariat

Stalin
pp 84, 86

Stalin

5. Revolutions and Revolutionaries

- (a) Marx and Engels
- (b) Soviet Union (Lenin, Stalin)
- (c) China (Mao)

Course Bibliography

Overall

1. Peoples College, Introduction to Afro-American Studies (Chicago: Peoples College Press, 1974).
2. W. Z. Foster, The Negro People in American History (New York: International Publishers, 1954, 1973).
3. Harry Haywood, Black Bolshevik: Autobiography of an Afro-American Communist (Chicago: Liberator Press, 19).
4. James M. McPherson, et. al., Blacks in America: Bibliographical Essays (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, Inc, 1971).

1. Fundamentals of Marxism

Karl Marx and Fredrich Engels, The Communist Manifesto (1848)

Mao Tse Tung, "On Practice" and "On Contradiction" (essays written in 1937)

Karl Marx, The German Ideology

Karl Marx, Capital (Volume 1)

John Eaton, Political Economy: A Marxist Textbook (New York: International Publishers, 1963)

Fredreich Engels, Anti-Dühring

V. I. Lenin, Imperialism

V. I. Lenin, The State and Revolution

J. V. Stalin, History of the Communist Party Soviet Union (Bolshevik) (1939)

W. Z. Foster, History of the Three Internationals: The World Socialist and Communist Movements from 1848 to the present (New York: International Publishers,)

2. Black History

Harold Cruse, The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual (New York: William Morrow and Co., 1967)

E. Franklin Frazier, The Negro in the United States (New York: Macmillan, 1949, 1957)

Herbert Aptheker, A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States (New York: Citadel Press) Vol. 1 From Colonial Times to 1910 (1951), Vol. 2 From the NAACP to the New Deal (1973)

Philip Foner, Organized Labor and the Black Worker, 1619-1973 (New York: Prager Publishers, 1974)

August Meier and Francis L. Broderick, Black Protest Thought in the 20th Century (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill and Co., 1965, 1971)

Nathan Huggins, et. al., Key Issues in the Afro-American Experience, Vols. 1 and 2 (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Govanovich, 1971)

St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton, Black Metropolis (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1945)

John Bracey, et. al., Black Nationalism in American (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1970)

Julius Lester, The Seventh Son: The Thought and Writings of W.E.B. DuBois (Vols. 1 and 2) (New York: Vintage Books, 1971)

Oliver Cox, Caste, Class, and Race: A Study in Social Dynamics (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1948)

3. Selected References to the Left

Wilson Record, The Negro and the Communist Party (Chapel: University of North Carolina Press, 1951)

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, The Civil War in the U.S. (New York: International Publishers, 1937)

* W. Z. Foster, History of the Communist Party of the U.S., (New York: International Publishers, 1952)

Benjamin Davis, Communist Councilman From Harlem (New York: International Publishers,)

Claude Lightfoot, Ghetto Rebellion to Black Liberation (New York: International Publishers, 1968)

William Patterson, A Man Who Cried Genocide (New York: International Publishers,)

Paul Robeson, Here I Stand

W. Z. Foster, Toward A Soviet America (New York: International Publishers,)

Angelo Herndon, Let Me Live (New York:

Nell Painter, Hosea Hudson (Cambridge: Harvard University Press,)

4. Black Liberation Movement 1960's

Clay Carson, SNCC (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, forthcoming)

August Meier and Elliott Rudwick, CORE: A Study in the Civil Rights Movement, 1942-1968 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973)

David Lewis, King: A Critical Biography (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1970)

Malcolm X, The Autobiography of Malcolm X (New York: Grove Press, 1964)

Anthony Lewis, Portrait of a Decade (1960's): The Second American Revolution (New York: Bantam Books, 1964)

James A. Geschwender, ed., The Black Revolt: The Civil Rights Movement, Ghetto Uprisings and Separatism (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1971)

Robert L. Allen, Black Awakening in Capitalist America (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., 1969)

August Meier and Elliott Rudwick, ed., Black Protest in the Sixties (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1970)

Philip Foner, ed., Black Panther Speaks

Leroi Jones and Larry Neal, Black Fire: An Anthology of Afro-American Writing (New York: William Morrow and Co., 1968)