

History 901  
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5255 Humanities Bldg.  
11 am - 1 pm., Tuesdays  
Spring Semester 2005

**SLAVERY AND RACE:  
AFRICAN BACKBACKGROUNDS TO THE EARLY REPUBLIC**

**Course Description:** This graduate reading seminar emphasizes the following topics: servile labor systems within Africa, the Atlantic slave trade (1450-1820), development of the principal (and varied) slave systems in English mainland America and the early Republic (to ca. 1820), the impact of the American Revolution, slave culture, resistance, emergence of antislavery activity, the growth and status of free black populations in the United States, and the impact of slavery on national politics.

**Readings:** All books are on three-hour reserve at the Wisconsin Historical Society, College Library, or the Kohler Art History Library (check MadCat for the location). In addition, the following titles are available for purchase at the UW Bookstore on State Street:

- Paul E. Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa* (2nd ed., 2000)
- Berlin, Ira. *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (1998)
- Walsh, Lorena S. *From Calabar to Carter's Grove: The History of a Virginia Slave Community* (1997)
- Thornton, John K. *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1800* (2nd ed., 1998)
- Koverman, Jill B. *I Made This Jar: The Life and Work of the Enslaved African-American Potter, Dave* (1998)
- Frey, Sylvia R. *Water from the Rock: Black Resistance in a Revolutionary Age* (1991)
- Wilkins, Roger W. *Jefferson's Pillow: The Founding Fathers and the Dilemma of Black Patriotism* (2001)

Sets of the *American Historical Review* and the *Journal of American History* are located on the south wall of the main reading room at the Wisconsin Historical Society. Xerox copies of some of the assigned readings are on the bookshelf in the southeast corner of the same room. The following titles listed in this syllabus may be accessed through the JSTOR database in MadCat (click on Journals, Magazines and Newspapers/Databases by Title: T/ JSTOR):

- American Historical Review*
- Journal of American History*
- Journal of Southern History*
- Reviews in American History*
- William and Mary Quarterly*

For print and electronic copies of other assigned journals, access the MadCat Library Catalog, then click on Basic Search/Journal Titles/[enter title being requested]. If the

journal is available electronically, the entry will lead you to ProQuest Research Library, the History Cooperative databases, or another site.

**Written Assignments:** A variety of brief written assignments are designed to enhance students' skills in articulating and evaluating scholarship and evidence.

### CLASS SCHEDULE

- Jan. 18            **Introduction to the Course**
- Jan. 25            **African Contexts**  
 Paul Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa*, chaps. 1-6.  
 Lorena S. Walsh, "The Africans," *From Calabar to Carter's Grove: The History of a Virginia Slave Community* (1997), chaps. 1-2.  
 William McKee Evans, "From the Land of Canaan to the Land of Guinea: The Strange Odyssey of the Sons of Ham," *American Historical Review* 85 (1980): 15-43.
- Writing Assignment: In no more than 100 words, state the argument of Evans's essay.
- Feb. 1             **The Atlantic Slave Trade**  
 Philip D. Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* (1969), chap. 1.  
 \_\_\_\_\_, *The Rise and Fall of the Plantation Complex: Essays in Atlantic History* (1990), preface and 3-57.  
 John K. Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1800* (2nd ed., 1998), intro. and chaps. 1-3.  
 Robin Law, *Ouidah: The Social History of a West African Slaving 'Port,' 1727-1892* (2004), introduction and chap. 4.  
 Winthrop Jordan, *White over Black: American Attitudes toward the Negro, 1550-1812* (1968), chap. 1.
- Feb. 8             **The Experience**  
 Philip D. Curtin, ed., *Africa Remembered: Narratives by West Africans from the Era of the Slave Trade* (1967), 3-9, 60-98.  
 Joseph C. Miller, "Voyage of No Return: The Experience of Enslavement: Flight, Disease, and Death," *Way of Death: Merchant Capitalism and the Angolan Slave Trade, 1730-1830* (1988), 379-442.  
 Ralph A. Austen, "The Slave Trade as History and Memory: Confrontations of Slaving Voyage Documents and Communal Traditions," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ser., 58 (2001): 229-44.  
 Bernard Bailyn, "Considering the Slave Trade: History and Memory," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ser., 58 (2001): 245-52.  
 Richard S. Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713* (1972), chaps. 2-3 and 10.
- Feb. 15           **Constructing Slavery and Race in English Mainland America**  
 T. H. Breen and Stephen Innes, 'Myne Owne Ground': *Race and Freedom*

- on *Virginia's Eastern Shore* (1980), chap. 1.
- Edmund S. Morgan, *American Slavery-American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* (1975), chaps. 15-16.
- Russell R. Menard, "From Servants to Slaves: The Transformation of the Chesapeake Labor System," *Southern Studies* 16 (1977): 355-90.
- Phillip J. Schwarz, *Twice Condemned: Slaves and the Criminal Laws of Virginia, 1705-1865* (1988), in part 2: intro and chap. 3.
- Kathleen M. Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches, and Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and Power in Colonial Virginia* (1996), chaps. 4 and 6.
- Ira Berlin, "Time, Space, and the Evolution of Afro-American Society on British Mainland North America," *American Historical Review* 85 (1980): 44-78.

Writing Assignment: In no more than 1,200 words, define slavery.

Feb. 22

### **Slave Societies**

- Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America*, 1-215, 369-71.
- Jean B. Lee, "Degrees of Freedom," *The Price of Nationhood: The American Revolution in Charles County [Maryland]* (1994), chap. 2.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "The Problem of Slavery in the Eighteenth-Century Chesapeake," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ser., 43 (1986): 333-61.
- Philip D. Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint: Black Culture in the Eighteenth-Century Chesapeake & Lowcountry* (1998), chaps. 3-4.

Mar. 1

### **African-American Material Culture**

**NOTE:** Meet in Room L140 of the Elvehjem Museum. This week we will be joining Professor Ann Smart Martin's course entitled "The Arts of Cultural Blending: The Material Culture of Race and Ethnicity in America, 1620-1910."

- Jill Beute Koverman, *I Made This Jar: The Life and Work of the Enslaved African-American Potter, Dave* (1998).
- Aaron de Grof, "Eloquent Vessels/Poetics of Power: The Heroic Stoneware of 'Dave the Potter,'" *Winterthur Portfolio* 33 (1998): 249-60.
- John M. Vlach, "The Shotgun House: An African Architectural Legacy," in *By the Work of Their Hands: Studies on Afro-American Folklife* (1991), 185-213.
- Patricia Samford, "Strong is the Bond of Kinship': West African-Style Ancestor Shrines and Subfloor Pits on African-American Quarters," *Historical Archaeology of Identity Formation & the Interpretation of Ethnicity*, ed. Maria Franklin and Farrett Fesler (1999), 71-85.
- Ann Smart Martin, "Suckey's Looking Glass: The Meanings of Things," chapter from *Buying into the World of Goods: Early Consumers in Backcountry Virginia* (books ms.)
- Walsh, *From Calabar to Carter's Grove: The History of a Virginia Slave Community*, chaps. 3-6.

#### Recommended:

- Lawrence W. Levine, *Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom* (1977), preface and

chaps. 1-2.

Georgia Writers' Project, Works Progress Administration, *Drums and Shadows: Survival Studies among the Georgia Coastal Negroes*, intro. Charles Joyner (1986; originally published 1940).

Charles Joyner, *Down By the Riverside: A South Carolina Slave Community* (1984), chap. 7 [re: the creation of the Gullah language].

Mar. 8           **No Class Today**

Writing Assignment due no later than 4 p.m. (faculty mailbox 5007): A well organized, well written paper that assesses the strengths and limitations of the sources scholars rely upon in interpreting slavery and race, as you have examined these topics during the first two months of the course. Be sure to support generalizations with citations to specific evidence used in the assigned readings. (maximum 5,000 words)

Mar. 15           **The Problems of Slavery in a Revolutionary Age**

David B. Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution, 1770-1823* (1975), chap. 1.

Peter H. Wood, "Liberty is Sweet': African American Freedom Struggles in the Years before White Independence," in *Beyond the American Revolution: Explorations in the History of American Radicalism*, ed. Alfred F. Young (1993).

Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone . . .*, 217-365, 372-75.

William Freehling, "The Founding Fathers and Slavery," *American Historical Review* 77 (1972): 81-93.

Paul Finkelman, "Slavery and the Constitutional Convention: Making a Covenant with Death," in *Beyond Confederation: Origins of the Constitution and American National Identity*, ed. Richard Beeman et al. (1987), 188-225.

Gary B. Nash, "The Failure of Abolitionism," *Race and Revolution* (1990), chap. 2.

Mar. 22           **SPRING BREAK**

Mar. 29           **Accommodation and Resistance**

Sylvia R. Frey, *Water from the Rock: Black Resistance in a Revolutionary Age* (1991).

Lucia Stanton, *Free Some Day: The African-American Families of Monticello* (2000), 102-40.

Scot A. French and Edward L. Ayers, "The Strange Career of Thomas Jefferson: Race and Slavery in American Memory, 1943-1993," in *Jeffersonian Legacies*, ed. Peter S. Onuf (1993), chap. 14.

Eugene A. Foster et al., "Jefferson Fathered Slave's Last Child," *Nature* 396 (Nov. 5, 1998): 27-28.

Jean B. Lee, "Charlotte's Mount Vernon." (typescript)

Writing Assignment: Review Frey's book (maximum 1,000 words)

- Apr. 5           **Masters**  
 Rhys Issac, *Landon Carter's Uneasy Kingdom: Revolution and Rebellion on a Virginia Plantation* (2004).  
 Jean B. Lee, "Mount Vernon Plantation: A Model for the Republic," in *Slavery at the Home of George Washington*, ed. Philip J. Schwarz (2001), 12-45.  
 Drew Gilpin Faust, *James Henry Hammond and the Old South: A Design for Mastery* (1982). chap. 6.
- Apr. 12           **Circumscribed Freedoms**  
 Arthur Zilversmit, *The First Emancipation: The Abolition of Slavery in the North* (1967),  
 Ira Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters: The Free Negro in the Antebellum South* (1974), chaps. 1-3.  
 David B. Davis, *Slavery and Human Progress* (1984), 154-68.  
 Carl Lane and Rhoda Freeman, "John Dipper and the Experience of the Free Black Elite, 1816-1836," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 100 (1992): 486-514.  
 Mary Carroll Johansen, "'Intelligence, Though Overlooked': Education for Black Women in the Upper South, 1800-1840," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 93 (1998): 443-65.
- Writing Assignment: Drawing upon this week's readings, as well as any others that appear relevant, consider this question: Could slavery have been abolished at the nation's founding? (1500 words)
- Apr. 19           **Slavery and National Politics in the Early Republic**  
 Don R. Fehrenbacher, *The Slaveholding Republic: An Account of the United States Government's Relations to Slavery* (2001), chaps. 1-3, 5, and 7.  
 Donald Robinson, *Slavery in the Structure of American Politics, 1765-1820* (1979),
- Apr. 26           **Migration in the Early National Period**  
 Drew McCoy, *The Elusive Republic: Political Economy in Jeffersonian America* (1980), chap. 3.  
 Fehrenbacher, *The Slaveholding Republic: An Account of the United States Government's Relations to Slavery*, 253-66.  
 Allan Kulikoff, "Uprooted Peoples: Black Migrants in the Age of the American Revolution, 1790-1820," *Slavery and Freedom in the Age of the American Revolution*, ed. Ira Berlin and Ronald Hoffman (1983), 143-71.  
 Walsh, "Moving West," *From Calabar to Carter's Grove: The History of a Virginia Slave Community* (1997), chap. 7 and conclusion.  
 Gail S. Terry, "Sustaining the Bonds of Kinship in a Trans-Appalachian Migration, 1790-1811: The Cabel-Breckinridge Slaves Move West," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 102 (1994): 455-76.  
 Staunton, *Free Some Day: The African-American Families of Monticello*, 141-63.

May 4

**A “Wolf by the Ears”**

Paul Finkelman, “Jefferson and Slavery: ‘Treason Against the Hopes of the World,’” in *Jeffersonian Legacies*, ed. Peter S. Onuf (1993), chap. 6.

Drew R. McCoy, “Despair: The Peculiar Institution,” *The Last of the Fathers: James Madison and the Republican Legacy* (1989), chap. 7.

Roger Wilkins, *Jefferson’s Pillow: The Founding Fathers and the Dilemma of Black Patriotism* (2001).

“Slavery,” *Newsweek* (May 4, 1992): 30-39.

Brooke, James. “Slavery on Rise in Brazil, as Debt Chains Workers,” *New York Times* (May 23, 1993).

Writing Assignment: Respond to Wilkins's book (maximum 1,500 words)