

MISSISSIPPI VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

Department of Social Sciences

College of Arts & Sciences

FALL 2018

African American History

HI 215-01; CRN: 10110 -- M/W/F 3:00-3:50PM

HI 215-02; CRN: 10111—WED. 5:00-7:50PM

3 Credit Hours

Duration: AUG 20 – DEC 7, 2018

C.Sade Turnipseed, MS/MBA, PhD, Professor

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MONDAYS & WEDNESDAYS
11:00 PM–12:55PM; 4:00–6:00PM;
WEDNESDAYS 12PM-12:55PM; 7:50-
9:00PM, or by appointment.

PROFESSOR T'S TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

In essence, the philosophical approach and teaching strategy applied to this course is one that emanates from an ancient African dictate to historical understanding and cultural appreciation. It begins with an understanding of self. You cannot fully function in society, nor appreciate the significance of lessons from the past, if you have no understanding of your own history. **Therefore, the philosophical approach and teaching strategy for this course is: KNOW THY SELF.**

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS and expected STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course examines the African American experience in the United States from before slavery to the present era. Students study the chronology of African history in America, the African heritage, the crucible of slavery, the struggle for equality, Pan-Africanism, and the development and evolution of the African American community. In addition, students will gain the ability to:

- read and critically analyze documents including primary sources
- write clearly and effectively, construct a clear thesis, and defend your assertions with historical evidence
- correctly identify and locate historically important sights on the map.
- understand the significance of the how and the why of history, not just the: who, what, when, and where.

CELL PHONES and/or HEADSETS ARE NOT PERMITTED IN THIS CLASS

(No exceptions unless otherwise instructed).

Five (5) points will be deducted for each infraction; after three (3) requests you will be asked to leave.

The overall goal of the Department of Social Sciences is to have a competent faculty who will offer a curriculum that will prepare students with the necessary skills to function effectively in government agencies, industry, research and professional careers. Specifically, the Department of Social Sciences strives:

- To prepare students to serve as professionals in administrative careers in government, public service agencies, and non-profit organizations;
- To provide skill training for Social Science majors in social research and writing for the Social Sciences; and,
- To prepare students for graduate study and professional employment.

In addition, students will be able to:

- read and critically analyze documents including primary and secondary sources
- write clearly and effectively, construct a clear thesis, and defend your assertions with historical evidence
- understand the significance of the why and how of history, not just the: who, what, when, and where.

HISTORY—working definition

History (from Greek *ἱστορία*, *historia*, meaning “inquiry, knowledge acquired by investigation”) is the study of the past, specifically how it relates to humans.^{1,2} It is an umbrella term that relates to past events as well as the memory, discovery, collection, organization, presentation, and interpretation of information about these events. History is the study of the human past as it is described in the written documents left by human beings.³ History is a narration of the events, which have happened among mankind, including an account of the rise and fall of nations, as well as of other great changes, which have affected the political and social condition of the human race.⁴ Events occurring prior to written record are considered prehistory.

History can also refer to the academic discipline, which uses a narrative to examine and analyze a sequence of past events, and objectively determine the patterns of cause and effect that determine them.⁵ Historians sometimes debate the nature of history and its usefulness by discussing the study of the discipline as an end in itself and as a way of providing “perspective” on the problems of the present.⁶

TEXT:

Freedom On My Mind

By: Deborah Gray White, Mia Bay, Waldo E. Martin Jr. (Authors)

ISBN # ISBN-13: 978-0312197292

ISBN-10: 0312197292

Because of the nature of this course, and the fact that it is required, you will need to get a copy of the book. Moreover, the material for quizzes, research paper and exams will be drawn from the text as well as other supplemental, but relevant, materials.

READING:

Reading is the key to doing well in this course. If you keep up with the reading, you should be fine.

You cannot pass this course without reading the assigned chapters. This semester we will cover **Chapters 1-14**, in your textbook. As you read don't skip over introductory materials, sidebar materials, or other relevant notations in the textbook. Each week students are expected to read one-two chapters

¹ Brian Joseph and Richard Janda, Eds., *The Handbook of Historical Linguistics* (New York: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 163.

² “History Definition,” *About Education* (August 21, 2015), last update July 7, 2013, http://archaeology.about.com/od/hterms/qt/history_definition.htm. Accessed August 21, 2015.

³ Kris Hirst, “What Is History? - A Collection of Definitions: How Historians (and Others) Define History,” *About Education* (August 21, 2015). Accessed August 21, 2015.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Professor Richard J. Evans, “The Two Faces of E.H. Carr,” *History in Focus, Issue 2: What is History?* (University of London, November 2008). Accessed August 21, 2015; Alun Munslow, “What History Is” *History in Focus, Issue 2: What is History?* (University of London, 2001), last update November 10, 2008. Accessed August 21, 2015.

⁶ John Tosh, *The Pursuit of History* (Pearson Education Limited, 2006), 52; Peter N. Stearns, et al, eds., “Introduction,” *Knowing Teaching and Learning History, National and International Perspectives* (New York & London: New York University Press, 2000), 6; Gary B. Nash, “The Convergence Paradigm in Studying Early American History in Schools,” *Knowing Teaching and Learning History, National and International Perspectives* (New York & London: New York University Press, 2000), 102–115.

of the book. If you spend time regularly reading, this will not be an issue; if you leave the reading (and or viewing) until the last day you will likely have a difficult time. There are no shortcuts. It is important to embrace the subject of history so that you can function from an informed position about **African American History; as well as, Mississippi Delta history and culture**. Ask me, your instructor (via email, or phone) about anything you don't understand. I am here to assist you.

PLEASE COMPLETELY READ ALL ASSIGNMENTS!

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

All acts of academic dishonesty, including, but not limited to, cheating on exams, plagiarism, internet papers, paraphrasing internet papers, presenting someone else's work as your own, failing to meet academic and professional requirements, will result in an automatic "F" The University's academic honesty and plagiarism policies are enforced in this course. [See online documentation on MVSU cheating/plagiarism policies: page 55 in the Student Handbook and pages 99-101 in the undergraduate catalog.]

IMPORTANT NOTE ON PLAGIARISM

In a university it is considered serious academic misconduct to plagiarize, which is the theft of someone else's work without giving credit to that person for their work. This university, in its efforts to stop plagiarism, has purchased a license to a software program, **Turnitin**, which allows faculty to check student papers against anything that is written on the web or that has been submitted by other students. The university administration took this step due to a real concern about this issue. Plagiarism will have a negative impact on your final grade. Students who engage in extensive plagiarism in an assignment [**over 35% of your paper**] receive 0 points for that assignment. **If you use another student's paper for your plagiarism, you and that student will both receive a 0 for the assignment.** If you use published or unpublished material—either words or ideas—in a paper you must acknowledge where you accessed this material. However, in this class try not to use quotes. **Use your own words** and cite the source of your ideas if they come from sources other than the textbook or the film or document you are analyzing. <http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml>

TURNITIN:

All of your papers must be submitted by you to the **Turnitin** website for plagiarism checking. Go to the website (below) TODAY and register for the course. Log in to the site, if you have previously used Turnitin, in the top right hand corner of the page--add the class by entering the Class ID and enrollment key (password). If you are new to Turnitin, click on "Create Account" immediately under the Login lines and follow the instructions. **You must register for Turnitin or you will not be able to get credit for your written assignments.** Turnitin <http://turnitin.com/>

The class ID for this course is:

18711784 (HI 215-01)

18711818 (HI 215-02)

The enrollment password for both classes is: ProfT

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE PASSWORD IS CASE SENSITIVE.

No written assignment will be credited or graded for this course before it is submitted to Turnitin. You will have until 11:59 pm, on the day the paper is due, to submit it to **Turnitin**. **No late papers will be accepted.** Do not cut and paste your paper into a file box. Upload all papers in a Microsoft Word file--to Turnitin. **DO NOT SUBMIT THE ASSIGNMENT TO ME AS AN E-MAIL, NOR AS AN ATTACHMENT, unless otherwise instructed!** Do not assume that your clock

is set to the exact minute that the Turnitin clocks are. When you submit a paper to Turnitin there is a two-step process. You will be given a paper ID/receipt following your submission as well as an email verifying that your submission has been received. Make note of the paper ID/receipt when you submit it to have proof of your timely submission in case of any technical errors on the internet/website. Always keep a digital copy [a file on your jump drive or on your computer] of your papers. If you do not receive a paper ID number/receipt then you have not completed the submission process—so be sure to complete the next step. **Turnitin does NOT accept Microsoft Works files. You must use Microsoft Word files--.doc or docx extensions in the file name.**

Special Needs and Accommodations

Mississippi Valley State University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for students with a documented disability. If you feel you are eligible to receive accommodations for a covered disability (medical, physical, psychiatric, learning, vision, hearing, etc.) and would like to request it for this course, you must be registered with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) program administered by University College. It is recommended that you visit the Disabilities Office located inside the EMAP Computer Lab in the Technical Education (IT) Building to register for the program at the beginning of each semester. For more information or to schedule an appointment, please contact Mr. Billy Benson, Jr. via phone or email at 662-254-3005 or billy.benson@mvsu.edu.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

INTRODUCTIONS: 50 points—Presentation of an interview of at least elderly two family members about your personal biographical information/family history. This assignment has a **500-word** minimum.

DISCUSSION PAPERS: 50 Points (each) -100 points —Students must choose from the Special Lecture Presentations **two** topics to develop (from their notes) into full concept papers—reflecting their thoughts and ideas about the topic of discussion (See Appendix I)—**500 words minimum**.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS: 300 Points

There will be two written research papers, 750 words minimum (approximately 4 double-spaced, typed pages), **plus one PowerPoint presentation** (approximately 15 minutes minimum). A separate assignment sheet (rubric) explains the requirements for these papers and presentations. Research papers (not the presentation PowerPoint) must be submitted via Turnitin.com. The goal is 0% similarity ... 35% or higher similarity will NOT be read; and a score of zero (0) will be awarded.

SPECIAL TOPICS RESEARCH PAPERS:

- 1) **PUBLIC HISTORY**--Visit a local museum and present an overview – (See Appendix I). This paper is worth up to **100 points**. DUE NOVEMBER 30
- 2) **SEE SPECIAL TOPICS LIST**—(See Appendix I). Choose one topic/historical person/place/event, from the list provided.
 - a. Team Research Paper = **100 points**—DUE SEPTEMBER 28
 - b. Team Presentation = **100 points** -- TBD

QUIZZES: 5 quizzes @ 20 points each – 100 points - The quizzes are based on reading material in the chapter and/or notes from films viewed and discussed in class. You are urged to find additional study resources and take the liberty to dig deeper on topics discussed to further your understanding about this particular aspect of history. It is important for success on the mid-term and final exams that you consider researching any quiz questions that you do not understand. So during lectures and after

quizzes take the time to jot down points that you didn't understand and look up the material either in the textbook, or other resource material(s), or discussing the issue with me all while taking notes for yourself. Each quiz is open book with 20 multiple-choice questions, and you will have 40 minutes to answer those 20 questions, you may work in groups or individually (I want you to get it right).

MID-TERM EXAM, 100 points, covering Chapters 1-7, plus supplemental assignments. **This is NOT a team effort, nor is it an open book/notes exam.**

FINAL EXAM, 100 points, covering all Team Research presentations, plus supplemental assignments. **This is NOT a team effort, nor is it an open book/notes exam.**

GRADING SCALE (for quizzes and exams):

Total Points: 90-100% of points = A
80-89% of points = B
70-79% of point = C
60-69% of points = D
Below 60% of points = F

TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE= 750 points

EXTRA CREDIT:

There will be opportunities to make extra credit points e.g., daily Hot Topics; Voices From the Valley (MVSU Radio Program); Documentary Film notes; Historic Event summaries; visit and report on historical sites. Join History Club e.g., Facebook, and post something relevant to the course material and explain its relevance and importance (**5 points**) **to the wider audience**, and reply to someone else's post with notable substance (**5 points**). Comments should be thoughtful, meaningful, and relevant. One-sentence statements are not acceptable. (Please notify professor and colleagues of your postings). Please see Appendix III for additional opportunities.

References:

- Joseph, Brian (Ed.); Janda, Richard (Ed.) (2008). *The Handbook of Historical Linguistics*. Blackwell Publishing (published 30 December 2004). p 163. ISBN 978-1-4051-2747-9.
- "History Definition." Retrieved 21 January 2014.
- "What is History & Why Study It?" Retrieved 21 January 2014.
- Professor Richard J. Evans (2001). "The Two Faces of E.H. Carr." *History in Focus, Issue 2: What is History?* University of London. Retrieved 10 November 2008.
- Professor Alun Munslow (2001). "What History Is." *History in Focus, Issue 2: What is History?* University of London. Retrieved 10 November 2008.
- Tosh, John (2006). *The Pursuit of History* (4th ed.). Pearson Education Limited. ISBN 1-4058-2351-8. p 52
- Peter N. Stearns, Peters Seixas, Sam Wineburg (eds.), ed. (2000). "Introduction." *Knowing Teaching and Learning History, National and International Perspectives*. New York & London: New York University Press. p. 6. ISBN 0-8147-8141-1.
- Nash I, Gary B. (2000). "The "Convergence" Paradigm in Studying Early American History in Schools." In Peter N. Stearns, Peters Seixas, Sam Wineburg (eds.). *Knowing Teaching and Learning History, National and International Perspectives*. New York & London: New York University Press. pp. 102–115. ISBN 0-8147-8141-1.

READINGS, WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS, QUIZZES & EXAMS

Academic Agenda/Calendar:

Week 1 August 20-24

- Introductions: Due September 5th by 11:59 p.m. – submit via Turnitin.com.
- Read/Discuss: Course Syllabus; (in its entirety)
Museum/Public History Review—Due November 30th by 11:59pm
Chap 1- From Africa to America, 1441-1808
- Select TEAM RESEARCH PAPERS TOPIC—SEE TOPICS LIST-- Due SEPTEMBER 28 by 11:59pm * Select Teams/Presentation dates

Week 2 August 27-31

- Introductions, cont.
- Read/Discuss Chap 2—African Slavery in North America, 1619-1739
 - *Special Lecture Presentation: Cotton Kingdom, pt 1*
- Quiz #1 Chapters 1&2 (Wednesday)

Week 3 September 3-7 -- LABOR DAY HOLIDAY

- Read/Discuss Chapter 3—African Americans in the Age of Revolution, 1740-1783
- Film: “Long Road to Freedom” pt. 1

Week 4 September 10-14

- Read/Discuss Chap 4-- Slavery, Freedom in the New Republic, 1783-1829
- Quiz #2 Chapters 3 & 4 (Wednesday)
- Film: “Long Road to Freedom” pt. 2
 - *Special Lecture Presentation: Cotton Kingdom pt 2: Benjamin T. Montgomery/Davis Bend/Mound Bayou, MS*

Week 5 September 17-21

- Read/Discuss Chap 5—Black Life in the Slave South, 1820-1860
- Read/Discuss Chap 6: The Northern Black Freedom Struggle and the Coming of the Civil War, 1830-1860
- Film: “Long Road to Freedom” pt. 3
- **Discussion assignment: Paper #1 Due**

Week 6 September 24-28

- Read Chap 7—Freedom Rising: The Civil War, 1861-1865
- Film: “Long Road to Freedom” pt. 4.
- Quiz #3 Chapters 5-7 (Wednesday)
- **TEAM RESEARCH PAPERS DUE (Friday)**

Week 7 October 1-5

- **MIDTERM exam on Chapters 1-7.**
 - *Special Lecture Presentation: The Gullah Geechee Narrative, pt 1*
- Film: “Long Road to Freedom” pt. 5

Week 8 October 8-12

- TEAM RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS begins
 - *Special Lecture Presentation: The Gullah Geechee Narrative, pt 2*

- Film: “Long Road to Freedom” pt. 6
- Read/Discuss Chap 8—Reconstruction: The Making and Unmaking of a Revolution, 1865-1885

Week 9 October 15-19

- TEAM RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS
- **Discussion assignment: Paper #2 Due**

Week 10 October 22-26

- TEAM RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS
- Read/Discuss Chap 9 & 10
 - Black Life and Culture, 1880-1915
 - The New Negro, 1915-1940
- Read/Discuss Chap 11—Fighting for a Double Victory, 1939-1948
- Quiz # 4 Chapters 8 - 11 (Wednesday)

Week 11 October 29-November 2

7th Annual Sweat Equity Investment in the Cotton Kingdom Symposium (Thursday & Friday)

- Read/Discuss Chap 12—The Early Civil Rights Movement, 1947-1963
- Read/Discuss Chap 13—Multiple Meanings of Freedom: The Movement Broadens, 1963-1975
- **CLASS WILL BE HELD IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES AUDITORIUM (FRIDAY ALL DAY-MANDATORY ATTENDANCE)**

Week 12 November 5-November 9

- TEAM RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS
- Read/Discuss Chap 14—The Challenge of Conservatism in an Era of Change, 1968-2000
- Read/Discuss Chap 15—African Americans and the New Century, 2000-present
- **Discussion assignment: Paper #2 Due (No Friday Class—meet in Library to finalize research)**

Week 13 November 12-16

- TEAM RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS
 - *Special Lecture Presentation: Ida B Wells-Barnett (see Attachment I, III)*
- Quiz # 5 Chapters 12-15 (Wednesday)

Week 14 November 19-23 FALL BREAK

Week 15 November 26-30

- *Special Lecture Presentation: Reparations-read Ta-Nehisi Coates article (see Attachment I)*
- ALL RESEARCH PAPERS, EXTRA CREDIT ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE
 -- must be completed and turned in to TURNITIN.COM, by FRIDAY, at 11:59 p.m.
- **Public History / Museum Review—Due**
 - Discuss Final Exam

Week 16 December 3-7

- FINALS

NOTE: This document does not constitute a contract with the University. It contains guidelines. Dr. Turnipseed reserves the right to make changes as necessary in the syllabus during the course of the semester.

APPENDIX I:

I INTRODUCTION: GRAND-MAMA' NEM

In 100-word essay/interview format discuss your family's cultural heritage and social contributions. These things are determined by asking relatives your grandmother's ages (Grand-mama 'nem) that may also be friends, guardians, people in your "village" about their early lives and the occupation(s) they held in their youth, or just some of the memorable things they encountered as a youth. Ask them about growing up in the city of their birth and/or where they grew up. In addition, you may inquire about anything they can remember about their grand-parents, parents, uncles, aunties, sisters and brothers ('nem) and some of the memorable things they did and where it was. Discuss how you and your family got to the Delta; and most importantly what do they think about you and what you intend to do with your education from MVSU. (Submit via turnitin.com). This assignment is worth

50 POINTS

DUE: Wednesday September 5, 2018

NOTE: This assignment is also your introduction to the class—all presenters will receive bonus points, iff presented to the class prior to the due date.

II. PUBLIC HISTORY

PUBLIC HISTORY--Visit a local museum and present an overview – there are several museums in the Mississippi Delta, including the **"COTTON IN MY HANDS"** exhibit in the J.H. White Library, on MVSU's campus. This assignment requires you visit the museum/interpretive center; introduce yourself to the executive director; and let him/her know that you are a student of history in Dr. Sade Turnipseed at MVSU who is working on a research paper/project, and you would like to have "professional courtesy" extended to you (meaning free entry). In addition, you will ask for any marketing material about the museum and its collections that they might recommend. Use the material(s) in addition to the notes you will take while walking through the collections/exhibit(s) to write your review **IN YOUR OWN WORDS**. This paper is worth up to **100 points**.

DUE: November 30, 2018

III SPECIAL LECTURE PRESENTATIONS:

I. THE COTTON KINGDOM AND PLANTATION SOCIETY: FROM SLAVERY TO SHARECROPPING

- a. For more than three hundred years, the American South was essentially a plantation society, in which the plantation system penetrated all aspects of social, cultural, economic, and political life. During this period, plantation slavery evolved into the key institutional component of Southern society and played an integral role in its development. Plantations were organized social systems that contributed significantly to the racial stratification of the Southern plantation society, and in this way served as the origin of contemporary race relations and social inequality in America. Presented is a sociological framework for the interpretation of historical data on plantation slavery by addressing different questions concerning four broad areas of research--theoretical perspectives; social institutions; race, gender, and social inequality; and social change and social transformations. Pt 1
- b. Benjamin T. Montgomery/Davis Bend and the historical narrative of Mound Bayou, Mississippi, the nation's first incorporated all African American township; and, its founders who were world renowned innovators, statesmen, and women of vision and purpose. Pt 2

II. THE WORLD THE GULLAH GEECHEE SOCIETY MADE

- a. The Gullah Geechee people are the descendants of Central and West Africans who came from different ethnic and social groups. They were enslaved together on the isolated sea and barrier islands that span what is now designated as the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor. The people known as the Gullah and the Geechee had an inherently strong community life and the geographical isolation contributed to their ability to preserve their African heritage probably more than other African groups in the United States of America. As a result, the history, stories, beliefs, and creative expressions became critical antecedents to African American culture overall; as well as, the broader American mosaic. The Gullah Geechee culture is an evolving story of self-determination, persistence, resilience, innovation, isolation, and enslavement. Pt 1
- b. The Story of indigo, rice, and cotton (and tobacco) are considered “the holy trinity” that links the holistic traditions of West Africa to the capitalistic way of life in Western societies. The Gullah Geechee cultural heritage is an essential component in this historical narrative. The art, food-ways, language and overall way of life have contributed in no small measure to the American experiment, as a significant “foundational culture.” Pt 2

III. Ida Bell Wells Barnett—Mother of the Human Rights Struggle

Ida B. Wells because of her unrepentant fight against the barbarism of white supremacy. Her accomplishments are truly extraordinary given the time and social context, in which she lived. She traveled throughout the United States and Europe with her anti-lynching message; she wrote extensively throughout her life on the injustices faced by African Americans; and she engaged in a never-ending effort to organize women and African people for social and political justice in America. As a writer, social researcher, activist and organizer Ida B. Wells was one of this country's most dynamic and remarkable women ... period.

IV. REPARATIONS AND THE NEW CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

Using Ta-Nehisi Coates award winning article we shall discuss the historical justification for the case for African American (Diaspora) reparations and how it relates (or not) to the “New Civil Rights Movement” e.g., Black Lives Matters, New Black Panthers, The Call for African Unity, etc.

Lecture notes are required and must be submitted for credit, for all lecture presentations.

APPENDIX II

I SPECIAL RESEARCH TOPICS--TEAM PROJECT: (choose one)

1. Transatlantic Slavery / The Middle Passage / Harry Belafonte
2. John Brown / Abolition Movements / Marcus Garvey Movement
3. Underground Railroad / Black Townships and Freedom Villages / Human Rights Movements
4. Thirteenth Amendment / Dred Scott / African American Communities, 2018
5. Black Codes / Jim Crow / Mass Incarceration / White Supremacy / Tupac Shakur
6. Mary Church Terrell / Ella Baker / Women in the Civil Rights Movements / Sweet Honey in the Rock
7. Assata Shakur / Angela Davis / Sgt. William Cathy (AKA Cathy Williams) / Radical Women Warriors
8. Fannie Lou Hamer / Democratic Freedom Party / Voting Rights
9. Medger Evers / Martyrs of Black Liberation / Nina Simone
10. Ida B. Wells-Barnett / Anti-Lynching Campaign / Black Lives Matter
11. Emancipation / Juneteenth / African American Social Resistance / Marvin Gaye
12. Adinkra System / African Art and Symbolisms of Freedom / African proverbs/phrases of empowerment / Black Agency (self-determination)
13. Field Hollers / Blues / David Glover-Childish Gambino
14. African Chants / Spirituals / Aretha Franklin
15. African Political Movements / African Social Resistance / Fela Kuti
16. Hip Hop / Freedom Songs / Kendrick Lamar
17. Great Inventions—inventions by African/African American inventors
18. Martin Luther King vs. Malcolm X—Ideological similarities and differences (*a panel discussion*)
19. Sharecroppers, Tenant Farmers, Day Laborers the precursors to minimum wage, trust fund accounts, and capitalism (*a panel discussion*)
20. “Up From the Cotton Patch” – a historical reflection on the establishment of the Mississippi Valley State University (*a panel discussion*)

**100 POINTS-750 WORD RESEARCH PAPER-- Due September 28th by 11:59pm
-15 MINUTES PRESENTATIONS-**

APPENDIX III

EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES

I Hot Topics—History is made on a daily basis, much of which can be predicted in our daily news. Each student is challenged to watch the news on a daily basis and write a commentary about the things that matter to them and their future as global citizens—News networks to consider: MSNBC, CNN, FOX, C-SPAN 1, II, AND III; PBS, Local broadcast news : CBS, NBC, ABC, etc. **5 pts daily max/ 3 pts max. per submission.**

II The Voices from the Valley is a 10-15 min series that will air every Wednesday at 9:00am and repeats 9:00pm, on 91.7 FM (WVSD) MVSU's radio station. Each segment features exemplary historical research conducted by MVSU history students about the people, places and events from their communities, as told to them by Grand-mama'nem. For More information and instructions on how you can submit content, please contact Dr. C. Sade Turnipseed @ 662.254.3025; 347.8198, or cassie.turnipseed@mvsu.edu.

III HISTORICAL EVENTS DISCUSSION PAPER INSTRUCTIONS:

All are a minimum of 250 words (approximately 1-2 double-spaced, typed pages), 25 points each. A TOTAL of 100 points are available: Each student is expected to conduct their individual research of primary sources and additional secondary material (including the textbook) not covered in the class. The discussion papers must speak to the involvement of African people (men and women) in America and their fight for freedom. All papers must be submitted via Turnitin before the end of the semester. No late papers will be accepted during finals week. No paper with a similarity rating of 35% or higher will be read and/or credited.

Topics:

- 1) The Revolutionary War
- 2) The War of 1812
- 3) The Mexican War
- 4) The Civil War
- 5) The War on Drugs

For each of the above topics please present with the proper heading and research paper format (Turabian/Chicago). The discussions should include a brief descriptive timeline indicating:

- the events/causes/ideas that led up to the war in question
- Identify at least three African American soldiers/warriors instrumental in the War
- the war itself what were the main casualties (territory/region(s), collateral damage, extent of time)
- the aftermaths—what were the costs (physical, emotional, spiritual)

III Ida Bell Wells Barnett—Mother of the Human Rights Struggle

Based on the special lecture presentation reflect on your own passion and through that lens present a creative gesture of thanks (poem, narrative, artistic rendering, concept board) showing appreciation for the life, legacy and overall contributions of Ida Bell Wells-Barnett.

ADDENDUM

Five Books to Make You Less Stupid About the Civil War—As suggested by Ta-Nehisi Coates

The retired four-star general and White House Chief of Staff John Kelly asserted that “the lack of an ability to compromise led to the Civil War.” This was an incredibly stupid thing to say. Worse, it built on a long tradition of endorsing stupidity in hopes of making Americans stupid about their own history. Stupid enjoys an unfortunate place in the highest ranks of American government these days. And while one cannot immediately affect this fact, one can choose to not hear stupid things and quietly nod along.

For the past 50 years, some of this country’s most celebrated historians have taken up the task of making Americans less stupid about the Civil War. These historians have been more effective than generally realized. It’s worth remembering that General Kelly’s remarks, which were greeted with mass howls of protests, reflected the way much of this country’s stupid-ass intellectual class once understood the Civil War. I do not contend that this improved history has solved everything. But it is a ray of light cutting through the gloom of stupid. You should run to that light. Embrace it. Bathe in it. Become it. Okay, maybe that’s too far. Let’s start with just being less stupid.

One quick note: In making this list I’ve tried to think very hard about readability, and to offer books you might actually complete. There are a number of books that I dearly love and have found indispensable that are not on this list. (Du Bois’ *Black Reconstruction in America* immediately comes to mind.) I mean no slight to any of those volumes. But this is about being less stupid. We’ll get to those other ones when we talk about how to be smart.

1) *Battle Cry Of Freedom*: Arguably among the greatest single-volume histories in all of American historiography, James McPherson’s synthesis of the Civil War is a stunning achievement. Brisk in pace. A big-ass book that reads like a much slimmer one. The first few hundred pages offer a catalogue of evidence, making it clear not just that the white South went to war for the right to own people, *but that it warred for the right to expand the right to own people*. Read this book. You will immediately be less stupid than some of the most powerful people in the West Wing.

2) *Grant*: Another classic in the Ron Chernow oeuvre. Again, eminently readable but thick with import. It does not shy away from Grant’s personal flaws, but shows him to be a man constantly struggling to live up to his own standard of personal and moral courage. It corrects nearly a half-century of stupidity inflicted upon America by the Dunning school of historians, which preferred a portrait of Grant as a bumbling, corrupt butcher of men. Finally, it reframes the Civil War away from the overrated Virginia campaigns and shows us that when the West was won, so was the war. *Grant* hits like a Mack truck of knowledge. Stupid doesn’t stand a chance.

3) *Reading the Man: A Portrait of Robert E. Lee*: Elizabeth Pryor’s biography of Lee, through Lee’s own words, helps part with a lot of stupid out there about Lee—chiefly that he was, somehow, “anti-slavery.” It dispenses with the boatload of stupid out there which hails the military genius of Lee while ignoring the world that all of that genius was actually trying to build.

4.) *Out of the House of Bondage*: A slim volume that dispenses with the notion that there was a such thing as “good,” “domestic,” or “matronly” slavery. The historian Thavolia Glymph focuses on the relationships between black enslaved women and the white women who took them as property. She picks apart the stupid idea that white mistresses were somehow less violent and less exploitative than their male peers. Glymph has no need of Scarlett O’Haras. “Used the rod” is the quote that still sticks with me. An important point here—stupid ideas about ladyhood and the soft feminine hand meant nothing when measured against the fact of a slave society. Slavery was the monster that made monsters of its masters. Compromising with it was morally bankrupt—and stupid.

5.) *The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*: The final of three autobiographies written by the famed abolitionist, and my personal favorite. Epic and sweeping in scope. The chapter depicting the bounty of food on which the enslavers feasted while the enslaved nearly starved is just devastating.

So that should get you to un stupid—but don’t stop there. Read Du Bois. Read Grant’s own memoirs. Read Harriet Jacobs. Read Eric Foner. Read Bruce Levine. It’s not that hard, you know. You’ve got nothing to lose, save your own stupid.