

Professor Deborah K. King
Office: 107 Silsby

Office Hours: Tues. 3:00-4:30 pm,
Wed. 3:30 -4:30 & by appointment

SOCY 79.5
THE BLACK MIDDLE CLASS
Spring 2013 ~ 2 Hour
209 Rockefeller

Studying race and class have long been integral to the sociological enterprise in the U. S since the late 19th century. sociologists explored the interplay of social class and race as the social structural dynamics shaping African American communities as well as individual lives. Much of that scholarship, however, focused on the issue of impoverishment.

With the advent of the 20th century, several leading sociologists began grappling with an emergent class differentiation among African Americans -- a middle class. W. E. B. DuBois' concept of the "talented tenth," Anna Julia Cooper's (southern) woman's voice on "racial uplift," and E. Franklin Frazier's consideration of the "black bourgeoisie" were all products of such investigations and the continue to inform current investigations on the implications of class for African Americans' life chances.

This course will provide a critical exploration of the "black middle class" beginning with those early perspectives in conjunction with classic and contemporary sociological approaches to stratification (e. g. Marx, Weber, Bourdieu). We will analyze African Americans' economic participation as entrepreneurs, skilled laborers, educated professionals, and artists. We will also consider their control of economic resources in terms of income, wealth and culture as well as their patterns of consumptions.

Sociological studies, visual presentations and biographies will enrich our explorations of the Black middle class and Black elites in terms of family life and socialization, homeownership and consumerisms, civic involvement and politics, social life and leisure, ethnic/national differences and class conflicts within Black communities, and the persistence of racism.

Required Books Available for Purchase at Wheelock Books & Dartmouth Bookstore

Frazier, E. Franklin. 1997. *Black Bourgeoisie: The Book That Brought the Shock of Self-Revelation to Middle-Class Blacks in America*. New York: The Free Press

Lacy, Karyn R. 2007. *Blue-Chip Black: Race, Class, and Status in the New Black Middle Class*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press

Pattillo, Mary. 2013. *Black Picket Fences: Privilege and Peril Among the Black Middle Class*. Chicago, Illinois: University Of Chicago Press. Second Edition

Shapiro, Thomas M. 2005. *The Hidden Cost of Being African American: How Wealth Perpetuates Inequality*. New York: Oxford University Press

Additional Required Readings and Other Resources

Other required readings/viewings are posted in electronic format or links on the course Blackboard site or held on reserve in the Baker course reserve or in the Jones Media Center.

You are encouraged to explore the 'Links' on Blackboard. You will discover links to a diverse array of online resources including primary documents, exhibitions, photographs, statistical reports, bibliographies, etc. These resources should be used in completing assignments and as part of your research for the final project.

Developing the habit of routinely reading a national newspaper (e. g. New York Times, Washington Post, L. A. Times, Chicago Tribune, Atlanta Constitution) is an invaluable for effectively contributing to class discussions and for enhancing your cultural capital. For this particular course, I strongly encourage you to add at least one major Black audience publications (e. g. *Ebony*, *Black Enterprise or Essence*) and/or blog (e. g. The Griot, The Root, BlackVoice). See "Links" folder on Blackboard.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

10% Participation

Students are expected to attend all class sessions as well as any special sessions, to have completed the assigned reading and viewing in a timely fashion, and be prepared to participate actively and meaningfully in discussions. Please arrive on time and remain until the end of the class period. You are encouraged to bring to class written observations, questions and criticisms of the assigned work plus relevant illustrations (i. e. news items, statistics, songs, etc.). Personal opinions, when offered, should be grounded in solid evidence; while personal experiences, when discussed, should be reflective and self-critical.

20% Short Exercise

Each student will complete an exercise in the use of the sociological imagination. The exercise will involve analyzing some contemporary aspect of the life circumstances, public discourse, or social policies affecting Black women, and/or their responses to those issues. Completion of one exercise option is required. Detailed descriptions of each option and its due date will be posted on Blackboard. Possible options *may* include:

Black Women's Autobiography: Writing About How A Black Woman Ought to Be

Select and read an autobiography or biography of an African American woman who was born in 1950 or later. Critically analyze its account of her family and community expectations of her behavior, values and goals. What strategies were used to socialize her and police her behavior?

30% Midterm Exam

The in-class, midterm examination will consist of an essay question and may include identifications or short answers. It will cover readings, lectures, discussions, videos, guest presentation, and required special events.

40% Take-Home Final Essay Exam and/or Final Project

The completion of a final paper, approximately 7-9 pages in length, will be required. It will emphasize post-midterm, course materials

COURSE POLICIES

Honor Principle Academic work is simultaneously a collaborative and an independent enterprise. Consulting others and using their ideas, findings, and interpretations are integral parts of intellectual inquiry. The laborious, critical and creative work of developing one's own understandings is equally important. In this course, you will have opportunities to engage in both endeavors. Therefore it is essential that you maintain the integrity of each. Class members are encouraged to discuss readings, lectures and other course materials with one another. However in-class and take-home examinations, exercise reports, research papers and/or other assignments must be your own independent work, unless otherwise indicated. By putting your name on an assignment that you turn in, you are indicating to me that the work is your own original work.

COURSE POLICIES, cont.

Acknowledgements & Citations Learning how to acknowledge appropriately the idea, words and work of others is a critical skill for academic as well as other professional fields. Pay close attention to your citations of the intellectual

and creative ideas, writings, images and products of others (including other class members, readings, films, government reports, art work, lectures, websites, etc.). Always use a comprehensive reference book on acknowledging sources and/or the links provided on Blackboard. Two useful style guides are *The Chicago Manual of Style* and Diana Hacker's *Research and Documentation Online*. You should also feel free to consult me before submitting work that you think might be improperly cited.

Students' Religious Observance Some class members may wish to take part in religious observances that occur during this academic term, but which may conflict with your participation in this course. Before the end of the second week of the term, please send me an email detailing the occasion, date and the specific course responsibility that may be affected. I will use this information to determine any appropriate accommodations.

Attendance & Missed Classes As responsible adults, you are expected to attend each class meeting, having completed that day's assigned readings and fully prepared to participate actively in class. There is no need to seek my approval for any absences, however members should notify the instructor of any anticipated absences or extended absences. In the event that you miss a class for any reason, you are responsible for getting the lecture notes for that class from another student. As a general policy, I will not make my lecture notes available, and only post selected slides from my lecture powerpoint on Blackboard. I trust that members of the class will be cooperative in sharing their notes, realizing that you may be in a similar position one day. Repeated absences, without documented evidence of illness or family emergency, will adversely affect your participation grade.

Assignment Submissions The submission of assignments, exams and paper is expected on the indicated "due date" during that day's class meeting (unless otherwise stated). Requests for extensions beyond the submission date should be made prior to the due date and time. Please note that grades on non-approved late submissions may be penalized. Course assignments, examinations and research papers *may not be submitted* by email, snail mail or fax.

Make-up Exam Students with legitimate reasons may be entitled to make-up the midterm examination. However, such arrangements are only available for students who inform me at least 48 hours *prior* to the original exam date.

Note for Students who Speak English as a Second Language Students who speak English as a second language are encouraged to meet with the professor during the first week of the term to discuss any academic accommodations that may be of assistance to you.

Note for Students with Disabilities and Special Concerns Students with learning or other disabilities as well as chronic health conditions that may disrupt your studies are encouraged to meet with the professor during the first two weeks of the term to discuss any academic accommodations that may be of assistance to you. *All discussions will remain confidential, although the Student Disabilities Coordinator, Dick's House staff or other college officials may be consulted.*

Electronic Devices Cell and smart phones, iPods, MP3s, Blackberrys, Bluetooths, etc. must be turned-off and put away during class sessions. Laptop computers and notepads should only be used for note taking. Web browsing, handling email or working on non-course related matters are discouraged, and may be penalized.

Communications You are encouraged to come to my posted office hours to discuss course concerns, introduce yourself, etc. During office hours, I will meet with students on a first-come, first-served basis. You may wish to make an appointment for more extended conversations or if your schedule does not permit the flexibility to wait.

Please check the course Blackboard site and your Dartmouth email account for class announcements, accessing assignments, and updates. The Blackboard site also has information regarding office hours, x-hours, due dates. I prefer that you use your Dartmouth e-mail account to correspond with me. I typically read and answer my email occasionally each day during the work week (i. e. Mon. - Fri.), but not necessarily according to any schedule.. On teaching days, I typically access my email in late afternoon. As a rule, I am not accessible via email during the weekends.

Classroom Etiquette: I trust that together we may create a learning environment where every one is welcome to express her or his opinions. We will cover some complex and sensitive subjects. Understandably, disagreement and debate are integral dynamics in learning to reason critically. Please extend respect to all members of the class in

terms of your verbal and nonverbal communications, listen attentively to their questions and comments as you would the lectures, and offer your informed observations and criticisms in a respectful, constructive manner.

SCHEDULE OF COURSE READINGS, ASSIGNMENTS & EVENTS

Class topics and reading assignments are subject to change

PART I

March 25 **Course Overview**

March 27 **Visualizing a New Negro: African American of Money & Status**

DuBois, W. E. B. "The Talented Tenth" in *The Negro Problem: A Series of Articles by Representative American Negroes of Today*. New York: James Pott & Co., pp. 33-75 (on Blackboard)

Willis, Deborah. 2003. "The Sociologist's Eye: W. E. B. DuBois and the Paris Exposition," in *A Small Nation of People: W. E. B. DuBois & African American Portraits of Progress*. Washington, D. C.: Library of Congress, pp. 50-78 (on Blackboard)

T. Washington. 1908. "Negro Homes," *The Century Magazine*, May: 71-79 (on Blackboard)
<http://www.unz.org/Pub/Century-1908may-00071?View=PDF>

View

More Images from "The American Negro" 1903 Paris Exhibition (on Blackboard)

The Brownies' Book". Initially published in 1920, it was aimed at black children, who Du Bois called "the children of the sun"

March 29

The 'Black Metropolis' Revisited A Comparative Analysis of Northern and Southern Cities in the United States in the Early 20th Century
RL Boyd - *Urban Studies*, 2012

Weems, Jr., Robert E 2009. "Culture, consumption, and the black community. African American consumers since World War II," in *African American Urban History since World War II*, edited by Kenneth L. Kusmer and Joe W. Trotter. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 359-375

Walker, Susannah. 2009. "Black dollar power: assessing African American consumerism since 1945," in *African American Urban History since World War II*, edited by Kenneth L. Kusmer and Joe W. Trotter. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 376-403 (on Blackboard)

April 1

What Constitutes the Middle Class: Is there a Black One?

Frazier, E. Franklin. 1970. *Black Bourgeoisie*. Intro. 1-4; Part I: I-III

Optional Viewing:

A Raisin in the Sun. Based on book of the same title by Lorraine Hansberry (on reserve Jones Media Center)

April 3

Frazier, *Black Bourgeoisie*. Part I: IV - VI

Fiske, Susan T., Bergsiekker, Hilary B., Russell, Ann Marie and Williams, Lyle. 2009. "Images of Black Americans - Then, "Them," and Now, "Obama!" *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race* / Volume 6 / Issue 01 / March 2009, pp 83 - 101

Browse:

"Digital Harlem: Everyday Life 1915-1930." (on Blackboard)

April 5

Seiler, Cotten. "" So That We as a Race Might Have Something Authentic to Travel By": African American Automobility and Cold-War Liberalism." *American Quarterly* 58, no. 4 (2006): 1091-1117.

Armstead, Myra B. Young. "Revisiting Hotels and Other Lodgings: American Tourist Spaces through the Lens of Black Pleasure-Travelers, 1880-1950." *The Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts* 25 (2005): 136-159.

"Green Guide" listing black-friendly hotels and businesses

<http://kiratianatravels.com/2010/08/23/meet-the-first-black-travel-guide-the-negro-motorists-green-guide>

April 8

April 10

Barbara Burlison Mooney. 2002. "Comfortable Tasty Framed Cottage: An African American Architectural Iconography," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* v. 61 no. 1 March: 48-67 (on Blackboard)

[HOUSING DEVELOPMENT]

Browse: *The Chicago Defender* real estate section (ads for Mid City realty) from the 1920s-50s (on Blackboard)

April 12

Frazier, *Black Bourgeoisie*. Part II-The World of Make-Believe, VII - X, Conclusion

Ebony Magazine

Optional Video Viewing:

" Bourgeois Blues," in *People Like Us: Social Class in America (in Jones Media)*
The Real Housewives of Atlanta

April 15

Black Wealth in Land and Real Estate: Losses and Gains

Shapiro, Thomas M. 2004. *The Hidden Cost of Being African American: How Wealth Perpetuates Inequality*. Oxford University Press. Intro, Chaps. 1-3

[FARMERS]

[African-American Farmers Benefit Relief Act of 2007 and the Pigford Claims Remedy Act of 2007](#) [elect
United States. Congress. House. Committee on the Judiciary. Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights,
and Civil Liberties.

[Federation of Southern Cooperatives Land Assistance Fund](#)

<http://www.federationsoutherncoop.com/aalandown04.htm>

View:

Stevens, Thaddeus. "Reparations Bill for the African Slaves in the United States." 40th Cong.,
1st sess. (1867) (on Blackboard)

Black Farmers in America: a photo essay (on Blackboard)

The University Press of Kentucky (March 3, 2006)

April 17

Shapiro, *The Hidden Cost of Being African American*, Chaps 4 & 5

Screen in class: The House We Live In

April 19

Shapiro, *The Hidden Cost of Being African American*. Chaps. 6, 7 & Conclusions

April 22

April 24

April 26

Cassandra Chaney and Colita Nichols Fairfax. 2013. "A change has come: The Obamas and the
culture of black marriage in America," *Ethnicities*, 13(1): 20-48 (on Blackboard)

April 29

No class meeting today

May 1

Midterm Examination

May 3

Collins, Sharon. 1983. "The Making of the Black Middle Class." *Social Problems* 30:4:269-82.

Video: *African American Lives 2*

May 6

Middle Class amidst the Black Working Class and Poor

Pattillo-McCoy, Mary. 1999. *Black Picket Fences: Privilege and Peril among the Black Middle
Class*. Intro, Chaps. 1 - 4, Appendix A

May 8 Pattillo-McCoy, *Black Picket Fences*, Chaps. 5-7

May 10 Pattillo-McCoy, *Black Picket Fences*, Chaps. 8, 9 Conclusion

May 13 **Different Kinds of Middle Class, Yet Black**

Lacy, Karyn R. 2007. *Blue Chip Black: Race, Class, and Status in the New Black Middle Class*, Intro. Chaps. 1 & 2

The Changing Wealth of Americans

View:

Top Black or African American-Run Companies on the 2011 *Inc. Magazine 5000* (on Blackboard)

RANKCOMPANY NAME3-YEAR % GROWTH

<http://www.inc.com/inc5000/list/2011/diversity/black>

Richest African Americans – Forbes Wealthiest Black Americans (on Blackboard)

By Sammy S. on April 20, 2012

<http://www.therichest.org/nation/wealthiest-african-americans/>

Kaba, Amadu Jacky. "Talented tenth: An analysis of the 2011 root magazine's 100 most influential young black Americans." *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 2.5 (2012): 1-31.

Brown, Eric S. "Racialized Class Formation: Blacks in the Professional Middle Class in the Post-Civil Rights Era." (2012): 225-266. in Julian Go (ed.) *Political Power and Social Theory (Political Power and Social Theory, Volume 23)*, Emerald Group Publishing Limited, pp.225-266

May 15

Lacy, *Blue Chip Black*, Chaps. 3 & 4

[CONSUMPTION]

May 17

Lacy, *Blue Chip Black*, Chaps. 5, 6 and Conclusion

[CHILDREARING]

Carol Vincent, Nicola Rollock, Stephen Ball and David Gillborn, "The Educational Strategies of the Black Middle Classes," *The Politicization of Parenthood Children's Well-Being: Indicators and Research*, 2012, Volume 5, Part 2, 139-152

Banks, Patricia Ann. 2012. "Cultural Socialization in Black Middle-Class Families," *Cultural Sociology*, v 6 n 1 March: 61-73 (on Blackboard)

Browse:

"Boondocks" The First & Second Years Complete Series (2006) by Aaron McGruder (Jones

Media DVD 3974 disc2

Show Similar Items AVAILABLE Jones Media DVD 3974 disc3)

10081

MHP

Part ____ The Black Middle Class: Current Hot Topics

May 20 The Class Divide: Battlelines

Dyson, Michael Eric. *Is Bill Cosby Right? Or Has the Black Middle Class Lost Its Mind?*. Perseus Books Group. 2005 ISBN 0-46501-7193

Moore, Keisha. 2009. "Gentrification in Black Face?: The Return of the Black Middle Class to Urban Neighborhoods," *Urban Geography* v 30 118-142

May 22 The Ethnic/Nationality Divides

Johnson, Violet M. Showers. 2008. "What, Then, Is the African American?" African and Afro-Caribbean Identities in Black America." *Journal of American Ethnic History* 28.1: 77-103.

Griffin, Kimberly A., et al. 2012. "Oh, of course I'm going to go to college": Understanding the role of habitus in the college choice process of Black immigrant college students." *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education* 5.2: June: 96-111

Griffin, Autumn A., McNair Scholar, and Kimberly A. Griffin. 20___. "For me, it was just routine:" Exploring Factors Related to Post-Secondary Aspirations for African Immigrants." *The Penn State McNair Journal*: 67 ____

Bennett, Pamela R., and Amy Lutz. 2009. "How African American is the net black advantage? Differences in college attendance among immigrant blacks, native blacks, and whites." *Sociology of Education* 82.1: 70-100

May 24

May 27 No class meeting - Memorial Day

May 29 Course Review

FINAL PROJECT DUE: Sunday, June 2 at 9:00 pm

Submit in hard copy to either my departmental mailbox in 111 Silsby or the box outside my office 107 Silsby

Bryant Simon, Bryant. 2010. "Race Doesn't Matter, Race Matters: Starbucks, Consumption and the Appeal of the Performance of Colorblindness,"
Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race / Volume 7 / Issue 02 / December 2010, pp 271 - 292

Jackson, Jr., John L. 2010. "In Medias Race (and Class) - Post-Jim Crow Ethnographies of Black Middleclassdom,"
Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race, v 7 n 1, March 2010: pp 35 - 39 (on Blackboard)

Fiske, Susan T., Bergsieker, Hilary B., Russell, Ann Marie and Williams, Lyle. 2009. "Images of Black Americans - Then, "Them," and Now, "Obama!" *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race* / Volume 6 / Issue 01 / March 2009, pp 83 - 101

"Rise and Inevitable Liberation of the Black Creative Class,"

Valerie Smith, "Authenticity in Narratives of the Black Middle Class," from *Not Just Race, Not Just Gender: Black Feminist Readings*

Young, Vershawn Ashanti, ed. 2011. *From Bourgeois to Boogie: Black Middle-Class Performances* (electronic resource via Digital Library)

<http://libcat.dartmouth.edu/record=b5291203~S1>

DuBois, W. E. B. *The Brownies' Book*".