

**History 600, Seminar #8**  
**The Long Civil Rights Movement**  
**Fall 2006**

**Seminar Meetings:** Wednesday, 1:20-3:20

**Seminar Location:** 2111 Humanities

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**Office Hours:** Tuesday and Thursday, 2:30-3:30

The field of civil rights history has expanded tremendously in the past decade, from a focus on the non-violent movement against southern Jim Crow to analysis of a full spectrum of African American politics in the post-World War II era. This change has resulted from increasing dialogue among scholars of African American history and scholars in women's history, labor history, and the history of foreign and domestic policy. It has also led scholars to rethink basic categories of class and gender, as well as dichotomies between moderate and militant, non-violent and Black Power, or northern and southern that seemed unproblematic to earlier scholars of the movement. This expansion has allowed scholars to understand the civil rights movement as a thread uniting a wide array of social, economic and political changes that characterized postwar American history. Historian Jacquelyn Dowd Hall calls this thread the "long civil rights movement."

Students in this course will participate in this rethinking of the civil rights movement by producing a 20-25 page paper based on their own primary research. Over the course of the semester, they will read and discuss books that have inspired or built upon the rethinking. They will also learn to identify and use archival records, oral history interviews, and newspaper accounts that document the movement. They will benefit from the rich collections in civil rights history at the Wisconsin State Historical Society. They will also team up with a writing partner who will critique their work and share strategies for completing the final writing assignment before the end of the semester.

**NOTE:** This is a capstone course for history majors. Students must have completed a methods prerequisite and most requirements for the major before they enroll in this course. Success will require a large amount of reading and writing and participants should expect to devote a considerable amount of time. Please do not take this course if you are not prepared.

**Required books:** There are six required books for this course. They can be purchased at A Room of One's Own Feminist Bookstore, 307 W. Johnson St. (257-7888). Reserve copies are also available for 3 hour loan at College Library.

Barbara Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement: A Radical Democratic Vision* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2003)

Robert O. Self, *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland* (Princeton University Press, 2005)

Peniel E. Joseph, *Waiting 'Til the Midnight Hour: A Narrative History of Black Power in America* (Henry Holt, 2006)

Annelise Orleck, *Storming Caesars Palace: How Black Mothers Fought Their Own War on Poverty* (Beacon, 2006)

Anne Lamott, *Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life* (Anchor Press, 1995)

Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 6th edition. (University of Chicago Press, 1996)

**Evaluation:** Graded written assignments are due each class period and will not be accepted late. You will also be graded for participation in class, which will require you to complete reading assignments before coming to class. You should be in habit of taking notes while you read, so that you can refer to those notes during class.

**Preparation/Participation** 10%

This grade reflects a student's level of preparation for and participation in class meetings. Attendance is required. Absence and/or lack of preparation will result in a lower grade. Inform the instructor and your writing partner in advance of an unavoidable absence.

**Short Assignments** 15%

A short written assignment is due nearly every week, either in class or a few days before class. This grade will reflect your completion of those assignments.

**Response/Critique** 15%

This grade reflects your written and oral response to your writing partner. You will need to be thorough and constructive.

**Research Paper** 60%

A 20-25 page research paper based on primary sources from the Wisconsin State Historical Society or another archive. Your paper will include a concise thesis statement and then support that thesis with references to your research. It will also use relevant secondary literature to demonstrate the significance of your thesis (See Paper Writing Guide, pg. 4).

**Policies on late work and academic misconduct:** Late work will be accepted only by prior arrangement or documented emergencies. Academic misconduct—including plagiarism or sexual harassment—will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in accordance with university policies. **Do not copy material from any source without a proper citation.** If you have any questions about this see Professor Jones and read the UW System's "Student Academic Misconduct Campus Procedures." They are available on-line at: <http://www.wisc.edu/students/conduct/uws14.htm>

**Class Schedule:**

September 6 The Long Civil Rights Movement

1:20 Course introduction

2:00 Tour and introduction to the Wisconsin Historical Society

Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past," The Journal of American History March 2005  
 <<http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/jah/91.4/hall.html>> (19 Jul. 2006).

September 13

Ransby, *Ella Baker*, 1-195  
 Lamott, *Bird by Bird*, 3-15

Writing assignment: Your paper topic and the name of your writing partner

September 20

Ransby, *Ella Baker*, 209-374  
 Lamott, *Bird by Bird*, 16-20

Writing assignment: A one page research proposal, including the topic of research, why you think it is important, and the primary sources you will use

September 27

Self, *American Babylon*, 1-214  
 Lamott, *Bird by Bird*, 21-27

Writing assignment: A one page critique of your partner's proposal

October 4

Self, *American Babylon*, 217-334  
 Lamott, *Bird by Bird*, 28-32

October 11

Joseph, *Waiting 'Til the Midnight Hour*, TBA  
 Lamott, *Bird by Bird*, 33-38

Writing assignment: Annotated bibliography of at least five primary sources

October 18

Joseph, *Waiting 'Til the Midnight Hour*, TBA  
 Lamott, *Bird by Bird*, 39-43

Writing assignment: Annotated bibliography of at least five secondary sources

October 25

Orleck, *Storming Caesars Palace*, 1-167  
 Lamott, *Bird by Bird*, 44-53

Writing assignment: Bring 17 copies of a one page primary source. Write a two page analysis of that source and how it contributes to your research project.

November 1 Writing Workshop 1

Orleck, *Storming Caesars Palace*, 168-310  
 Lamott, *Bird by Bird*, 54-63

Writing assignment: **On Monday before class** you should email your partner the first two paragraphs of your research paper. They should make the reader interested in your topic and convince her or him that your topic is important. **Bring to class** a two paragraph critique of your partner's paragraphs along with editorial comments written in the margins. Each team will present their paragraphs and responses to the class.

November 8 Writing Workshop 2

Lamott, *Bird by Bird*, 64-73

Writing assignment: **On Monday before class** you should email your partner a one page thesis statement. **Bring to class** a one paragraph critique of your partner's statement. Each team will present their paragraphs and responses to the class.

November 15 No Class – Work on Paper

Lamott, *Bird by Bird*, 74-84

November 22 Writing Workshop 3

Lamott, *Bird by Bird*, 85-94

Writing assignment: **On Friday before class** you should email your partner a 10 page section of your research paper. **Bring to class** a three page critique of your partner's draft along with editorial comments written in the margins. Each team will present their drafts and responses to the class

November 29 No Class – Work on First Draft

Lamott, *Bird by Bird*, 97-130

December 6 Writing Workshop 4

Lamott, *Bird by Bird*, 133-182

Writing assignment: **On Friday before class** you should email your partner a draft of your entire research paper. **Bring to class** a five page critique of your partner's

draft along with editorial comments written in the margins. Each team will present their drafts and responses to the class

December 13                      Final Paper Due

Lamott, *Bird by Bird*, 185-221

Writing assignment: **Bring your entire paper to class.** Be prepared to read 3-4 pages out loud as if you were presenting your work at a scholarly conference. The class will respond both to your writing and your oral presentation, with your partner as the lead commentator.

December 20    **Revised final papers due at noon.**

Lamott, *Bird by Bird*, 225-237

Place a printed copy of your paper in the box next to my office (5133 Humanities). I will not accept papers on disk or by email.

### **Paper Writing Guidelines**

#### ***In Brief:***

- *Read the following paper writing guidelines.*
- *Read all assigned material and participate in class discussions.*
- *Work closely with your writing partner.*
- *Present a full draft of the paper on **December 13***
- *Turn- in final copy on **December 20.***

#### **I. Assignment and Deadline:**

Assignment: Write a 20-25 page paper on some aspect of the civil rights movement. Your paper will be based on primary research at the Wisconsin Historical Society. Talk to me if you would like to use an additional source. You will also need to analyze your material in relation to other published scholarship on the civil rights movement. This can include assigned material and a few additional books or articles.

**Use 12 pt. font, 1” margins, and double spacing throughout. You must use footnotes or endnotes and you must include a bibliography.**

Deadline: Your final paper is due at noon on **December 20.** No late papers will be accepted without prior arrangement.

Title: Give your paper a revealing title. The title should hint at your thesis and reveal the general topic. For example, “The Civil Rights Movement in Milwaukee” is too vague. “Why Mrs. Smith Joined Milwaukee’s Open Housing Movement” is better.

Thesis: Each paper must include a thesis statement that completes the following sentence: **“I argue that...”** To write a successful paper you must avoid two errors: 1) do not merely restate

facts — a listing of historical or statistical data does not constitute an argumentative essay; 2) do not make assertions based on intuition or feelings — offer evidence to support your thesis.

Evidence: Most of the information in your paper will be based on primary sources. A primary source is a document that gives the words of a witness or a first recorder of a historical event. For example, an interview with Ella Baker would be a primary source on the civil rights movement. A contemporary newspaper article could be a primary source about the 1941 March on Washington Movement. Historians use primary sources to produce secondary sources, which are analytical observations written by people who did not necessarily experience the event. Books and articles written by historians or other scholars will serve as your secondary sources. Your final paper will also be a secondary source, which future researchers may use for their own writing.

You should begin looking for primary sources as soon as possible. If you want to write about a well-known event such as the *Brown* decision or the urban rebellions of the 1960s, you should start by looking for newspaper articles published at the time of those events. Memorial Library has local and major national newspapers on microfilm. The *New York Times* is a good place to start looking for reports of a nationally known event. African American newspapers are good places to look for coverage of civil rights activism and black political activity. The *Chicago Defender*, the *Baltimore Afro-American*, and the *Pittsburgh Courier* are the best. If you are researching union activity or about black workers in a particular industry, you might also consider looking at union newspapers. Newspapers that are not available at UW can often be accessed through the World Wide Web. You can also order microfilm copies through inter-library loan. Remember that newspaper research can take a very long time. Be prepared to spend many hours searching for a particular article.

For less publicized events, you will have to find sources other than newspapers. Important historical documents such as the *Brown* decision or the Civil Rights Act have been published and are available in Memorial Library. For those that are not published, you will have to look in a manuscript collection, which is a collection of documents generated by a particular person or organization. The State Historical Collection has one of the nation's best collection of documents on the civil rights movement. Other interesting collections are the Papers of the NAACP, the Papers of the National Urban League, The Peonage Files of the US Department of Justice, and the National Negro Congress Papers. All of these are on microfilm and available through Inter-Library Loan.

Oral history interviews are a wonderful, but often difficult source. If you choose to write on an event that occurred recently and near Madison, you may be able to interview a participant or an observer. The interviewee should have been directly involved in the event that is the subject of your paper -- not just observers or people with close contact with participants or strong views on these events. Remember that you will need enough material to write 20-25 pages.

**Tips for conducting an interview:**

1. Set aside 3-4 hours, and make sure that your interviewee knows that the interview may take that much time. You don't want to have to cut short a great conversation.
2. Ask open ended questions, and give the interviewee time to answer them fully. This is not a survey, and you should allow the interviewee to elaborate. Ask

follow up questions such as “what do you mean when you say . . .?” “How did that make you feel?” or “why did you do that?”

3. Don't assume that you know the answer to a question. Even your parent or sibling can surprise you with an interesting answer to a question like “how did you feel about your parents' decision to move to Madison?”
4. Encourage your interviewee to think broadly and historically. Ask how that person came to be involved in that event, and how that participation changed his or her life. Ask about the interviewer's opinions about the event, and whether they agreed with people around them. Explore the reasons for agreement and disagreement with other family members, friends and neighbors, and the media. Ask if your interviewee's opinion has changed over time, and what led them to change or hold on to their views.

You may also want to use an interview or interviews that were collected by another researcher.

**A word about the world wide web.** The internet can be a valuable source for primary research. Many libraries have begun publishing documents on the web, and you can also find many newspapers and magazines collected there. Because web sources are often searchable, they can make your research much easier. While you may use primary sources that have been published on the web, *I discourage you from using the web itself as a source.* A search for “The Black Panther Party,” or for “A. Phillip Randolph” will turn up countless pages that provide historical and biographical information. The problem is that you have no way of knowing how accurate that information is. For that reason, you should cite only sources that are indeed primary and that have clear and reliable origins. A page on the “Life of A. Philip Randolph,” for example, is most likely a secondary source, and should therefore not be used. An interview with Randolph published by a library or a magazine that can be contacted for verification can serve as a primary source. Talk to Professor Jones if you have any questions about a particular source.

Sample Outline: *You are free to organize the paper in any form, or you can follow this suggested form.*

- I. Introduction: In the first few paragraphs state the topic of your paper and give some information that will interest the reader in that topic. You should also introduce the central conflict or issue of your paper and state your thesis, or main argument.
- II. Historical Overview - Provide the reader with a summary of the historical event or theme that you will discuss. Explain the background of the event --why it occurred and what groups or individuals were involved -- and then the chronology of events. End with a summary of the legacy of this event.
- III. Your sources – Describe what your source reveals about this event. This section should not be a recounting of the source. Instead, you should tell the story in your own words -- picking out what you think are the important details and summarizing parts that you find less important. You may quote passages that you find well stated, but avoid frequent or long quotations. Put as much as possible in your own words.
- IV. Evaluation -- Drawing upon secondary sources, assess your primary sources. You might show that your source reflects a broader truth about the civil rights movement, or that it provides insight into an exceptional incident. Another approach would be to assess the reasons that your source provided a particular

interpretation, or the reasons that a person your interviewed took part in a particular event. In this section you must provide evidence to support your thesis.

- V. Conclusion -- Restate your argument and summarize the evidence that you have provided. You might consider alternate interpretations in this section and provide some rationale for why you did not choose them for your paper.

**Citation:** Consistently follow an accepted citation format. I suggest Kate Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* for proper source citation. You may use footnotes or parenthetical citations, but must also attach a bibliography. You may use periodicals as sources; however you must include a minimum of **three scholarly sources** in your bibliography. Scholarly sources include books and edited volumes or articles from academic journals.

According to the US System Code, **“Academic misconduct is an act in which a student:**

- seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation;
- uses unauthorized materials or fabricated data in any academic exercise;
- forges or falsifies academic documents or records;
- intentionally impedes or damages the academic work of others;
- engages in conduct aimed at making false representation of a student's academic performance;
- assists other students in any of these acts."

**Objections:** Consider possible counter-evidence and objections to your thesis and respond to them in advance. Imagine what an informed classmate might say to challenge your argument.

**Gender Neutral Language:** You must use gender-neutral language in your paper. Language is powerful; by maintaining a male semantic bias, we reinforce thoughts and images of a sexist order that is damaging to both women and men. For example, the sentence, “A politician must represent *his* constituency” creates and reinforces the image that all politicians are male with the effect of making women irrelevant. By saying, “A politician must represent *her or his* constituency”, we are both more accurate and create a possibility in our minds of male *or* female politicians. If you are unfamiliar with gender-neutral writing, you may consider consulting Miller and Swift, *The Handbook of Nonsexist Writing*.

### III. Criteria for Grading

**“A” Paper:** The principle characteristic of an A paper is its rich content. The information delivered is such that the reader feels taught by the author, sentence after sentence, and paragraph after paragraph. The A paper also is marked by stylistic finesse: the title and opening paragraph are engaging; the transitions are artful; the phrasing is interesting and highly specific; the sentence structure is varied; the tone enhances the purpose of the paper. Finally, the A paper, because of its careful organization and development, imparts a feeling of wholeness and clarity. Specifically an A paper will:

- Follow directions outlined above;
- Present a clear, focused, and substantial thesis, with a strong introduction and a thoughtful conclusion.
- Anticipate objections to the thesis and answer them directly.

- Display a judicious sense of evidence -- will support the thesis by citing relevant sources, data, examples, explanations and quotes;
- Contain an appropriate amount of background material to explain but not overwhelm the reader.
- Present all information fairly and accurately (no straw person or historical errors)
- Be logically developed and very well organized.
- Contain smooth transitions in and among paragraphs.
- Address a general academic audience using a tone and style appropriate to a scholarly paper.
- Meticulously document sources using a standard citation format.
- Show stylistic maturity through sentence variety and paragraph development.
- Have a precise title that reflects the thesis.
- Employ gender-neutral language;
- Be virtually free of surface and usage errors.

**“B” Paper:** A B paper is significantly more than competent. Besides being almost free of mechanical errors, the B paper delivers substantial information in terms of both quantity and interest. Its points are logically ordered and developed, and it contains a clear organizing principle. The opening and closing paragraphs are thematically related and the sentence structure and paragraph transitions are mostly smooth. Occasionally, a B paper shows distinctiveness. A B is paper typically much more concise and precise than a C paper.

Specifically a B paper will:

- Follow directions outlined above;
- Present a clear thesis, with a strong introduction and conclusion.
- Anticipate objections to the thesis and answer them directly.
- Will support the thesis by citing relevant sources, data, examples, explanations and quotes.
- Contain background material to explain but not overwhelm the reader;
- Present all information fairly and accurately (no straw person or historical errors)
- Be logically developed and well organized.
- Contain good transitions in and among paragraphs;
- Address a general academic audience using a tone and style appropriate to a social science paper.
- Correctly document sources using a standard citation format.
- Show stylistic maturity through sentence variety and paragraph development, but will lack the verbal felicity or organizational strength of an A paper;
- Have a title that reflects the thesis.
- Employ gender-neutral language;
- Be largely free of surface and usage errors.

**“C” Paper:** A C paper is generally competent and meets the assignment with few mechanical errors, and is reasonably organized. The actual information it delivers however, seems thin and commonplace. One reason for that impression is that the ideas are typically cast in the form of vague generalities that confuse readers and prompt them to ask: “In every case?” “Exactly how large?” “Why?” “How many?” Stylistically, the C paper contains other shortcomings as well: the opening paragraph is weak; the final paragraph offers a perfunctory wrap-up; the transitions between paragraphs are bumpy; the sentences tend to be choppy and confusing; the writing often

is marred by imprecision and repetition. While the C paper gets the job done, it lacks imagination and intellectual rigor. Specifically, a C paper will:

- follow directions outlined above;
- present a thesis, with an introduction and conclusion;
- may anticipate objections to the thesis ;
- will support the thesis by citing examples;
- contain excessive or insufficient background material;
- present most information accurately, however it is too general;
- display competence in logical development and organization, although it may display organizational and argumentative weakness;
- contain transitions in and among paragraphs;
- address a general academic audience using a tone and style appropriate to a social science paper;
- document sources using a standard citation format;
- display basic competence through sentence variety and paragraph development and usage;
- have a title related to the thesis;
- employ gender-neutral language;
- generally avoid excessive description above analysis, passive voice, and tense shifts, but exhibits some errors.

**“D” Paper:** A D paper’s treatment and development of the subject are as yet rudimentary. Although organization is present, it is neither clear nor effective. Sentences frequently are awkward, ambiguous and weakened by mechanical errors. Evidence of careful proofreading is scanty or nonexistent. The whole piece gives the impression of being conceived of and written in haste. Specifically, a D paper will be weakened by one or more of the following:

- follows few of the directions outlined above;
- lacks a clear thesis, introduction and conclusion;
- fails to anticipate objections to the thesis;
- supporting thesis details are poorly explained, trivial, inappropriate or logically flawed;
- presents information unfairly or inaccurately;
- contains flaws in organization and development;
- lacks transitions in and among paragraphs;
- employs inappropriate tone and style;
- contains errors in documentation format;
- has an inappropriate title;
- uses sexist language;
- contains frequent usage and surface errors.

**“F” Paper:** A F paper’s treatment of the subject is superficial; its themes lack a discernible organization; its prose is garbled or stylistically immature. Mechanical errors abound. In short, the ideas, organization, and style fall far below what is acceptable college writing. Specifically, an F paper will be weakened by one or more of the following:

- serious flaws in terms of argument, organization, style, tone;
- many usage and surface errors.