**HIST 4340 Philosophies of History**

Professor David McNally

*Mondays and Wednesdays, 4-5:30 PM, Room 203 Agnes Hall*

Does history have a meaning? Does it tend toward justice, or is it merely a litany of violence and domination? This course engages these debates in relation to a primary event—the Haitian Revolution of 1791-1804, which saw the abolition of slavery and the creation of the world’s first independent Black republic—and a primary text, C.L.R. James’s classic, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L’Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution*. We will examine this historic event and James’s text in relation to liberal, Marxist, Feminist, and post-structural philosophies of history. And we will analyze the Haitian struggle for freedom in relation to anti-colonialism, human rights, anti-racism, socialism, feminism, and the meaning of freedom and universal emancipation. Below: CLR James in his study.

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Grading Scheme

* Paper proposal (15%)
* Short research presentation (15%)
* Seminar participation (25%)
* Final essay (45%)

Core Readings

*Note: PDFs of many core readings will be provided by the instructor.*

* C.L.R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L’Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution*
* Immanuel Kant, “The Contest of Faculties”
* G.W.F. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History* (selections). See also: <https://philosophynow.org/issues/129/Hegel_on_History>
* -----------------, “Lordship and Bondage” from *The Phenomenology of Spirit*: <https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/hegel/works/ph/phba.htm>
* -----------------, *The Philosophy of Right* (selections)
* Susan Buck-Morss, *Hegel, Haiti, and Universal History*
* Nick Nesbitt, “Troping Toussaint” *Research in African Literatures,* v. 35, n. 2 (2004)
* Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology: Part One--**Feuerbach: Opposition of the Materialist and Idealist Outlooks*: <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/german-ideology/ch01.htm>
* Friedrich Nietzsche, “On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life”
* Michel Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History”
* David Scott, “The Re-Enchantment of Humanism: An Interview with Sylvia Wynter,” *small axe* 8 (September 2000)
* Aaron Kamugisha, “The Hearts of Men? Gender in the Late CLR James,” *small axe* 34 (March 2011)
* Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*
* Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*
* Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth,* Ch. 3
* Nick Nesbitt, *Universal Emancipation: The Haitian Revolution and Radical Enlightenment*

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

January 19 **Course Introduction**

January 24, 26 **The Haitian Revolution, 1**

CLR James, *The Black Jacobins*, Ch. 1-6

January 31, February 2 **The Haitian Revolution, 2**

CLR James, *The Black Jacobins*, Ch. 7-13

February 7 **Liberalism and History as Human Progress**

Immanuel Kant, “The Contest of Faculties”

February 9, 14 **Reason and History in Europe and Africa**

GWF Hegel, *The Philosophy of History* (selections). See also:

<https://philosophynow.org/issues/129/Hegel_on_History>

February 16 **History and the Struggle Between Master and Bondsman**

GWF Hegel, “Lordship and Bondage” from *The Phenomenology of Spirit*:

<https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/hegel/works/ph/phba.htm>

February 21, 23 **Slavery, Freedom, and Revolution**

GWF Hegel, *The Philosophy of Right* (selections)

Feb 28, Mar. 2 **History, Freedom, and Class Struggle**

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology: Part One--Feuerbach: Opposition of the Materialist and Idealist Outlooks*: <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/german-ideology/ch01.htm>

March 7, 9 **History as Will to Power**

Friedrich Nietzsche, “On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life”

March 14, 16 MARCH BREAK

March 21, 23 **Power Without Progress**

Michel Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History”

March 28, 30 **Colonialism, Gender, and Emancipation**

David Scott, “The Re-Enchantment of Humanism: An Interview with Sylvia Wynter,” *small axe* 8 (September 2000), excerpt pp. 173-207

Aaron Kamugisha, “The Hearts of Men? Gender in the Late CLR James,” *small axe* 34 (March 2011)

April 5, 7, 12, 14 **Colonialism and the Silences of World History**

Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*

April 19, 21 **History Beyond Colonialism?**

Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*

Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth,* Ch. 3

April 26, 28 **Haiti and the Project of Universal Emancipation**

Nick Nesbitt, *Universal Emancipation: The Haitian Revolution and Radical Enlightenment* (selections)

May 2 **Concluding Session**