

**Instructor:** Jeannine DeLombard

**Course number:** ENG435F

**Course title:** African-American Autobiography

**Course Description:**

Americans having elected for their president not only an African-American man, but the latest in a long line of black autobiographers, this course examines the emergence of the black male print subject in the nexus of print and politics from the colonial era to the present. In the process, we will have occasion to consider the role of print publication in asserting black civic personhood in a nation where slavery and racial thought has historically encouraged Americans to think of black people as either objects of property or criminals. As we examine first-person print constructions of the black self, we will also consider how masculinity and race intersect with each other as well as with classical republican and liberal models of citizenship.

**Required Reading:**

*The Life, and Dying Speech of Arthur, a Negro Man; Who Was Executed at Worcester, October 20, 1768. For a Rape Committed on the Body of One Deborah Metcalfe*  
*Brief Account of the Life and Abominable Thefts of the Notorious Isaac Frasier*  
*A Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Venture, a Native of Africa: But Resident above Sixty Years in the United States of America. Related by Himself*  
*A Narrative of the Lord's Wonderful Dealings with John Marrant, a Black*  
Benjamin Franklin, *Autobiography*  
Ephraim Peabody, "Narratives of Fugitive Slaves."  
Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave*  
Samuel Ringgold Ward, *Autobiography of a Fugitive Negro*  
Booker T. Washington, *Up from Slavery*  
W.E.B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (selections)  
James Weldon Johnson, *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*  
Malcolm X. *Autobiography*  
(Film: *Malcolm Speaks*)  
Barack Obama, *Dreams from My Father*

Selected secondary texts

**First Three Texts/Authors to be Studied:**

(as above)

**Method of Instruction:**

Lecture/Discussion

**Method of Evaluation:**

- Participation
- 2 Quizzes
- Term Test
- Introduction and Outline
- 8-10 pp. Term Paper