

**HISTORY 2296F**  
**Introduction to Black History & Diaspora in the “Great White North”**  
**Fall/Winter 2022-23**

**Wednesdays 9:30-12:20, September–December 2022**

**Room: TBA**

**Course delivery: In Person**

**Instructor: Erin Isaac**

Office Hours: By Appointment  
Department of History, Office: Lawson Hall 1202  
Email: [eisaac3@uwo.ca](mailto:eisaac3@uwo.ca)

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**This is a draft syllabus. Please see your course OWL site for the final syllabus.**

**Course delivery with respect to the COVID-19 pandemic**

Although the intent was for this course to be delivered in-person, the changing COVID-19 landscape has necessitated that at least the first part of the course be delivered on-line synchronously (i.e., on Zoom at the times indicated in the timetable) / asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience) [delete as necessary]. The grading scheme will not change. Any assessments affected will be conducted on-line as determined by the course instructor. The course will return to an in-person mode of delivery when the University and local health authorities deem it safe to do so.

**Course Description:**

This course examines Black histories of freedom, enslavement, resistance, and oppression in the “Great White North” between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. We will consider how Black histories are remembered and forgotten in Canada, and the reasons we focus on some narratives while silencing others.

**Course Syllabus:**

Our 3-hour sessions will be broken up between lecture, discussion, guest lectures, and skill workshops as listed in the syllabus. You will do between 2-3 hours of preparation each week, a mix between readings and alternative materials such as virtual museum exhibits or podcasts. All sources can be obtained through Western’s library system or have open access. Please come to class prepared, having completed the pre-class preparation as listed.

**Learning Outcomes**

Students coming away from this course will be able to:

- Articulate how the legacies of Canada’s early colonial history carried through to and continue to impact Black communities in this country;
- Explain how race and ethnicity impacted experiences of major historical events;
- Understand how race was constructed and how Blackness was historically conceived as at odds with Canadian climates;

- Explain how colonialism has swayed the historical record and memory to favour white perspectives & downplay historical racism;
- Improve oral and written communication;
- Evaluate primary sources and understand how to read against authors' biases;
- Construct and defend historical arguments.

### **Course Materials:**

All course materials for History 2296 can be accessed through your Western Library account or are open-access. Please refer to the Course Schedule for each week's assignment.

### **Methods of Evaluation:**

Writing Assignment 1 (Historica Canada Response, 300 words): 15%

Writing Assignment 2 (Local Heritage): 40% made up of:

*In class presentation & workshop: 5%*

*Research Log: 10%*

*Final Essay (1500 words): 25%*

Take Home Final Examination (1,000 words): 25%

In-Class Participation: 20%

*Students must submit all assignments to pass the course.*

### ***In-Class Participation***

Every week, we will have a discussion about assigned readings or do an activity in class. For class discussions and activities, students will break up into groups of 4-6. At least twice in the term, you will lead the discussion for your group (questions will be supplied by the instructor). Participation grades will take into account your performance as discussion lead, your contributions to class discussions, and your attendance. **Students may miss up to one class without penalty, but will receive a grade of 0% for any following absences. Please email the instructor in advance if extenuating circumstances prevent you from attending class.** During weeks 6-10, submission of worksheets by the end of class will contribute to your participation grade.

### ***Writing Assignment 1 (Historica Canada Response)***

The first writing assignment is a 300-word assignment based on *Heritage Minutes* about Richard Pierpoint, Chloe Cooley, or the Underground Railroad. Students will write a short response to Historica Canada's narrative in light of the broader history discussed in class. Students will be asked to think bigger than simply evaluating the *Heritage Minute's* historical accuracy—successful assignments will consider why these stories in particular were chosen. Students will select one of three weeks to submit their term assignment, based on the *Heritage Minute* they plan to write on. Further direction will be given in Week 1.

### ***Writing Assignment 2 (Local Heritage)***

### ***Research Log***

The research log will be due at the same time as the final essay, in Week 11. For this assignment, students will create a record of their historical research endeavours—those that improve their understanding of their research topic, leads that do not pan out, successes, concerns, and frustrations. A sample will be provided in Week 1.

### ***Research Presentation***

In Week 9 of the course, students will give a brief presentation on their research findings to their peers and offer feedback in discussion groups of 6 or less. Requirements will be explained in Week 1.

### ***Final Essay***

The second 1500-word major research paper will require students to identify and write on a visitable Black heritage site in our community or elsewhere in Southwest Ontario. With permission, students may select a site from a site in another Canadian province. The site might be well known, like Uncle Tom's Cabin in Dresden, ON, or may be one with a lesser-known Black history, such as Aeolian Hall in London, ON (where, in 1927, the first convention of the Canadian League for the Advancement of Coloured People was held). Students will select from a list of potential sites but may propose different sites if they so choose, pending permission from the instructor. Students will give a brief presentation on their chosen location in Week 9. This paper will be due in Week 11. This assignment will be explained in Week 1.

### ***Final Examination*** (Min, 1000 words)

Students will have 72 hours to complete a take-home exam. The exam will be due to OWL during the December exam period, exact date TBA. More details will be given in the final week of the course.

### **Course Schedule and Readings:**

\*This draft syllabus is subject to change before posting.

#### **Week 1: September 14, 2022**

##### **Introduction to the Course & Writing Assignments**

Guest Speaker: Patrick Kingon on Black History at Western

#### **Week 2: September 21, 2022**

##### **How was Black enslavement experienced in New France?**

*Pre-class preparation:*

- Read Valerie Martin, "Racial Slavery and the Development of Gendered Power in the Quebec Gazette: The Role of Fugitive Slave and Slave Sale Notices, 1765-1791," *Journal of Eastern Townships Studies* no. 47 (2016): 11–139. [https://ocul-uwo.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL\\_UWO/t54!2v/cdi\\_proquest\\_journals\\_1958474469](https://ocul-uwo.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL_UWO/t54!2v/cdi_proquest_journals_1958474469)
- Read Natasha Henry's 2013 Blog post, "Slavery in Canada? I Never Learned That!" <http://activehistory.ca/2013/10/slavery-in-canada-i-never-learned-that/>

- Browse the Canadian Museum of History’s exhibit on Slavery in New France, <https://www.historymuseum.ca/virtual-museum-of-new-france/population/slavery/>

\*Possible presentations from Jason Dyck (jdyck3@uwo.ca) & Emily Draicchio

### **Week 3: September 28, 2022**

#### **How were Black loyalists received in British North America following the American Revolution?**

\*Students must indicate which site they plan to write their term papers on by this date.

##### *Pre-Class preparation:*

- Read Whitfield, Harvey Amani. 2007. “Black Loyalists and Black Slaves in Maritime Canada.” *History Compass* 5 (6): 1980–97. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1478-0542.2007.00479.x>. (18 pages).
- Read Ruma Chopra’s 2017 Blog post “Refugees Fit for Rescue: Loyalists, Maroons, and Mi’kmaq,” <https://earlycanadianhistory.ca/2017/04/17/refugees-fit-for-rescue-loyalists-maroons-and-mikmaq/>
- Listen to the Loyalist Connections podcast, “Birchtown & Shelburne – Connections to the Port,” <https://www.listennotes.com/e/981bfd77f9d14305b2b3c0a4d91c2116/>. 48m
- Please also view the *Heritage Minute* for Richard Pierpoint prior to class: <https://youtu.be/UQyPXOHvwEc>

\*Guest lecture by Graham Nickerson & Sarah Chute

### **Week 4: October 5, 2022**

#### **Why did many Black loyalists and Maroons choose to relocate to Sierra Leone?**

\*Richard Pierpoint *Heritage Minute* Responses Due

##### *Pre-Class preparation:*

- Read Troxler, Carole Watterson. 2008. “Re-Enslavement of Black Loyalists: Mary Postell in South Carolina, East Florida, and Nova Scotia.” *Acadiensis* (Fredericton) 37 (2): 70–85. 16 pages. [https://ocul-uwo.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL\\_UWO/t54i2v/cdi\\_proquest\\_journals\\_197410472](https://ocul-uwo.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL_UWO/t54i2v/cdi_proquest_journals_197410472)
- Read Anya Zilberstein’s 2016 Blog post “Jamaican Maroons in Nova Scotia: The politics of climate and race,” <https://earlycanadianhistory.ca/2016/05/18/jamaican-maroons-in-nova-scotia-the-politics-of-climate-and-race/>
- Listen to Lawrence Hill’s interview with CBC on *The Book of Negroes*, <https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/2202971589> 15m

- Read Erica Armstrong Dunbar’s 2015 Blog post, “From Roots to The Book of Negroes: Black Slavery and the General Viewing Audience,” <http://www.processhistory.org/from-roots-to-the-book-of-negroes-black-slavery-and-the-general-viewing-audience/>
- Read Andrew Nurse’s 2015 Blog post, “Emotion and History: The Book of Negroes,” <http://activehistory.ca/2015/03/emotion-and-history-the-book-of-negroes/>

### **Week 5: October 12, 2022**

**In what ways did Black refugee experiences after the War of 1812 differ from those of Black loyalists following the American Revolution?**

*Pre-class preparation:*

- Read Amani Whitfield, ““We Can Do As We Like Here”: An Analysis of Self Assertion and Agency Among Black Refugees in Halifax, Nova Scotia, 1813-1821,” *Acadiensis* 32 no. 1 (2002), p.29-49. 20pgs. [https://ocul-uwo.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL\\_UWO/t54l2v/cdi\\_proquest\\_journals\\_197400350](https://ocul-uwo.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL_UWO/t54l2v/cdi_proquest_journals_197400350)
- Read Roger P. Nason’s 2021 Blog post, “Eliza Taylor: Belle of Loch Lomond,” <http://activehistory.ca/2021/02/eliza-taylor-belle-of-loch-lomond/>
- Browse The Harriet Tubman Institute’s virtual exhibit “We Stand on Guard for Thee: Teaching and Learning the African Canadian Experience in the War of 1812,” <https://tubman.info.yorku.ca/educational-resources/war-of-1812/>
- Please also watch the Heritage Minute for Chloe Cooley before class. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cLPMINSQjOg>

\*Possible visit to University Archives

### **Week 6: October 19, 2022**

**How is the history of the Underground Railroad told in Canada?**

\*Chloe Cooley *Heritage Minute* Responses Due

*Pre-Class Assignment:*

- Read Tiya Miles, “Of Waterways and Runaways: Reflections on the Great Lakes in Underground Railroad History,” *Michigan Quarterly Review* 50 no. 3 (Summer 2011), 434-440. (7 pages) [https://ocul-uwo.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL\\_UWO/t54l2v/cdi\\_proquest\\_journals\\_888573786](https://ocul-uwo.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL_UWO/t54l2v/cdi_proquest_journals_888573786)

- Listen to The Secret Life of Canada Podcast's Season 3 Crash Course on Uncle Tom  
<https://www.cbc.ca/listen/cbc-podcasts/203-the-secret-life-of-canada/episode/15772189-s3-crash-course-on-uncle-tom> 16m  
\*About Josiah Henson
- Read Alison Smith's 2016 Blog post, "Reflections on 'Mary Ann Shadd Revisited,'" <http://activehistory.ca/papers/reflections-on-mary-ann-shadd-revisited/>
- Watch the *Heritage Minute* for the Underground Railroad. <https://youtu.be/DZStWWVqkh0>

\* Writing workshop 1: How to develop a thesis statement.

### **Week 7: October 26, 2022**

#### **What was going on in the West?**

\*Underground Railroad *Heritage Minute* Responses Due

#### *Pre-Class Assignment:*

- Read R. Bruce Shepard, "Diplomatic Racism: Canadian Government and Black Migration from Oklahoma, 1905-1912," *Great Plains Quarterly* (1983), 5-16. 12 pgs.  
<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2737&context=greatplainsquarterly>
- Please read the Debbie Beaver's 2017 Blog Post "Black Settlers of Alberta and Saskatchewan Historical Society," <http://activehistory.ca/2017/01/black-settlers-of-alberta-and-saskatchewan-historical-society/>
- Read over the Pier 21 page on The Colour Bar at the Canadian Border:  
<https://pier21.ca/research/immigration-history/black-american-farmers>

\* Writing Workshop 2: How to outline an essay.

### **Week 8: November 2, 2022**

**Fall Reading Week, no classes.**

### **Week 9: November 9, 2022**

#### **Student Presentations for Local History Project**

\* Writing Workshop 3: How to use and quote primary vs. secondary sources.

## **November 14, 2022**

Last day to drop a first-term half course or a first-term full course on campus and Distance Studies without academic penalty.

## **Week 10: November 16, 2022**

### **How did Black participation in the military change between the First and Second World Wars?**

- Read Roger P. Nason's 2021 Blog Post "Black Identity and the Great War: History from the Bottom Up," <http://activehistory.ca/2021/06/black-identity-and-the-great-war-history-from-the-bottom-up/>
- Jeff Donison and Anne F. MacLennan, "Podcasting Marginalised History: Historica Canada's World War Podcast Narratives and their Audio Archival Considerations," *Radio Journal* 19 no. 2 (2021), 271-289. 20pgs. [https://ocul-uwo.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL\\_UWO/t54l2v/cdi\\_ingenta\\_journals\\_ic\\_intellect\\_14764504\\_v19n2\\_20220119\\_0430\\_default\\_tar\\_gz\\_s4](https://ocul-uwo.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL_UWO/t54l2v/cdi_ingenta_journals_ic_intellect_14764504_v19n2_20220119_0430_default_tar_gz_s4)
- Listen to Historica Canada's Podcast on "The No. 2 Construction Battalion and the Fight to Flight," 15m. [https://soundcloud.com/historicacanada/the-no-2-construction-battalion-and-the-fight-to-flight?utm\\_source=clipboard&utm\\_medium=text&utm\\_campaign=social\\_sharing](https://soundcloud.com/historicacanada/the-no-2-construction-battalion-and-the-fight-to-flight?utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing)

\* Writing Workshop 4: Formatting, the good, the bad, the ugly.

\* Guest Lecture: Katelyn Steiva (University of New Brunswick, Gregg Centre for the Study of War and Society)

## **Week 11: November 23, 2022**

### **How did the Civil Rights movement unfold in Canada?**

\*Final Essay due.

*Pre-class preparation:*

- Read: Agnes Calliste, "The Influence of the Civil Rights and Black Power Movement in Canada," *Race, Gender & Class* no. 3 (Spring 1995), 123-140. 17 pages. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41674712>
- Please read Camille Robert's 2016 Blog post "The Ninth Floor: Finding Black Power in Montreal," <http://activehistory.ca/2016/03/the-ninth-floor-finding-black-power-in-montreal/>

- Listen to the History Slam Podcast, episode 26: “The Black Panthers in Saskatchewan,” <http://activehistory.ca/2013/08/history-slam-episode-twenty-six-the-black-panthers-in-saskatchewan/> 51m.
- Watch *Heritage Minute* about Viola Desmond <https://youtu.be/ie0xWYRSX7Y>

\* Possible guest lecture from Lianne Xiao

## **Week 12: November 30, 2022**

### **How does gentrification impact Black communities in Canada?**

*Pre-class preparation:*

- Read: Margaret Kohn, “What is wrong with gentrification?” *Urban Research & Practice* 6 no. 3 (2013), 297-310. 14pgs. [https://ocul-uwo.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL\\_UWO/t54I2v/cdi\\_proquest\\_miscellaneous\\_1563988219](https://ocul-uwo.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL_UWO/t54I2v/cdi_proquest_miscellaneous_1563988219)
- Please watch at least one of the videos about Africville found here: <https://www.cbc.ca/archives/topic/africville-expropriating-black-nova-scotians>
- Read the introduction and browse the virtual exhibit for Photojournalist Bob Brooks’s collection of images of Africville, <https://archives.novascotia.ca/africville/>
- Watch NFB’s “Remember Africville,” <https://www.nfb.ca/film/remember-africville/> 35m

\*Possible Public History guest lecture

## **Week 13: 7 December 2022**

### **How does environmental racism impact Black Canadian communities?**

- Before class, please watch Elliot Page’s documentary by the same name on Netflix OR watch the 2020 panel on the book here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pJrTP7vq8ZE> 1hr31m.
- Listen to the Nature’s Past Podcast episode 69, “Environmental Racism and Canadian History,” 41m <https://niche-canada.org/2020/07/29/natures-past-episode-69-environmental-racism-and-canadian-history/>
- Read Cheryl Teelucksingh’s Blog post “The Canadian Environmental Justice Movement Needs Black Lives Matter,” <https://niche-canada.org/2020/11/23/the-canadian-environmental-justice-movement-needs-black-lives-matter/>

\*Exam Review: How to write a history take home exam.



## **Use of Electronic Devices:**

All tests, discussions, and in-class activities in History 2296 are open book and you are permitted to use your personal electronic device for notetaking or to refer to assigned readings. Cell phones are NOT permitted. Please ensure your phone is on “silent” in class.

## **Etiquette**

Hate speech, intolerant language, or inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated in HIST 2296. If you wish to speak during the lecture, please raise your hand and wait for the instructor to call on you. Students are encouraged to ask questions or share their experiences, but we will maintain a respectful and safe environment in the classroom. Students who are disruptive or behave inappropriately will be removed from the session and will not receive credit for attending that day’s class.

When emailing the instructor, please write “HIST2296” in the subject line of the email. You may address me as “Ms. Isaac” or “Erin” in emails. Please remember that email correspondences with instructors should be formal. DO email me requesting an office hours appointment, with a follow-up from class, to notify me about an academic consideration, or to let me know you will be absent from lecture. DO NOT email me asking for extra credit assignments, to make a demand, or requesting grade reconsideration.

Arrive to class on time and stay for the duration of the session. Students who do not return from breaks or who leave class early without permission will be recorded as absent for the entire session. Do your readings before class. We will discuss them in our sessions and failure to prepare will result in a failing participation grade for that day’s class. (Plus, you will need to read all assigned texts to prepare for the exam, so best to do it spread across the term rather than all at once! 😊)

Assignments should be submitted on OWL and as paper copies in class. When you submit on OWL, use the following convention to name your document: “LastName\_AssignmentTitle, date submitted” (i.e. Isaac\_HeritageMinuteResponse, 9 November 2022”. All assignments should have a cover page, page numbers, and proper citations. Please do not submit any assignments to me by email unless otherwise instructed.

Students who submit plagiarised work will be penalised and reported according to Western’s policy. Penalties are severe and can include academic sanctions.

## **Additional Statements:**

Please review the Department of History Course Must-Knows document, <https://www.history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/Docs/Department%20of%20History%20Course%20Must-Knows.pdf>, for additional information regarding:

- Academic Offences
- Accessibility Options
- Medical Issues
- Plagiarism

- Scholastic Offences
- Copyright
- Health and Wellness

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