History 201 – The Historian's Craft
A Global History of Unfree Labor in the Long 19th Century

Mondays, 1:20pm-3:15pm
Mosse Humanities Building, 5255

Professor Geoffrey Durham (he/him)
Email: gdurham@wisc.edu
Office location: 4118 Mosse Humanities Building or Zoom
Office hours: Wednesdays, 9am-11am and by appointment

Course Description

People have been enslaved, enserfed, and otherwise compelled to work all over the world for millennia. The long nineteenth century—roughly the period from the revolutions in the Americas in the late eighteenth century to the First World War in the first quarter of the twentieth—was a major inflection point in this long history of unfree labor. But why, exactly? In a word, unfree labor became a problem for moral, economic, and other reasons. For some, it was unjust and inhumane. For others, it was simply inefficient. Movements for emancipation from unfree labor regimes coincided with efforts to discipline labor in new ways. In this course we will interrogate the many types of unfree labor and their transformations through a series of case studies. We will analyze the larger structures of unfree labor as well as individual experiences of working within them. We will consider these dynamics in different parts of the world and at different sites of work, including farms and plantations, factories, prisons, battlefields, and homes. By engaging with primary sources and secondary literature and developing the research and communication skills that historians use to analyze the past, you will have the opportunity to craft your own project that asks and answers an original question about unfree labor.

Diversity & Inclusion
At UW-Madison diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation. As a community, we value the contributions of each person and respect the ways that their identity, culture, background, experience, status, and abilities enrich life on and beyond campus. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals. UW-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background, whether they are students, staff, or faculty.

Everyone has a right to be addressed and referred to in accordance with their personal identity. In our class you will have the chance to indicate the name that you prefer to be called and, if you choose, to identify pronouns with which you would like to be addressed.

Mental Health & Well-Being
Students often experience stressors that can influence their academic experience and personal well-being. These may be mental health concerns, substance misuse, sexual or relationship violence, difficult family or friend circumstances, campus climate, financial matters, or may take other forms. I hope that you feel empowered to learn about and access UW-Madison's mental health services and/or other resources when needed. Please visit www.uhs.wisc.edu or call University Health Services at 608-265-5600 for more information.

All students have a right to feel safe and respected at UW-Madison. Unfortunately, sexual and relationship violence do happen here. Free, confidential resources are available on and off campus for students impacted by sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence, and stalking (regardless of when the violence occurred). Friends of survivors are also encouraged to seek support. A list of resources can be found at www.uhs.wisc.edu/survivor-resources/.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities
I recognize that it is a personal decision to disclose a disability. I encourage students with disabilities to contact the McBurney Disabilities Resource Center, which is UW-Madison's office for reviewing documentation provided by students with disabilities and for establishing accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin state law, and university policies. Implementing reasonable accommodations is a shared responsibility between students and instructors, so I ask that you inform me of any needs as soon as possible, certainly within the first three weeks of class. I promise to do what I can to accommodate whatever needs you may have, including but not necessarily limited to those recommended by the McBurney Center.

Format
This discussion-based seminar meets in person once per week.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes
What you learn in this class, and the quality of our experience together, depends on your commitment to reading closely, coming to class with informed ideas and questions, and being prepared to help your classmates answer theirs. The idea is for you to interpret the readings and to come to *your own* conclusions. In this History 201-Historian's Craft course, you will develop

the critical thinking, communication, and research skills that historians use to study the past—skills that will also serve you well in other courses and beyond your undergraduate career. Throughout the semester, you will learn to do the following:

1. Engage critically and analytically with primary and secondary sources, and develop reading and note-taking processes to organize your thoughts.
2. Ask and answer informed historical questions about the past.
3. Understand how historians make history and why our interpretations of the past change over time.
4. Evaluate and participate in the major scholarly debates about unfree labor broadly speaking, but also within the field of your chosen topic.
5. Identify and select relevant primary and secondary sources to produce an original piece of historical scholarship.
6. Craft sophisticated analytical arguments and communicate your ideas in both written and spoken form.

Required Work & Methods of Assessment

*Please note that I will provide more detailed descriptions of the assignments throughout the semester. You will submit all assignments to Canvas. I ask that you submit them as Microsoft Word documents so that I can better provide feedback on them. If this is a problem, please let me know.

- Before the end of September, each of you should plan to meet with me individually during my office hours for roughly ten minutes. This will give us the chance to learn more about one another, and for you to ask any questions or express any concerns you have about the course. If you have a scheduling conflict with my office hours, please notify me so that we can arrange an alternative time to meet.
- Complete the assigned readings and come to class prepared to engage with the material as well as with your classmates' thoughts and questions. You should always bring copies of the readings to class with you.
- Weekly reading reflection posts on Canvas. Please submit these by 9am each Monday that we meet through November 13th. (After November 13th, you we will stop the common readings so that you can focus on your research papers.) These reflection posts do not need to be longer than one-two paragraphs. The purpose for these posts is to give you the chance to begin processing the assigned readings and developing your thoughts *before* you come to class and thereby improve the quality of our conversations. I view these as more of a warm-up for class than a formal assessment of your grasp of the material. I do not grade these individually but they do count cumulatively towards your participation grade. I promise to provide written feedback on one of your posts within the first few weeks of class to help you make them more useful to you.
- Small writing and research assignments: primary source analysis (one-two pages); research topic and question; project proposal; annotated bibliography; peer review.
- Capstone research project: rough draft, oral presentation, final draft (six-eight pages).

Deadlines, Late Work, & Attendance

I acknowledge that your time is a finite resource and that there are many demands on it. I hope that I have paced readings and assignments in a manner that balances the course's learning

objectives with a respect for your time. My deadlines are meant to keep you on track and protect you from a bottleneck of work. This is especially important for this class because of how the assignments build on one another and prepare to write a final research paper. Having said that, life happens. If you are feeling stressed about completing an assignment on time, please send me an email at least twenty-four hours before the deadline so that we can make any necessary arrangements. I will automatically grant extensions if you notify me at least twenty-four hours before the deadline. If you request an extension with fewer than twenty-four hours remaining until the deadline, I will review your request on a case-by-case basis.

Grading Breakdown

- Participation and reflection posts: 30%
- Primary source analysis (due 10/2): 5%
- Project proposal (due 11/6): 5%
- Annotated bibliography (due 11/13): 5%
- Paper outline/roadmap (due 11/20): 5%
- Rough draft (due 12/1 *before midnight*): 5%
- Peer review (due 12/4): 10%
- Project presentation (12/11): 5%
- Final paper (due 12/13): 30%

Grading Scale

A: 93-100 AB: 88-92 B: 83-87 BC: 78-82 C: 70-77 D: 60-69 F: 0-59

Accessing Course Materials

All readings on the syllabus are required and are available in PDF format on the course's Canvas site. Research has shown that people retain more of what they read when they do so in paper copy and annotate what they read. You are not required to buy any materials for this class. If you are able to, I strongly encourage you to

Regular and Substantive Student Interaction

Our class meetings provide the main opportunity to engage in regular and substantive student interaction. During class I will provide direct instruction through mini-lectures and weekly skills workshops, answer student questions about course content, and facilitate student discussion of the course materials. Additionally, I will be available during my weekly office hours for one-on-one or group meetings with students. If you would like to meet but have a scheduling conflict with my office hours, please email me so that we can find an alternative time. I try to respond to all emails within twenty-four hours. I will provide further substantive interaction by providing written feedback on assignments.

Academic Integrity

If you are having difficulty with an assignment or feeling like you don't have enough time to complete work for this course, please see me. It is my experience that most instances of academic misconduct are the result of panic in the face of deadlines and mounting workloads. As established in the above note, "Deadlines and Late Work," I have a flexible policy that prioritizes your learning in full recognition of the many other demands on your time.

By enrolling in this course, you are agreeing to join UW-Madison's scholarly community and to uphold its high academic standards. Academic misconduct is behavior that compromises the integrity of the university. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit such acts are examples of misconduct. I understand plagiarism as including—but not limited to—the following:

- Using someone else's words or ideas without proper citation.
- Copying from another text without proper acknowledgment of your indebtedness to that source. (This includes software such as ChatGPT.)
- Submitting work written by another person.
- Presenting somebody else's work as your own.

Academic misconduct may result in disciplinary action. Examples of disciplinary sanctions include—but are not limited to—failure on the assignment or for the course, written reprimand, disciplinary probation, or suspension. For substantial or repeated cases of misconduct, I will confer with the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards for further review. For more information, please refer to https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/academic-misconduct/. I also encourage you to speak with me if you have any questions about what does and does not constitute academic misconduct.

A Note on Artificial Intelligence (AI)
Please be aware that my policy on AI may be different from those of instructors for your other courses. There is no standard university-wide policy. I encourage students to think critically about using generative AI software, such as ChatGPT, in educational settings. In particular, I ask that you reflect on how it interferes with the course's stated learning objectives—that is, for "you to interpret the readings and to come to *your own* conclusions." You may not submit text generated by AI as your own writing. If you submit AI-generated text for class assignments, I will consider that plagiarism. You may consult ChatGPT as you would Wikipedia, knowing that it is not always a reliable source of information. Please also be aware that ChatGPT frequently produces references to texts and sources that do not actually exist.

History Lab
I strongly encourage you to take advantage of the History Lab, the History Department's writing center. Our graduate student staff offer expert, one-on-one advising for your projects (both in-person and virtually). Regardless of the stage of your project—choosing a topic, conducting research, outlining, drafting, revising—the History Lab staff will be able to help. Please visit the website for instructions on how to schedule an appointment or to find tips, guides, and other resources to help with assignments.

Credits: 3

Explanation of Credit Hours: The credit standard for this course is met by an expectation of a total of 135 hours of student engagement with the course learning activities (at least 45 hours per credit), which include regularly scheduled instructor-student meeting times [115-minute weekly

seminars plus individual consultations on final projects], reading, writing, research, and other student work as described in the syllabus.

Requisites: Satisfied Communications A requirement.

Course Designations:
Gen Ed - Communication Part B
Breadth - Humanities
Level - Intermediate
L&S Credit - Counts as Liberal Arts and Science credit in L&S

Week 1 (9/4) – Labor Day (No Class)

Week 2 (9/11) – Introduction

- No assigned reading for the first week.

In-class workshop: Practicing engaged and active reading—or, reading as a dialogue between author and reader.

Event of note. September 13th from 12pm-1pm, 206 Ingraham Hall – Dr. Edda L. Fields-Black, "New Methods and Sources for Recovering New Voices: West African Peasant Rice Farmers and Enslaved Laborers on Lowcountry Rice Plantations."

Week 3 (9/18) – The Global Transformations of Labor in the Long Nineteenth Century

- Jürgen Osterhammel, *The Transformation of the World: A Global History of the Nineteenth Century*, translated by Patrick Camiller (Princeton University Press, 2014), 673-709.
- Joseph C. Miller, *The Problem of Slavery as History: A Global Approach* (Yale University Press, 2012), 1-13, 17-20, 25-29.
  - Karl Marx, "Wage Labour and Capital," 204-11.

In-class workshop: What are primary and secondary sources? How do historians use them to write about the past?

Week 4 (9/25) – An Anti-Slavery Revolution and the Birth of Haiti

- Laurent Dubois and John D. Garrigus, "Introduction: Revolution, Emancipation, and Independence," in *Slave Revolution in the Caribbean, 1789-1804: A Brief History with Documents*, 2nd ed. (Bedford/St. Martin's, 2017), 1-36.

  *For citation purposes, please note that all of the primary sources are from Dubois and Garrigus, *Slave Revolution in the Caribbean* **except** "Toussaint's Labor Decree."
  - "Observations on the Origin and Progression of the White Colonists' Prejudice against Men of Color, 1791," 66-69.
  - "Letter to the Marquis de Gallifet, September 19, 1791," 81-82.
  - "The True State of the Case, Respecting the Insurrection at St. Domingo, 1792," 101-03.
  - "Petition, 1793," 109-110.
  - "Insurgent Responses to Emancipation, 1793," 118-21.
  - "The Abolition of Slavery, February 4, 1794," 122-25.
  - "Victor Hughes, Proclamations, 1794," 126-28.
  - "Geneviève Labothière Secures Her Brother's Freedom, 1796-1801," 129-31.
  - "The Plantation Policies of Étienne Polverel, 1794," 131-37.
  - "The True Colors of the Planters, or the System of the Hotel Massiac, Exposed by Gouli, 1795," 137-39.
  - "Toussaint's Labor Decree," in David Greggus, ed., *The Haitian Revolution: A Documentary History* (Hackett Publishing Co., 2014), 153-54.

In-class workshop: Interpreting primary sources and asking historical questions through them.

Assignment: Write a brief essay (one-two pages) analyzing at least three of the primary sources from this week—due October 2nd by 10am.

Week 5 (10/2) – Convict Labor in Global Perspective

<u>*VISIT TO MEMORIAL LIBRARY—MEET IN THE LOBBY!***</u>**

- Clare Anderson, *Convicts: A Global History* (Cambridge University Press, 2022), introduction [1-34], chapter 4 [100-32].
- John McCracken, "Wisconsin's Prisoner-Made Furniture Business Is Still Booming," *Tone Madison*, November 30, 2020: https://tonemadison.com/articles/wisconsins-prisoner-made-furniture-business-is-still-booming/
- Steven Hahn, "Emancipation, Incarceration, and the Boundaries of Coercion," *The Journal of Southern History* 88, no. 1 (February 2022): 5-38.

In-class workshop: How to find primary and secondary sources using the library's resources.

Assignment for next week: Find one article/book and one primary source on a topic you *may* want to write about for your final paper. (You don't have to fully commit to the topic quite yet but you should be narrowing down an idea.) Skim them so that you'll be able to briefly tell us about them in class next week.

Week 6 (10/9) – Serfdom and Slavery in Comparative Perspective: The Russian and US Empires

- Peter Kolchin, *Unfree Labor: American Slavery and Russian Serfdom* (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1987), chapter 1 [49-102], chapter 4 [195-241].
- Two reviews of Kolchin's *Unfree Labor*—one by an expert on Russian imperial history; the other by an expert on US history.
    - Steven Hoch, review of *Unfree Labor*, *The American Historical Review* 93, no. 5 (1988): 1287-88.
    - Phillip Morgan, review of *Unfree Labor*, *The William and Mary Quarterly* 45, no. 3 (1988): 592-94.

In-class workshop: What is historiography? How do historians engage with others' scholarship? How to develop and sharpen research questions through historiography.

Week 7 (10/16) – Serfdom and Obligation in the Russian Empire

- Steven L. Hoch, "The Peasant Commune," in Daniel Kaiser and Gary Marker, eds., *Reinterpreting Russian History: Readings, 860-1860s* (Oxford University Press, 1994): 297-303.

- Alison K. Smith, "Freed Serfs without Freed People: Manumission in Imperial Russia," *The American Historical Review* 118, no. 4 (2013): 1029-51.
- Ilya Vinkovetsky, "Indigenous Labor and Colonial Insecurities," in *Russian America: An Overseas Colony of a Continental Empire, 1804-1867* (Oxford University Press, 2011): 73-93.
  - "Catherine II's Decree on Deportation of Serfs to Hard Labor, January 17, 1765," in Dmytryshyn: 141.
  - "Newspaper Advertisements for the Sale of Serfs, 1797," in Dmytryshyn: 142.
  - "Secret Instructions from Lieutenant General Ivan V. Iakobii, Governor-General of Siberia, to Agents of Grigorii I. Shelikhov, to Establish Russia's Claim to Newly Discovered Parts of Alaska, June 21, 1787," in Basil Dmytryshyn, ed., *Imperial Russia: A Source Book, 1700-1917*, 3rd ed. (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers, 1990): 151-52.
  - Aleksandr Nikitenko, "St. Petersburg: My Struggle for Freedom," in *Up from Serfdom: My Childhood and Youth in Russia, 1804-1824* (Yale University Press, 2008): 187-201.

In-class workshop: Analyzing different types of primary sources—laws, newspapers, officials' correspondence, memoirs, literature, etc.

Week 8 (10/23) – After Unfree Labor? Forging Transatlantic Connections

<u>*VISIT TO WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY—MEET IN THE LOBBY!***</u>**

- Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (Vintage Books, 2015), chapter 7 [175-98].
- Angela (Andrew) Zimmerman, *Alabama in Africa: Booker T. Washington, the German Empire, and the Globalization of the New South* (2012): introduction [1-20] and chapter 2 [66-111].

In-class workshop: What is an archive? What do they hold and how does all that stuff get there? How do historians use them in conjunction with other sources?

Assignment: For next week, decide on your topic and bring at least one primary source and one secondary source you plan to use for your project. Write a one-paragraph explanation of your proposed topic and the main question you want to answer. You will need these sources for the in-class workshop on writing a project proposal.

Week 9 (10/30) – Indentured and Enslaved Labor Migration to Cuba and France

- Paul J. Bailey, "'An Army of Workers': Chinese Indentured Labour in First World War France," in Santanu Das, ed., *Race, Empire, and First World War Writing* (Cambridge University Press, 2014): 35-52.
- Lisa Yun, *The Coolie Speaks: Chinese Indentured Laborers and African Slaves in Cuba* (Temple University Press, 2008): introduction [xv-xxiii], chapter 1 [1-35], and chapter 2/3 [36-71/72-141].
  - Selected petitions from *The Coolie Speaks*, 243-59.

In-class workshop: How to write a project proposal.

Assignment: Write a project proposal—due November 6th by 10am. For next week you should also bring at least three primary sources and three secondary sources you plan to use for your research papers. You will need them for the in-class workshop on writing an annotated bibliography.

Week 10 (11/6) – Skilled Labor as Unfree Labor

- Jenny Bulstrode, "Black Metallurgists and the Making of the Industrial Revolution," *History and Technology* 39, no. 1 (2023): 1-41.
- Londa Scheibinger, "The Colonial Crucible: The Debate over Slavery," in *Secret Cures of Slaves* (Stanford University Press, 2017), 117-46.
  - Primary sources TBA.

In-class workshop: Writing an annotated bibliography.

Assignment: Write an annotated bibliography—due November 13th by 10am.

Week 11 (11/13) – Disappearing Domestic Labor in the US

- Jeanne Boydston, *Home and Work: Housework, Wages, and the Ideology of Labor in the Early Republic* (Oxford University Press, 1994), introduction [ix-xx], chapters 1 [1-29], 2 [30-55], 7 [142-63].
  - Primary sources TBA.

In-class workshop: Creating roadmaps for your papers and how to begin writing.

Assignment: Create a plan for your papers—due November 20th by 10am. I strongly encourage you to start writing as well.

Week 12 (11/20) – Individual Meetings w/ Prof. Durham (no full-class meeting)

Assignment: Write *at least* three body paragraphs for next week.

Week 13 (11/27) – Revising, Editing, and Giving Feedback

In-class workshop: Revising and editing your own work, and how to give respectful, constructive feedback on others' writing.

Assignment: First drafts due to Prof. Durham and your peer review partners by Friday, December 1 at midnight.

Week 14 (12/4) – Peer Review Meetings (during class)

Week 15 (12/11) – Presentations!

*Your final papers are due on December 13th by midnight.