

ENGL 3325: African American Literature: The Beginnings to the Harlem Renaissance

Course Descriptions: This course will work within a historical framework beginning with the Colonial Period and ending with the Harlem Renaissance. To understand Early African American Literature one must begin to understand the monumental impact slavery has had on American culture. Therefore, we will begin this course by studying the slave narrative and its effect on the “peculiar institution” of slavery. We will interrogate the notion of freedom that emerges in the nineteenth century and continues to develop and change in the early twentieth century, paying particular attention to the complexity of the “double consciousness” within African American conceptualizations of freedom. Themes we will explore in the course include such markers of freedom as: literacy, voting rights, domesticity, ownership of property and self, and the birth of the New Negro.

Required Texts:

Jonah's Gourd Vine—Zora Neale Hurston—9780060916510

Norton Anthology of African American Literature (Volume I)—eds. Henry Louis Gates Jr. & Valerie Smith—9780393923698

Contending Forces. A Romance Illustrative of Negro Life North and South—Pauline E. Hopkins—9780195067859