

HIST 227 Explorations in the History of Race and Ethnicity
Early Atlantic Slavery and Resistance
University of Wisconsin-Madison, Department of History, 2021

Instructor: Dr. Justine Walden

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Location and Time: Online Synchronous, T/Th 11-12:15pm

Office Hours: 11am Mondays and by appointment

Course Overview and Description

Much of the commerce, development and settlement of the early Atlantic World rested upon the labor of enslaved Africans and their descendants. However the slave societies throughout the Atlantic world were not identical. They were shaped by legal statutes that restricted enslaved people's freedoms and the resistance of enslaved people to imposed bondage—two forces which were in constant tension, as well as political, economic, environmental, and social structures; all of which transformed slave societies and cast long shadows up until the present. This course will compare and contrast the three slave societies of Barbados, Jamaica, and South Carolina to understand their similarities and divergences in development. We will start by examining these societies' legal genealogy, then trace the various forces which caused each society to develop in different directions. Thus starting with slave codes developed in Barbados in 1661, we will see how these were redeployed in the slave societies of Jamaica and South Carolina and then will trace how differences in geography, indigenous power, and environment produced different systems of slavery. In South Carolina, trade in enslaved Amerindians fomented two violent wars and culminated in the Stono Rebellion of 1739. In Jamaica, a forty-year struggle between colonists and fugitive Africans and their descendants, known as Maroons, resulted in increased militarization. We will consider how gender intersected with enslavement during Week 5, and will conclude the course by considering both the diverse ways in which each of the slave societies in question responded to campaigns to abolish the transatlantic slave trade during the Age of Revolutions and how the existence of these past slave societies came to shape our understanding of race and ethnicity in the present day.

Objectives and Outcomes:

This course is intended to fulfil the Ethnic Studies requirement (HIST 227) through its consideration of race, enslavement and their legacies. Course activities will focus upon close reading, speaking, and learning the conventions of academic writing. While sharpening academic skills, students will learn how the enslavement of Africans became a system of racial oppression and how social structures created in the early modern Atlantic, including African ones, influenced the present.

Students will investigate the following historical topics:

- How systems of racialized slavery developed before the nineteenth century
- How diasporic Africans resisted and rebelled against oppression
- How a transatlantic commodity economy focused on slave labor impacted the longer-term development of America, Europe, and Africa
- How to distinguish between different slave societies and how law, environment, demography, economics, and custom combined to shape them
- How systems of racial and ethnic inequality persist across time and space.
- How past histories of race and enslavement have shaped the multicultural society of the present-day United States
- How ideologies of race are constructed over time and through specific historical circumstance

Student will learn the following academic skills:

- To read primary and secondary sources critically
- To use evidence to construct a coherent and logical argument
- To use library resources to conduct research in a specific topic

Course Assignments and Grade Breakdown:

- (60%) Short weekly papers ranging from two to four pages in length and a final 5-page paper. Students will workshop these papers both with peers and via conference with instructor. The 5-page paper must be substantially revised through review, commentary, and discussion.
- (25%) Two 5-minute oral presentations on selected papers.
- (15%) Student participation grade will consist of active class participation in discussions.

**HIST 227: *Slave Societies and Resistance in the Early Atlantic World:*
Course Schedule and Readings**

Course Readings:

For primary sources, students will read portions of Shepherd, V. & Beckles H. (ed.) *Caribbean Slavery in the Atlantic World: a Student Reader* (James Currey, Oxford: 2000)

Additional essays and readings for this course will be made available to students in .pdf format via Canvas.

WEEKLY THEMES

Week 1: Introduction: Theoretical Background

In our first course meeting, we will discuss course requirements; basic assumptions and ideologies of race and enslavement; and will begin to look at the slave codes which influenced the societies we are investigating.

Week 2: Barbados

Tuesday

The Barbados Slave Code of 1661 ('An Act for Better Ordering and Governing of Negroes')
Edward B. Rugemer. "The Development of Mastery and Race in the Comprehensive Slave Codes of the Greater Caribbean during the Seventeenth Century". *The William and Mary Quarterly*. Vol. 70, No. 3 (July 2013), pp. 429-458

Thursday

Richard Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713* (North Carolina Press, 1972) Excerpts from Ch. 2.
Jerome Handler, *The Unappropriated People: Freedmen in the Slave Society of Barbados* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), pp. 7-28; 190-218.

Due on Friday:

3 page summary and analysis of the Barbados Slave Code and its context. Paper should cite and reference secondary and/or recommended readings as necessary.

Recommended:

Richardson, B. C. *Economy and Environment in the Caribbean: Barbados and the Windwards in the Late 1800s*, University Press of Florida, 1997.

Parker, M. *The Sugar Barons: Family, Corruption, Empire and War* (Windmill Books: 2012)

Week 3: Jamaica

Tuesday

Mavis Campbell, *The Maroons of Jamaica: A History of Resistance, Collaboration, and Betrayal* (Trenton: Africa World Press, 1990) Chap 7 .

Frank Wesley Pitman. "The Treatment of the British West Indian Slaves in Law and Custom". *The Journal of Negro History*. Vol. 11, No. 4 (Oct., 1926), pp. 610-628.

Thursday

Jack Greene. *Settler Jamaica in the 1750s: A Social Portrait*. University of Virginia Press (2016), p. 1-10.

Vincent Brown, "Spiritual Terror and Sacred Authority in Jamaican Slave Society," *Slavery & Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies*, 24:1 (2003), 24-53.

Due on Friday:

3-page comparison of Barbados slave society to Jamaican, with references to secondary and/or recommended readings as required.

Recommended:

Aaron Graham. "Jamaican Legislation and the Transatlantic Constitution, 1664-1839". *The Historical Journal*. October 2017.

Vincent Brown, *Slave Revolt in Jamaica, 1760-1761: A Cartographic Narrative*.
<http://revolt.axismaps.com/project.htm>

Diana Paton, *No Bond but the Law: Punishment, Race, and Gender in Jamaica State Formation, 1780-1870* (Duke University Press, 2004)

Mimi Sheller, *Democracy after Slavery: Black Politics and Peasant Radicalism in Haiti and Jamaica* (University Press of Florida, 2001)

Week 4: South Carolina

Tuesday

Edward B. Rugemer. *Slave Law and the Politics of Resistance in the Early Atlantic World*. Harvard University Press, 2018. Chapter 3: "The Domestication of Slavery in South Carolina", pp. 75-119.

Thomas J. Little. "The South Carolina Slave Laws Reconsidered, 1670-1700". *The South Carolina Historical Magazine*. Vol. 94, No. 2 (Apr., 1993), pp. 86-101.

Thursday

Selected slave narratives from *I Belong to South Carolina: South Carolina Slave Narratives*. Ed.

Susanna Ashton et. al. University of South Carolina Press. 2010

Paul Heinegg, "Free African Americans of Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Maryland and Delaware," on internet at <http://www.freeafricanamericans.com>. (read forward to sections)

Due on Friday:

4-page compare/contrast paper on one of the Caribbean slave societies and South Carolina. Paper should refer to secondary and/or recommended readings as required.

Recommended:

Robert Olwell, *Masters, Slaves, and Subjects: The Culture of Power in the South Carolina Low Country, 1740-1790*

Larry E. Hudson, *To Have and to Hold: Slave Work and Family Life in Antebellum South Carolina*

Charles Joyner, *Down by the Riverside: A South Carolina Slave Community*

Week 5: Gender

Tuesday

Jennifer Morgan, *Laboring Women: Gender and Reproduction in New World Slavery* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004) (whole book)

Thursday

Discussion of second half of Morgan; Student Oral Presentations.

Due on Friday:

3-page paper which discusses and outlines Morgan's argument for how gender intersected with racial oppression and enslavement in the New World. Cite secondary and/or recommended readings as required.

Recommended:

Hilary McD. Beckles, "Perfect Property: Enslaved Black Women in the Caribbean," in *Confronting Power, Theorizing Gender: Interdisciplinary Perspectives in the Caribbean*, ed. by Eudine Barriteau (Kingston, Jamaica: The University of the West Indies Press, 2003), 142-158.

John D. Garrigus, "Redrawing the Color Line: Gender and the Social Construction of Race in Pre-Revolutionary Haiti," *Journal of Caribbean History*, 30:1-2 (1996): 28-50.

Thavolia Glymph, *Out of the House of Bondage: The Transformation of the Plantation Household* (Cambridge University Press, 2003)

Week 6: Resistance

Tuesday

Edward B. Rugemer, *Slave Law and the Politics of Resistance in the Early Atlantic World*. Harvard University Press, 2018. Chapter 4: The Militarization of Slavery in Jamaica, 120–170

Thursday

John K. Thornton “African Dimensions of the Stono Rebellion” *The American Historical Review* Vol. 96, No. 4 (Oct., 1991), pp. 1101-1113.

Due on Friday:

2-page paper which compares and contrasts forms of slave resistance in the societies we are investigating.

Recommended:

Michael Craton, “Proto-Peasant Revolts? The Late Slave Rebellions in the British West Indies 1816-1832,” *Past & Present*, 85 (1979): 99-125.

Radica Mahase, “‘Plenty a dem run away’: Resistance by Indian Indentured Labourers in Trinidad, 1870–1920,” *Labor History*, 49:4 (2008)

Week 7: Abolition

Tuesday

Edward B. Rugemer, *Slave Law and the Politics of Resistance in the Early Atlantic World*. Harvard University Press, 2018. Chapter 5: The Transformation of Slavery’s Politics, 171–212

Thursday

Chapter 6: The Slaveholders Retrench, 213–247.

Due on Friday (Final Paper Draft):

5-page paper which **compares and contrasts the diverse slave societies we have investigated in this course.**

Recommended:

Christopher L. Brown, *Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism* (OIEAH, North Carolina Press, 2006)

Hochschild, A. *Bury the Chains: The British Struggle to Abolish Slavery*. (Macmillan: 2005.)

Stanley Harrold. Direct Abolitionist Engagement in Politics, 1688–1807. *American Abolitionism: Its Direct Political Impact from Colonial Times into Reconstruction*. University of Virginia Press (2019), pp. 13-32.

Daniel Livesay, *Early Abolitionism And Mixed-Race Migration Into Britain, 1762– 1778 Children of Uncertain Fortune: Mixed-Race Jamaicans in Britain and the Atlantic Family, 1733-1833*, Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture (2018), pp. 90-142.

Wilberforce, William, *An appeal to the religion, justice, and humanity of the inhabitants of the British Empire, in behalf of the Negro slaves in the West Indies*. London : Printed by Ellerton and Henderson, for J. Hatchard, 1823.

Week 8: Course Wrap-Up and Synthesis

Edward B. Rugemer, *Slave Law and the Politics of Resistance in the Early Atlantic World*. Harvard University Press, 2018. Chapter 5: The Transformation of Slavery's Politics, 171–212, Chapter 6: The Slaveholders Retrench, 213–247.

Due on Friday: Final Paper

Revision of your 5 page paper which compares and contrasts the diverse slave societies we are investigating.

ADDITIONAL COURSE POLICIES

Paper Submission and Formatting.

All papers will be uploaded online to Canvas. All papers must possess a title along with numbered pages and your name must be on every page. All papers must be double-spaced using a standard 12-point font. All papers must cite sources appropriately in footnotes, and all papers must contain an appropriately formatted bibliography.

Late Papers and Assignments

For each day that an assignment is late, your grade will go down by one-third of a grade, beginning with the day on which it was due. For example, an A level paper will receive an A- if it is submitted on the day the paper is due *but after class*. If you submit the same paper the following day, it will receive a B+. The day after that, the paper will get a B, and so on. *No responses will be accepted more than one week after the date on which they are due excepting unusual or emergency circumstances.*

Help with Writing Academic Papers

Academic paper writing is a learned skill and is by no means easy. Its style and its requirements may take some getting used to, and all papers require multiple drafts, revisions, and stages of editing. In addition to using course readings as models for standards of writing, there are many resources available to help you learn how to write more clearly and persuasively and how to construct an argument and support it with evidence. If you need assistance with drafting your paper, the UW campus Writing Center offers a variety of services, tutors, and workshops at <https://writing.wisc.edu/>.

In addition, **The History Lab at UW**—at <https://history.wisc.edu/undergraduate-program/the-history-lab/history-lab-writing-guides/>— offers writing guides and multiple other forms of assistance in paper writing.

A Tip: Papers typically require much more time than you think due to the need to write multiple drafts, so you should start research and writing as early as possible.

Academic Integrity

Academic misconduct can assume many forms, including the borrowing of someone else's words or ideas without crediting them—also known as plagiarism. To ensure that you are understand the standards by which your work and ideas will be evaluated, please visit <https://www.students.wisc.edu/doso/academic-integrity/>. No academic misconduct will be tolerated in this course, and instances of plagiarism may earn you an instant F.

Course Grading Scale

A (92.50+); AB (87.50-92.49); B (82.50-87.49); BC (77.50-82.49); C (69.50-77.49); D (60-69.49); F
(Below 60)

Additional Readings and Sources

- Vincent Brown, *The Reaper's Garden: Death and Power in the World of Atlantic Slavery*. (Harvard University Press, 2008).
- Trevor Burnard. "Planter Politics and the Fear of Slave Revolt." In *Jamaica in the Age of Revolution*, (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2020), 20-42.
- Trevor Burnard. "A Brutal System: Managing Enslaved People in Jamaica." In *Jamaica in the Age of Revolution*, (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2020). 70-102.
- Trevor Burnard. "Tacky's Revolt and Its Legacies." In *Jamaica in the Age of Revolution*, (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2020). 103-30.
- David Brion Davis. *Inhuman Bondage: The Rise & Fall of Slavery in the New World* (Oxford University Press, 2006)
- Ada Ferrer, *Freedom's Mirror: Cuba and Haiti in the Age of Revolution* (Cambridge University Press, 2014)
- G. Heuman & T. Burnard, ed. *The Routledge History of Slavery* (Routledge, 2010)
- Winthrop Jordan, *White over Black: Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550-1812*, (Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, North Carolina Press, 2006; 1968)
- Aline Helg. "Conspiracy and Revolt The Most Perilous Paths to Freedom, from *Slave No More: Self-Liberation before Abolitionism in the Americas*. (University of North Carolina Press, 2019), pp. 82-110.
- Jamaica Kincaid, *A Small Place*. Farrar, Straus & Giroux.
- Livesay, Daniel. "Anolution, Revolution, and Migration, 1788-1793." In *Children of Uncertain Fortune: Mixed-Race Jamaicans in Britain and the Atlantic Family, 1733-1833*, (University of North Carolina Press, 2018), pp 193-248.
- Edward Rugemer. *Jamaica's Morant Bay Rebellion and the Making of Radical Reconstruction, United States Reconstruction across the Americas*. (University Press of Florida, 2019), pp. 81-112.
- John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1800*, (Cambridge University Press, 1998; 1992)
- J. Walvin. *Black Ivory: Slavery in the British Empire* (Blackwells, 2001)
- J. Walvin. *Questioning Slavery*, (Routledge: 1996)