

ENGL 672: Topics in American Literature and Culture to 1900: “Early Black Atlantic Literature”

Dr. Ira Dworkin

Wed. 1:00 - 4:00 PM, LAAH Rm. 504

This course meets the distribution requirement as a course in pre-1800 literature. This course provides students with grounding in a critical area of research and teaching in the field of early Black Atlantic literature published in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, prior to the U.S. Civil War. By working within and beyond the most canonical authors of the period, they will expand their base of knowledge in terms of time, place, language, and genre. This course will introduce students to a range of works in English, French, Spanish, and Arabic (all in English translation) from a range of overlapping literary genres—essay, oratory, memoir, correspondence, poetry, fiction, pamphlet, journalism, and treatise. Writers may include Ayyub ibn Suleiman Diallo, Olaudah Equiano, Ignatius Sancho, Ottobah Cugoano, James Albert Ukawsaw Gronniosaw, Phillis Wheatley Peters, Mary Prince, Nancy Prince, Jarena Lee, David Walker, Maria Stewart, Venture Smith, John Marrant, Rebecca Cox Jackson, Frederick Douglass, Zilpha Elaw, Britton Hammon, Victor Séjour, Baron de Vastey, Omar ibn Said, Placido, Juan Francisco Manzana, David Dorr, Toussaint L’Ouverture, Mahommah Gardo Baquaqua, Sojourner Truth, William Wells Brown, Absalom Jones, Richard Allen, Mary Shadd Cary, Henry Highland Garnet, and Samuel Ringgold Ward. This diverse group of writers are writing from, publishing in, and describing events in North America, Europe, Cuba, Brazil, and Haiti. This course will provide grounding in many overlooked writers of the Black Atlantic as well as a survey of major critical literary scholarship Frances Smith Foster, Houston Baker, William Andrews, Henry Louis Gates Jr., Hazel Carby, Paul Gilroy, R.A. Judy, Sterling Stuckey, Sylvian Diouf, Michael Gomez, Christopher Hager, and others.