AFR 147A (HIST 80/ AMER 180 /Special Topics) ~ Summer 2017
“Stranger In the Village”: Race, Nation, and Belonging in History and Film

Professors Kendra Field and Khary Jones
Africana Studies/ History/ Drama and Dance
kendra.field@tufts.edu, khary.jones@tufts.edu

Course Description

Through the lens of African American expatriates in France – epitomized by James Baldwin’s classic 1953 essay, “Stranger In the Village” – this team-taught course explores the construction of racial and national categories and identities in the long twentieth century. Looking back from our present political moment, incorporating biography, memoir, literature, and film, we will explore the historical experiences, creative production, and identifications of African-descended writers, artists, and exiles in France. While our sustained focus will remain on the life and writings of James Baldwin in the U.S. and France, additional figures will range from W.E.B. Du Bois and Josephine Baker to Richard Wright and Anita Reynolds to Ta-Nehisi Coates. Ultimately, we return to our current moment, employing the past as the foundation for interrogating contemporary questions of race, nation, and belonging, including students’ present-day experiences of travel, migration, and diaspora. Students may have the opportunity to participate in an excursion to the Swiss town of Leukerbad, where James Baldwin wrote “Stranger in the Village,” or to Baldwin’s home in St. Paul de Vence.

Required Texts

The following books will be available for purchase. These are books that we will be reading in their entirety, or nearly so. Students may also locate these books through online booksellers. Required articles and book selections will be available via Box.

James Baldwin, Notes of a Native Son (1955; reprint by Beacon Press, 1984)
Ta-Nehisi Coates, Between the World and Me (Spiegel & Grau, 2015)
Fred Standley and Louis Pratt, Eds., Conversations with James Baldwin (Univ. Press of Mississippi, 1989)
Supplemental Texts:
We will be reading selections from the following texts. These will be made available as pdf via Box site.
Darlene Clark Hine et al, eds., Black Europe and the African Diaspora (University of Illinois Press, 2009)
Michel Fabre, From Harlem to Paris: Black American Writers in France, 1840-1980 (Univ. of Illinois, 1993)

Course Films:
I Am Not Your Negro (2016)
What Happened, Miss Simone? (2015)
The African Americans: Many Rivers to Cross (2013)
Herskovits At the Heart of Blackness (2009)
James Baldwin: The Price of the Ticket (1990)
Round Midnight (1986)
Story of a Three Day Pass (1968)

Course Requirements
1. Informed participation in discussion 15%
2. Group Presentations 15%
3. Weekly Reading Responses 20%
4. Midterm Essay (five pages) 20%
5. Final Project (eight pages) 30%

Our class is built around student participation, including active discussion and regular class presentations. Class meetings will be divided between lecture, discussion, film, and student presentations. Class meetings and material will be divided between Professors Field and Jones. Please come to class prepared to speak about course materials. All students are expected to be respectful of one another and the instructor at all times. All students are expected to attend every class meeting, and to notify the professor in writing in advance of anticipated absences. Academic dishonesty or plagiarism will require disciplinary action. If you have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Part I: Reflections on Race, Nation, and Belonging in the U.S. and France Today

Week 1 (5/18-5/19) Reading and Assignments:
Ta-Nehisi Coates, “Acting French,” The Atlantic, August 29, 2014
Darlene Clark Hine et al, Black Europe, Preface and Introduction

Weekly Response #1 Due

Week 2 (5/22-5/26) Readings and Assignments:
Ta-Nehisi Coates, Between the World and Me (all)

Weekly Response #2 Due
Part II: James Baldwin and the Long Civil Rights Movement (1930s-1980s)

Week 3 (5/29-6/2) Readings and Assignments:

James Baldwin, “This Morning, This Evening, So Soon” (1960)
James Baldwin, The Price of the Ticket, selected essays
Michel Fabre, From Harlem to Paris: Black American Writers in France, 1840-1980, selected essays
James Campbell, Exiled in Paris, selected chapters

Weekly Response #3 Due

Week 4 (6/5-6/9) Readings and Assignments:

James Baldwin, “Stranger In the Village” Harper’s Magazine, 1953
James Baldwin, Notes of a Native Son, selected essays
Gordon Parks, selected works
Melvin Van Peebles, selected works
James Campbell, Exiled in Paris, selected chapters

Midterm Essay Due

Part III: Anita Reynolds, the Jim Crow Era, and the Jazz Age (1890s-1930s)

Week 5 (6/12-6/16) Readings and Assignments:

Anita Reynolds, American Cocktail: A “Colored Girl” in the World, Preface and Introduction
Fabre, From Harlem to Paris: Black American Writers in France, 1840-1980, selected essays
Photographs from Paris Exposition of 1900, Du Bois Exhibit

Weekly Response #4 Due

Week 6 (6/19-6/23) Readings and Assignments:

Anita Reynolds, American Cocktail: A “Colored Girl” in the World, to end

Weekly Response #5 Due

Contemporary Legacies (6/26-6/27) Readings and Assignments:

Henry Louis Gates, Jr. “Interview with James Baldwin and Josephine Baker”
Hine et al, Black Europe, selected essays
Thomas Chatterton Williams, “Breaking into James Baldwin’s House,” The New Yorker, October 8, 2015

Final Essay Due
Selected Biographies (for presentations):

Sally Hemings  
William Wells Brown  
Armand Lanusse  
B. Valcour  
Camille Thierry  
Victor Séjour  
Ida B. Wells  
W.E.B. Du Bois  
Anna Julia Cooper  
Langston Hughes  
Alain Locke  
Countee Cullen  
Claude McKay  
Jessie Fauset  
Gwendolyn Bennett  
Josephine Baker  
Anita Reynolds  
Sidney Bechet  
Richard Wright  
Gordon Parks  
Melvin Van Peebles  
James Baldwin  
William Melvin Kelley  
Chester Himes  
Ted Joans  
Barbara Chase-Riboud

Course Films:

*I Am Not Your Negro* (2016)
*What Happened, Miss Simone?* (2015)
*Herskovits At the Heart of Blackness* (2009)
*James Baldwin: The Price of the Ticket* (1990)
*Round Midnight* (1986)
*Story of a Three Day Pass* (1968)

Khary Jones is a film lecturer and an award-winning filmmaker who received degrees in Film Directing (MFA) and English (MA) from Columbia University. His films have screened at numerous festivals including Sundance, SXSW, and the Palm Springs International ShortFest. He has earned awards and fellowships from Columbia University's School of the Arts, AFI-Dallas, the Brooklyn Arts Council, the Andrew Mellon Foundation, and the Sundance Institute. Jones has taught courses on narrative filmmaking, visual storytelling, and screenwriting at Clark University, the University of California, Riverside, and as a teaching artist in various programs in New York City and Los Angeles. At Tufts, Jones teaches Writing the Short Film, Filmmaking I, and special topics courses in Africana and Film Studies.

Kendra Field Kendra Field is assistant professor of history and director of the Center for the Study of Race and Democracy at Tufts University. Field is the author of the forthcoming book, *Growing Up with the Country: Family, Race, and Nation after the Civil War* (Yale University Press, 2017). The book traces her ancestors’ migratory lives between the Civil War and the Great Migration. Field served as Assistant Editor to David Levering Lewis' *W.E.B. Du Bois: A Biography* (Henry Holt, 2009) and has been awarded fellowships from the Ford Foundation, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and the Huntington Library. Field has advised and appeared in historical documentary projects, including Henry Louis Gates, Jr.'s “The African Americans: Many Rivers to Cross” (2013) and "Roots: A History Revealed" (2016). Field received her Ph.D. in American History from New York University. She also holds a Master's in Public Policy from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government and a B.A. from Williams College. Previously, Field served as Assistant Professor of History at the University of California, Riverside, and worked in education, organizing, and the non-profit sector in Boston and New York.