

HIST 530: Slavery in America
Spring 2012
University of Northern Colorado

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Office Hours: Tuesdays, 2-3; Thursdays, 10-11; and by appointment

Tuesdays, 7-10

2260 Ross Hall

This course examines the history of slavery in America, from its origins in the Caribbean and American colonies extending to the abolition of slavery after the Civil War, as well as the memory of slavery in the twentieth-century United States. The class is designed as a seminar where we will read the latest in scholarship on the history of slavery. I have picked recently published books as well as articles, some of which are also recent, some of which are classics in the field. The books have also been chosen to explore as many themes as possible, most of them having to do with the social history of slavery: family life, reproduction, sex and rape, labor, the domestic slave trade, slave markets, resistance and revolt, and abolition. The major assignment of the class is a paper, either one based on original research using primary sources or a historiographical paper exploring the scholarship on one aspect of the history of slavery.

At the end of the semester, students should have a greater knowledge of the history of American slavery; should be able to evaluate the major claims and evidence in a book; and should be able to construct a graduate-level paper, complete with argument and evidence to back it up.

Requirements

Attendance

Attendance is required. If you miss more than one meeting of the class, you will fail the course. As a courtesy to your fellow students please also make sure to be prompt. Three tardy entrances will constitute one absence.

Participation

Students are expected to attend class and participate in the discussion that is the backbone of the class. To that end, participation makes up 40% of your grade.

Oral Presentation and Book Review

In each class that we read a monograph it will be the responsibility of one student to give a report on that day's reading, summarizing for the class the major contribution that the author is making. The presenters should also make sure to discuss methodology, argument, and engagement with other literature that we have already read. They should also—and importantly—pose questions for discussion. The presentation should be no more than 15 minutes and should be accompanied by a written book review. Together the presentation and the oral report will constitute 10% of your total grade. Do NOT simply summarize the book in your oral report. Tell us what matters most, what is problematic, what the major arguments are, but do not go through the book chapter by chapter.

Paper

The major assignment in the class will be a paper. You may choose to write a research paper using primary sources; many are available online (runaway slave advertisements, slavery

narratives, shipping records) or you may write a historiographical paper that surveys the literature of one particular area in the history of slavery and makes an argument about that literature. A preliminary proposal for this paper, that identifies the specific area and a number of key sources, will be due in the first third of the semester (10%) and the final paper is due on the last day of class (40%). Students will also be responsible for brief presentations on their topics in the final class, though the presentations will not be graded. The paper itself should be between 15 and 20 pages.

Failure to hand in any written assignment or give either presentation will result in automatic failure of the class.

The papers will each earn a number grade between 1 and 100. Your final grade in this class will be determined by the grade breakdown (below). I enter your grades into a spreadsheet that generates a final number. That number accords with a letter grade in the following manner: A (94 and above); A- (90-93); B+ (87-89); B (84-86); B- (80-83); C+ (77-79); C (74-76); C- (70-73); D+ (67-69); D (64-66); D- (60-63); F (below 60). There is no final A+ grade at UNC; however, students could potentially earn an A+ on an individual assignment or exam. That A+ *will* be factored into the calculations of your overall grade for the course, increasing your chances of earning an A overall.

Grading Breakdown

Participation – 40%

Presentation and Book Review – 10%

Proposal – 10%

Final Paper – 40%

Disability Statement

Students with disabilities: Any student requesting disability accommodation for this class must inform the instructor by giving appropriate notice. Students are encouraged to contact Disability Support Services at (970) 351-2289 to certify documentation of disability and to ensure appropriate accommodations are implemented in a timely manner.

Honor Code

All members of the University of Northern Colorado community are entrusted with the responsibility to uphold and promote five fundamental values: Honesty, Trust, Respect, Fairness, and Responsibility. These core elements foster an atmosphere, inside and outside of the classroom, which serves as a foundation and guides the UNC community's academic, professional, and personal growth. Endorsement of these core elements by students, faculty, staff, administration, and trustees strengthens the integrity and value of our academic climate.

UNC's policies and recommendations for academic misconduct will be followed. For additional information, please see the Dean of Student's website, Student Handbook: <http://www.unco.edu/dos/handbookindex.html>

Do not plagiarize in your written work. While quoting others and paraphrasing their ideas are important parts of historical writing, you must always cite your sources. If you plagiarize and I catch you (and I should add that I do so most semesters), you will fail the assignment, and depending on the nature of the plagiarism, you may fail the class. Handing in the same

paper for two classes (either two you are taking concurrently or one you have taken in the past) also constitutes cheating. Further, cheaters and plagiarizers will be reported to the Dean of Students; whatever punishment they choose to exact will be beyond my purview.

Questions

If you have questions about anything on the syllabus or about any aspect of the class, please feel free to email me or come to my office hours. If you are busy during my office hours but would like to speak with me in person, please email me and we'll figure out another time to meet.

Required Texts

There are seven required books in this class. The books are available for purchase at The Bookstop (931 16th Street), and may be available at the Barnes & Noble in the UC as well. Of course you may also order the books online but please do so quickly so that you have them in time to discuss them in class. The books that our library owns are on reserve there. All articles are on electronic reserve at the library.

Stephanie Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage Between Africa and American Diaspora* (Harvard University Press)

Jennifer Morgan, *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in New World Slavery* (University of Pennsylvania Press)

Christina Snyder, *Slavery in Indian Country: The Changing Face of Captivity in Indian Country* (Harvard University Press)

Adam Rothman, *Slave Country: American Expansion and the Origins of the Deep South* (Harvard University Press)

Walter Johnson, *Soul By Soul: Life Inside the Antebellum Slave Market* (Harvard University Press)

Thavolia Glymph, *Out of the House of Bondage: The Transformation of the Plantation Household* (Cambridge University Press)

Micki McElya, *Clinging to Mammy: The Faithful Slave in Twentieth-Century America* (Harvard University Press)

Schedule

January 10 – Introductions

January 17 – Origins and Early Years

Patrick Manning, "Why Africans? The Rise of the Slave Trade to 1700"

David Eltis, "Labour and Coercion in the English Atlantic World from the Seventeenth to the Early Twentieth Century"

Winthrop D. Jordan, "Modern Tensions and the Origins of American Slavery"

Ira Berlin, "Time, Space, and the Evolution of Afro-American Society on British Mainland North America"

January 24 – The Middle Passage

Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery*

January 31 – Gender in New World Slavery

Morgan, *Laboring Women*

February 7 – Research Day; No Class

All students must meet with me some time this week to discuss their papers.

February 14 – Native American Slavery

Snyder, *Slavery in Indian Country*

Research Proposal Due

February 21 – Expansion of Slavery: The Deep South

Rothman, *Slave Country*

February 28 – The Domestic Slave Trade

Johnson, *Soul by Soul*

March 6 – Family

Michael Craton, “Changing Patterns of Slave Family in the British West Indies”

Philip D. Morgan, “The Significance of Kin”

Dylan C. Penningroth, “My People, My People: The Dynamics of Community in Southern Slavery”

Brenda E. Stevenson, “Slave Marriage and Family Relations,” from *Life in Black and White*

March 13 – No Class; Spring Break

March 20 – Resistance and Rebellion

John Hope Franklin and Loren Schweninger, “Profile of a Runaway Slave”

Stephanie M. H. Camp, “The Pleasures of Resistance: Enslaved Women and Body Politics in the Plantation South, 1830-1861”

Michael P. Johnson, “Denmark Vesey and His Co-Conspirators.”

March 27 – Abolition, Proslavery and the Coming of the Civil War

Drew Gilpin Faust, “Proslavery Thought”

Julie Roy Jeffrey, “Ordinary Women in the Antislavery Movement”

Eric Foner, “Politics, Ideology and the Origins of the American Civil War”

April 3 – Slavery and its Aftermath in the Household

Glymph, *Out of the House of Bondage*

April 10 – Slavery Remembered

McElya, *Clinging to Mammy*

April 17 – Work Day; No class

April 24 – Presentations

Paper Due