

## “Emancipation” in /and the Afterlife of Slavery

Course Proposal – Erica S. Lawson

This essay and presentation based graduate seminar examines what Rinaldo Walcott describes as “the long emancipation” signaling the unfulfilled promise of freedom despite the legal end to Black people’s enslavement. It engages provocations and disruptions to challenge complacent readings of democratic liberalism – or what Charles Mills describes as “liberalism.”<sup>1</sup> The seminar is informed by the structural violence of the transatlantic trade and its manifestations in what Saidiya Hartman signals as the afterlife of slavery that is, skewed life chances for African descendants in the Black diaspora (extended to continental Africans). We will examine contested ideas and arguments about freedom, rights, and racial progress drawing on

Here are some of the criteria that I use to assess written work:

- x Good grammar and sentence structure
- x Clear and precise use of language (i.e. clear definitions of terms)
- x Concise articulation of the issue/problem that the paper addresses
- x Coherent development of argument
- x Arguments supported with clear evidence
- x Close attention to proper citations
- x An examination and interpretation of arguments in ways that illuminate hidden assumptions, meanings, contradictions, or inconsistency (in other words, an analytic rather than an overly descriptive assessment of the topic/issue)

GSWS Grading Criteria (see WSFR Handbook for details)

- A+ (90 to 100) – Excellent work
- A (80 and up) Superior work
- B (70 to 79) Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory
- C (60 and up) – Competent work, meeting requirements
- D (50 to 59) – Fair work, minimally acceptable
- F (49 and down) – Assignment does not apply to course; basic requirements are unmet; plagiarism)

Sample Reading List

Brand, D. (2001) *A Map to the Door of No Return*. Vintage Canada

Benahene, P.A. (2013) "When Blackness Shows Up Uninvited: Examining the Murder of Trayvon Martin through Fanonian Racial Interpellation." *Counterpoise*, 4(15), Contemporary Issues in the Sociology of Race and Ethnicity: A CRITICAL READER 2541.

Farmer, P. (2001). "An Anthropology of Structural Violence." *Current Anthropology* 42(3): 305-325.

Goldberg, D.T. (2018). "The Reason of Unreason": Achille Mbembe and David Theo Goldberg in conversation about "Critique of Black Reason." *Theory, Culture and Society* 35(7-8): 205-277.

Hannah Jones, N. (2021). *The 1619 Project: One World* (Random House).

Hartman, S.V. (1997). *Scenes of Subjection: Terror Slavery and the Self in Nineteenth Century America* Oxford University Press.

Lawson, E. S. (2024) "Black Maternal Grief and Grievance against the Liberal State." In M. Caputi and P. Moynagh (eds). *Research Handbook on Feminist Political Theory* Edward Elgar Press, pp. 283-303.

McKittrick, K. (2013). "Plantation Futures." *Small Axe* 17(42): 115

Mills, C. (1997). *The Racial Contract*. Cornell University Press .

Osman, M. (2023). "Rethinking the Liberian Predicament in Black Terms: On Repatriation, Modernity, and the Ethnographic Choreographies of Civil War." In (P. Goulimari, ed.), *After Modernism*. London: Routledge

Pierre, J. (2020). "The Racial Vernaculars of Development: A View from West Africa." *American Anthropologist* 122: 8698. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aman.13352>

Robinson, C. (2000, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition). *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition*. University of North Carolina Press.

Rodney, W. (1972).