

RESISTANCE AND RECONCILIATION
TH 243-3, Spring 2007
Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary
Mondays 2:00 p.m.-4:50 p.m.
Nelson Hall 119

Instructors:

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This online syllabus should be used to gain a better understanding of the content and focus of a course. The syllabus given out in the class may differ from this online version and its content supercedes that of the online syllabus.

Course Description

The aim of this course is to explore the twin themes of resistance and reconciliation in African American theological discourse. We understand resistance to an imperial church and society as part of the work of reconciliation. The authors we will consider all recognize a call to resistance against powers grounded in particular forms of sin. The forms of sin highlighted include, but are not limited to, racism, sexism, heterosexism, and classism. Our authors also recognize a call to reconciliation that is occasioned by the work of justice and forgiveness.

Resistance and reconciliation then are interdependent efforts, supported by the global Christian community as it responds to the revelation of God's love in Jesus Christ. The purpose of this course is to help students build upon their foundations in theological and ethical reflection. Students will gain skill in evaluating the complexities of the interlocking themes of resistance ethics and a theology of reconciliation. Further, students will gain an appreciation for the ways in which African American theologians and ethicists have contributed not only to theological discourse but also to the witness of the church in society.

Requirements

1. Attendance and participation in course discussions and assignments (20%). This requirement also involves leading the class in one of the reading assignments. The ability to raise informed questions and demonstrate critical engagement with course readings and discussions is an essential part of the attendance and participation requirement as well.
2. A (3) page reflection paper and presentation on a particular assigned reading. The presentation will be shared with the class and serve as a basis for the development of a more substantial paper to be submitted at the end of the course (30%). In this paper, students will identify a historical episode emerging from readings and discussions. Half of the paper will be devoted to presenting a position or positions raised in the readings, while the other half will focus on your own theological response to the historical episode and stated position (s).
3. Students will also be required to prepare a short reflection paper (2 pages, double spaced) drawing from the Timothy Tyson Grawemeyer Lecture and the book, Blood Done Signed My Name. The paper should reflect not simply the context of the lecture and book, but also a thoughtful reflection on the ways in which it creates the opportunity for dialogue on issues of race, social justice and the pursuit of reconciliation (15%).

3. Final paper of 12-15 pages (double spaced). The final paper will serve as a comprehensive reflection on course readings, discussions, and analytical research on a specific aspect of the course of study. The final paper will have a normative and constructive theological component as it attends to theological and ethical reflection and cultural criticism (35%).

Required Texts

DeYoung, Curtiss Paul, Reconciliation: Our Greatest Challenge-Our Only Hope, (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1997).

West, Traci, Wounds of the Spirit: Black Woman, Violence, and Resistance Ethics

Stone, Ronald H., and Stivers, Robert L., Resistance and Theological Ethics

Tyson, Timothy, Blood Done Sign My Name

Schreiter, Robert J., The Ministry of Reconciliation: Spirituality and Strategies

Reserve Readings

Anderson, Victor, Beyond Ontological Blackness

Battle, Michael, Reconciliation: The Ubuntu Theology of Desmond Tutu

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich, The Cost of Discipleship

Cone, James, Black Theology & Black Power, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Press, 1968)

Pauw, Amy Plantinga and Jones, Serene, Feminist and Womanist Essays in Reformed Dogmatics

Peters, Rebecca Todd, In Search of the Good Life: The Ethics of Globalization

Bell, Daniel, Liberation Theology at the End of History

McBride, James, The Color of Water: A Black Man's Tribute to His White Mother

Roberts, J. Deotis, Liberation and Reconciliation

Volf, Miroslav, The End of Memory: Remembering Rightly in a Violent World (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Co., 2006).

Wink, Walter When the Powers Fall: Reconciliation in the Healing of Nations (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998).

Articles on E-Reserve

O'Connor, June, "Fostering Forgiveness in the Public Square: How Realistic a Goal?", Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics, 22 (2002), 165-182.

J. Deotis Roberts, "Reconciliation with Justice," Perspectives in Religious Studies 29:4 (Winter 2002), 401-409.

Williams, Preston N., "The Price of Social Justice," Christian Century 90:19, No. 19 (May 9), 529-533.