The Harlem Renaissance: Race and Rhetoric

By using the compelling artistic, political, and cultural lens of the Harlem Renaissance, students will learn how to write an insightful, coherent and organized paper driven by an arguable and analyzable thesis. You will write, workshop, and revise three papers. The first will deal with the (sometimes) competing ideologies at play during the Harlem Renaissance, the second paper will focus on a creative genre, such as the poetry or short stories of the period, and the third will be a research-driven paper and will include an annotated bibliography. All three major papers will be argumentative and analytical, but only the final paper will require outside research. A detailed assignment sheet will be handed out well in advance of each paper’s due date. In addition, you will be given quizzes and a variety of smaller writing assignments. Late papers will not be accepted. A late draft will result in a lower grade on the final paper, even if you are absent on its due date. A paper must go through the workshop process in order to be accepted on the final draft due date.

Texts:
The Portable Harlem Renaissance, David Levering Lewis
Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom, August Wilson (*will be available in the CU bookstore in a week)

Attendance: Since we offer concentrated instruction and since students rely on other students’ assessment of their work, regular attendance and punctuality are essential for the completion of the course. More than 3 absences will result in a lower grade for the course. Two late arrivals will count as one absence. Students absent more than 4 classes will not be given credit for the course. Please inform instructor of absences due to religious observances.

Grading:

A Paper= Excellent in content, form, and style; original, substantive, insightful, persuasive, well-written, clear, free of mechanical errors.

B Paper= A good paper with no major flaws; interesting with above average thought and expression.

C Paper= Adequate or reasonably competent; it may have a mixture of strengths and weaknesses.

D Paper= Poor in content, form, or style; disorganized, illogical, confusing, unfocused, or containing pervasive errors that impair readability.

F Paper= An incoherent, disastrously flawed, late, plagiarized, or nonexistent paper
Grade Breakdown:

Paper #1: 20%
Paper #2: 20%
Paper #3: 35%
Quizzes, in class writing, class discussion: 25%

Students with disabilities:

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit a letter to me from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact: 303-492-8671, Willard 322, or www.Colorado.EDU/disabilityservices.

Religious holidays:

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort reasonably and fairly to deal with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. In this class, {{insert your procedures here}}. See policy details at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html.

Honor Code:

All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include cheating, plagiarism, academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council. Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from me and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Additional information: http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html and http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode.
Course Schedule (subject to change)

Critical Essays and Autobiography

Aug. 22  Introduction to the Harlem Renaissance and in-class writing assignment

Aug. 24  Read David L. Lewis' introduction to *The Portable Harlem Renaissance Reader* and two poems, "The Blue Meridian" (p.303-307) and "If We Must Die" by Claude McKay (p.290).

Aug. 29  Read DuBois' "Returning Soldiers" (p. 3-5), Marcus Garvey's "Africa for Africans" (p. 17-28) and excerpt from Langston Hughes' *first* autobiography, *The Big Sea* (p. 76-99)

Aug. 31  *Draft #1 of paper #1 due—Workshop*

Sept. 5   *Labor Day Holiday*

Sept. 7  *Final draft paper #1 due. View and discuss the film *I Remember Harlem* in class*

Sept. 12 Read excerpts from Claude McKay's autobiography *A Long Way From Home* (p.156-172), excerpt from Van Vechten's *Nigger Heaven* (hand-out), and black reviews of *Nigger Heaven* (p. 108-109).

The Short Story

Sept. 14 Read Gwendolyn Bennett's "Wedding Day" (p. 363-370) and Angelina Weld Grimké's "The Closing Door" (handout of the first 4 pages, the rest on p486-500)

Sept. 19 Read Richard Bruce Nugent's "Smoke, Lilies and Jade" (p.569-584) and Dorothy West's "The Typewriter" (p. 501-11). *Bring typed thesis statement paper #2*

Sept. 21 Workshop first page of paper #2

Sept. 26 Workshop complete first draft of paper #2

Sept. 28 Read Langston Hughes' "Luani of the Jungles" (p. 585-591) and Wallace Thurman's "Cordelia the Crude" (629).

Oct. 03 Workshop second draft of paper #2

Oct. 05 Workshop second draft of paper #2

Oct. 12 wiggle room

The Art World

Oct. 17 Read Albert C. Barnes' "Negro Art and America" (p.128-133) and Alain Locke's "The Negro Takes His Place..." (p.134-137) Also go to: http://www.artic.edu/artaccess/AA_AfAm/pages/AfAm_3.shtml# This is an excellent site on renowned painter Aaron Douglas

Oct. 19 Finish art discussion and brainstorm research projects

Drama, drama, drama (and film)

Oct. 24 Conferences—no class but conferences are mandatory

Oct. 26 Conferences—no class but conferences are mandatory

Blues, Oh Blues and Poetry

Oct. 31 Bring thesis statements and be prepared to discuss your final project with the class Read All of the poetry by Hughes (257-267) and those by Sterling Brown (p.227-236)

Nov. 02 More blues and poetry

Nov. 07 Workshop first 4 pages of Paper #3

Nov. 09 Annotated Bibliography Due Workshop first 4 pages of Paper #3

Drama, drama, drama (and film)

Nov. 14 Watch part of Paul Robeson’s film Body and Soul (1924) Start Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom (p. 1-50)

Nov. 16 First draft paper #3 Due, Finish Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom. Discuss

Nov. 21 Workshop paper #3 drafts

Nov. 23 No class—Thanksgiving Holiday

Nov. 28 Second draft paper #3 due, workshop

Nov. 30 workshop

Dec. 05 Presentations

Dec. 07 Final draft of Paper #3, Presentations