Department of History
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MADISON

History 201: The Historian's Craft

Slavery and the archival problem: researching and writing impossible histories

EIGHT POUNDS REWARD.

RAN away from the subscriber two Negroes, one named BOB, and the other FERGEE, they are about twenty three years old, small and very black, the fellow's back is very much marked with the whip.—

Any person that will deliver the said negroes to me, or so secure them that I get them again, shall be entitled to the above reward.

December 25th, 1795.

S. Jernegan.

N. B. All masters of vessels are warned from carrying them away; and others from harbouring or employing them at their peril.

Ten Dollars Reward.

RAN AWAY on the 24th of last month, from the plantation of Mrs. Marshall, near Warrenton, a Mulatto Boy named PETER, nineteen or twenty years of age, spare made, would weigh about one hundred and twenty; he is a gambler at heart and will attempt to pass as a free man under some other name.—Whoever will secure him in any Jail so that Mrs. Marshall can get him again shall receive a reward of Ten Dollars, and if delivered to her shall also be paid any reasonable expence.

JOSEPH HAWKINS,
One of the Executors of Charles Marshall, Dec'd.
May 8th, 1810. 20 3w.

TWENTY-FIVE DOLLARS REWARD.

RUN AWAY from the Subscriber, on the 6th of July last, my Negro man

BEN,

Formerly the property of Elizabeth Bonner, dec. He is about 26 years of age, about 6 feet high, stout made, and a very coarse voice. He had on a jacket and trowsers of twilled cotton cloth. I have heard of him being at Swifts-Creek towards Newbern, some time ago. The above reward will be given to any person delivering said negro to me, or 20 dollars for lodging him in any goal so that I may get him again.

All masters of vessels, and others, are forbid employing said negro, or carrying him out of the State, under the penalty of the law. THOMAS TROTTER.

Near Washington, Beaufort County, Dec. 24, 1811

Professor Simon Newman
Room 227, University Club Bldg.,
432 East Campus Mall
spnewman3@wisc.edu

Tuesdays, 8.50-10.45am
5255 Mosse Humanities Building

Course Description:

This class is linked to a project being developed at UW Madison entitled "Freedom Seekers," which will create and publish online hundreds of short essays about enslaved people who challenged their bondage by escaping. Students will develop their research and writing skills by investigating enslaved people who escaped in the 17th, 18th, and early 19th centuries, exploring how historians research individuals, places, contexts, and other sources in order to learn more about enslaved individuals who have left few and sometimes no records of their lives. The main assignment for the class will be to research and write short essays about freedom seekers, and at the end of the class these will be submitted to "Freedom Seekers," and if accepted will be published.

Millions of people were enslaved in the British Atlantic world, including North America, yet most have left no written records and we do not even know their names. Individual enslaved people are among the most invisible of historical subjects. But while it is challenging it can also be very rewarding. We will discuss the challenges in seeking to write life histories of people with so few records, and whose situations and experiences are so different from our own. We can never truly know these people, and we must be very careful in how we write about them.

Credit:

This is a 3 credit course, and it fulfills the Comm-B requirement. 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, reading, writing, problem sets, studio time, labs, field trips, and other student work as described in the syllabus.

Student Learning Outcomes:

The following are adapted from the History Department's goals for History 201 seminars. By taking "Slavery and the archival problem" students will:

- Learn to **ask questions**. This will include thinking about sources (and the lack of sources), and what we can learn from them, and how best to formulate historical questions about people largely absent from most historical sources.
- Learn to **find sources**. Students will learn about the ways to locate and utilize sources from secondary works, and to think imaginative about different kinds of source materials in order to flesh out the lives of people who have left few sources.
- Learn to **evaluate sources**. Students will be trained in distinguishing between secondary and primary sources, and then in assessing the utility of sources, including the perspectives and agendas of those who created surviving sources.
- Learn to **develop and present arguments**. Students will learn about the development of historical writing, with clear thesis statements, identifying the sources needed to support argument and analysis.
- Learn to **plan further research**. Students will draw upon their own research, collaborative group work, and feedback from the instructor, developing further research plans in order to develop and complete their own short essay.
- Learn to **communicate findings effectively**. Students will begin with very short pieces of written work, moving up to short essays written in formal academic style with footnotes. They will also discuss and present their work in small groups and in the class as a whole.
- Gain a nuanced understanding of the difficulties involved in researching and writing the histories of enslaved people.

Substantive interaction:

This class will feature substantive interaction, engaging students in teaching, learning, and assessment, including: direct instruction; feedback on coursework; facilitation of group discussions; feedback on group presentations.

Format:

The course will meet on Tuesdays from 8.50 to 10.45 in Room 5255, Mosse Humanities Building. Attendance is required. Since we have only one meeting each week, missing a seminar session is equivalent to missing an entire week of the class. Seminar will provide me with my main opportunity to engage in regular and substantive interaction with you; in seminar I will give you direct instruction, provide information about course content, and facilitate discussion of the material under consideration.

Email communication and office hours:

I can be reached by email at spnewman3@wisc.edu Please note that I will respond to email messages as quickly as possible during working hours, but I may not respond as quickly in the evenings or at weekends. My office is in Room 227 of the University Club building (803 State Street/432 E. Campus Mall, the brick building adjacent to Mosse Humanities Building and the Conrad Elvehjem Building). I can meet with you

(in person, or virtually) by appointment, or during my online office hours, 9-10am on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Access the office hours on zoom at https://uwmadison.zoom.us/j/95472796288?pwd=M1BZcVhoQVVaRytMNEdVeTc4K05DZz09 (pas scode 527383).

Reading:

Your reading assignments will consist of secondary and primary sources. (Primary sources and documents such as letters, memoirs, newspapers etc. that were written during the years we are studying, and secondary sources are documents written by historians who have made use of primary sources). The primary sources are often quite short, but you are expected to read theser carefully, and sometimes you will be required to provide written or spoken responses to these sources, either before or during class.

Computer policy:

Cell phones should be silenced during class, and I ask that you do not look at them during our meetings. Computers may be used, but only to take notes and to access primary sources that we are discussing. (If you are a McBurney student who needs accommodation, please speak with me).

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:

UW-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Developing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. If you need accommodations, please let me know by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. I will work either directly with you or in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

The History Lab:

The History Lab is the Department of History's in-house writing center. Our graduate student staff offer expert, one-on-one advising on your History/History of Science projects, both in-person and virtually. No matter your stage in the writing process—choosing a topic, conducting research, composing a thesis, outlining your argument, or revising your drafts—the History Lab staff will help you sharpen your skills and become a more successful writer. Visit our website for instructions on how to schedule an appointment with a Lab TA, or to find tips, guides, and other resources for all of your History/History of Science assignment needs.

Academic Integrity:

By virtue of enrollment, each student agrees to uphold the high academic standards of the University of Wisconsin-Madison; academic misconduct is behavior that negatively impacts the integrity of the institution. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these previously listed acts are examples of misconduct which may result in disciplinary action. Examples of disciplinary sanctions include, but are not limited to, failure on the assignment/course, written reprimand, disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion.

Academic calendar and religious observances:

Establishment of the academic calendar for the University of Wisconsin-Madison falls within the authority of the faculty as set forth in Faculty Policies and Procedures. Construction of the academic calendar is subject to various rules and laws prescribed by the Board of Regents, the Faculty Senate, State of

Wisconsin and the federal government. For additional dates and deadlines for students, see the Office of the Registrar's pages. Students are responsible for notifying instructors within the first two weeks of classes about any need for flexibility due to religious observances.

Course evaluations:

Students will be provided with an opportunity to evaluate their enrolled courses and their learning experience. Most departments use AEFIS a digital course evaluation survey tool. In most instances, students receive an official email two weeks prior to the end of the semester, notifying them that anonymous course evaluations are available. Student participation is an integral component of course development, and confidential feedback is important. UW-Madison strongly encourages student participation in course evaluations.

Diversity and Inclusion:

Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals. The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world.

Mental health and well-being:

Students often experience stressors that can impact both their academic experience and personal well-being. These may include mental health concerns, substance misuse, sexual or relationship violence, family circumstances, campus climate, financial matters, among others.

Students are encouraged to learn about and utilize UW-Madison's mental health services and/or other resources as needed. Visit uhs.wisc.edu or call University Health Services at (608) 265-5600 to learn more.

"Trigger Warning":

The content of this course will include topics that may be difficult for some people to confront or discuss. I will flag especially difficult content proactively and will do my best to make this classroom a space where we can engage bravely, empathetically and thoughtfully with difficult content every week.

Assessment

Evaluation

In this seminar we will use "un-grading." What does that mean? Over the course of the semester we will not have grades on individual assignments, and instead the class will foster an ongoing process of student self-assessment (in dialogue with me). I will regularly provide you with detailed feedback on your work, both in writing and in meetings.

In this small seminar learning goals are more qualitative than quantitative. We will be working together on a focused subject and approach allows for a great deal more constructive engagement between class members, as well as one-on-one interaction and qualitative feedback.

It is impossible to completely eliminate grades, of course: we are in an educational system that requires them. You will receive a final grade for the course, but my hope is that you will assign that grade yourself, with my support. I still maintain final authority over grades, and can overturn your self-assigned grade if I believe the grade you assign to yourself is not consistent with the work you have done in class. But based on my own and other teachers' experiences, I don't expect this to be an issue.

I am confident that if you put in the time and work you will be able to achieve the grade you wish to attain. Within the UW Madison scheme, this is how I define grades:

- **A**: the student has mastered the material, completed all assignments and has gone above and beyond the course requirements. The student has done exceptional, original work. The student has had a positive impact on the class as a whole, enhancing the learning of other students.
- **AB**: the student has mastered the material, has completed all assignments and has met all learning goals. The student has been actively engaged in the course, and has had a positive impact on the course as a whole.
- **B**: the student has mastered most of the material, has completed all assignments and has met most learning goals. The student has been actively engaged in the course.
- **BC**: the student has understood some of the material, has completed all assignments, has met some learning goals and requirements, but may have some significant weak spots, or may not be as actively engaged.
- **C**: the student has understood some of the material, has completed most assignments, and has met at least two learning goals.
- **D**: the student has understood very little of the material, is missing several assignments and did not meet learning goals or requirements.
- **F**: the student did not meet any requirements or goals of the class.

Assignments:

Citizenship/Class Participation: 40%
Students should attend class every week, unless they are unwell. You are required to read all assigned materials, and then come to class prepared to participate in discussions and group activities. There is no single correct way of participating in class, and good participation is not about how much you talk but about the ways that you contribute to the course as a learning community. Sometimes good participation can be holding back and allowing others to speak and develop ideas. The very best participation involves expressing your own ideas while also encouraging and supporting others to develop and express their own ideas. The Citizenship/Class Participation grade is made up of the following:

- Attendance and class participation: 80 points (20%)
- Discussion posts (two one-page posts): 20 points (5%) each, 40 points (10%) total
- Responses to other students' papers (total of two one page responses): 20 points (5%) each, 40 points (10%) total

Writing assignments: 20%
The writing assignments grade is made up of the following:

- 2 page paper (week 5) 20 points (5%)
- 3 one page papers (week 6) 28 points (7%)
- 3 page paper (week 9) 32 Points (8%)

Final five-page paper: 40%
The final paper assignment awards grades for different drafts, with marks awarded for the integration of new research, and for the amount of work editing and organizing your writing. The final draft should be ready for submission for consideration for publication on the Freedom Seekers website.

- First rough draft (week 10) 20 points (5%)
- Second draft (week 12) 20 points (5%)
- Third draft (week 13) 20 points (5%)

- Final paper (week 14) 100 points (25%)

Writing requirements:

Week 2:	1 page discussion post
Week 3:	1 page discussion post
Week 5:	2 page paper
Week 6:	3 x 1 page papers
	2 x 1 page responses
Week 9:	3 page paper
Week 10:	5 page paper(1st draft)
Week 12:	5 page paper (2nd draft)
	4 x 1 page 'reviews'
Week 13:	5 page paper (3rd draft)
Week 14:	5 page paper (final paper)

ChatGPT and AI:

ChatGPT and other AI programs are now available to help create text. These can be useful tools but they are far from perfect. Often they produce factually inaccurate and flawed material, some of which is effectively plagiarized from other sources. In this class you are welcome to use this software to help you generate first-drafts (or to edit your own writing), but you must then fact-check, edit, and rewrite what in order to ensure that what you submit is accurate and your own work.

Software like this will be part of your daily lives after you leave college. But it will still be essential that you can do different kinds of research, and be able to organize ideas and data, analyze them, and formulate structured arguments. For example, in an interview you will quite likely have to do all of these things, but you won't be able to use ChatGPT or other such software. History is one of the Humanities disciplines that teaches you these skills, and writing is where these skills all come together. The very process of writing develops your ability to analyze, argue, and present. Writing is a process, and we learn to think through problems and develop understanding and analysis as we write. It is an essential part of your education and intellectual development.

So, if you want you may use ChatGPT or other such software to produce first drafts (or to edit your own writing). But you must then edit, revise, and rework, ensuring that it becomes your own work. What you submit must be your work, not the work of ChatGPT or similar programs.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1, Tuesday September 12

Introductions, and explanation of the class.

Introductory Lecture: What is history? How do we research and write "impossible histories"?

Primary sources vs. secondary sources

Week 2, Tuesday September 19: The challenges facing historians: writing about place

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REQUIRED READINGS:

Deborah Harkness, *The Jewel House: Elizabethan London and the Scientific Revolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007). Excerpt from "Prelude. London, 1600, The View From Somewhere," pp. 1-6.

Deborah Harkness, *Shadow of Night* (New York: Penguin, 2012), Book 2 of the All Souls trilogy of novels. Excerpt from Chapter 15, pp. 207-212.

> Prof. Deborah Harkness is a professor of history and the history of science at the University of Southern California. She is also the author of a series of historical novels (notably the All Souls Trilogy, made into a tv series *A Discovery of Witches*). She is an expert on late-16th century England and has written about this place and its people both as a historian and as a novelist. Please read these two very short extracts from her history book (6 pages) and her novel (5 pages) about London in about 1600.

Ona Judge materials (16 pages, including 7 pages of pictures and maps).

ASSIGNMENT:

Come to class ready to discuss the similarities and differences between historical writing and fiction. Think about the challenges facing a historian trying to write about places in the past. The Ona Judge readings will form the basis of an in-class exercise.

Discussion Post

After class write a discussion post based on the Ona Judge readings and our discussion in class. This should be 150-200 words long and is due by 11.59 PM on Thursday September 21.

> *Discussion Prompt: When Ona Judge moved from Virginia to Philadelphia, and then later from Philadelphia to New Hampshire, she was moving between three very different places and societies.*
>
> - *Reflect on the differences between* ***two*** *of these places, and how Ona Judge might have experienced them (e.g. between Virginia and Philadelphia, or between Philadelphia and New Hampshire)*
> - *What might the move from one to another of these places have felt like and meant to Judge as an enslaved Black woman?*

The purpose of this assignment is to think about how the historical characters we write about experienced the places they lived and moved between, and how environment shapes our life experiences.

Read and think about the posts of your classmates.

Week 3, Tuesday September 26: reading the bodies of enslaved people

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REQUIRED READINGS:

Read ONE of the following articles. (Both will be invaluable as you complete your work in this course, so if possible read both). Also, look through some of the large collection of images on the *Slavery Images* website.

Shane White and Graham White, "Slave Hair and African American Cultures in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," *Journal of Southern History*, 61 (1995), 45-76

Shane White and Graham White, "Slave Clothing and African American Culture in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," *Past & Present*, 148 (1995), 149-86.

Look at the large collection of images at *Slavery Images: A Visual Record of the African Slave Trade and Slave Life in the Early African Diaspora*. Think about how these images reveal aspects of the daily lives and experiences of enslaved people in ways that can help us better understand how they experienced their lives.

ASSIGNMENT:

Come to class prepared to discuss these readings. They will form the basis of an in-class exercise.

Discussion Post

After class write a discussion post based on one of the freedom seekers described in the advertisements we used in class (these will be available on Canvas). This should be 150-200 words long and is due by 11.59 PM on Thursday September 28.

> *Discussion Prompt: Write about what the advertisement reveals about the freedom seeker in relation to one or more of the following:*
>
> - *name*
> - *language and communication skills*
> - *kinesics (comportment, gestures)*
> - *clothing*
> - *African marks (if any)*
> - *slavery marks (if any)*
> - *hair style*
> - *characteristics*

Read and think about the posts of your classmates.

Week 4, Tuesday October 3: The Transatlantic Slave Trade, and freedom seeker advertisements

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REQUIRED READINGS:

Saidiya Hartman, "The Dead Book," in *Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2007), 136-153.
TRIGGER WARNING: Hartman writes about the torture of a young enslaved woman aboard a slave ship in 1791, and her attempt to understand something about this person. It is a harrowing account.

ASSIGNMENT:

Come to class prepared to discuss the Hartman readings.

Also, browse through some of the online collections of newspaper advertisements for people who escaped. (Please see the listing of where to find these advertisements). Select **five** *newspaper advertisements for enslaved people who escaped. These can be from the 13 colonies or the early United States, from the Caribbean, or from Britain in the period from the 1600s to about 1815. Take your time and select five that interest you: hopefully you will use one of these as the basis of the final assignment for this class. At this stage this is all about finding advertisements that intrigue you. But remember that more detailed advertisements, with more information, will give you much more to work with. Here are a few things to look for:*

- *Names (the enslaved person who has escaped, the enslaver, and perhaps others)*
- *Detailed description of the freedom seeker's physical appearance (this may include scars from whipping, branding, or other marks, scars, and injuries*
- *Descriptions of the clothing the freedom seeker wore, and what clothing and other items they took with them*
- *Information about the freedom seeker's past life (including where she or he were born or came from), work skills, personal relationships etc.*
- *Information about the freedom seeker's family, friends, and relationships*
- *Information about possible motives for escape*
- *Information about where the freedom seeker might have gone, and why*

Submit these five advertisements (either an image of the actual newspaper advertisement or a transcription) on Canvas by 11.59PM on Sunday October 1, and indicate which one you will focus on in class (this will allow me to put it on screen for everyone to see when you discuss it).

During the second half of class each person will read aloud one of the advertisements they have chosen, and say a little about what interested them about it, and then class members will respond with their own reactions.

For the rest of the semester you will need to regularly spend time researching these advertisements, trying to find information about the individuals and places identified in the text. Some of this will be background research (e.g. if a freedom seeker in 1780 escaped from a Maryland plantation and was believed to be heading for Philadelphia, what can you find out about Maryland plantation life and work, and Philadelphia and Black people in the city in that period?).

SCHEDULE INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS: bring your five advertisements to discuss.

Week 5, Tuesday October 10: The Hemings Children

Please note, I will not be holding regular office hours this week. Please contact me by email if you would like to arrange an online meeting.

REQUIRED READINGS:

Hemings Family source document (15 page document, including images).

ASSIGNMENT:

In preparation for class read the following materials:

- *Hemings-Jefferson family tree*

- *1802 newspaper article by James Callender attacking Thomas Jefferson by focusing on Sally Hemings*
- *Satirical poem by James Callender about Sally Hemings (1802)*
- *Extract from Thomas Jefferson's Farm Book, record of Beverly and Harriet Hemings*
- *Extract from interview with Edmund Bacon, Jefferson's plantation manager*
- *Extract from memoirs of Isaac Jefferson*
- *Madison Hemings, "Life Among the Lowly" (1873)*
- *Images of grave of Thomas Eston Jefferson (Hemings) in Madison, WI*

Before class write approximately two pages of double-spaced text about one of the children of Sally Hemings and Thomas Jefferson, using the above sources. This can focus on any aspect of their life in slavery or freedom. For example:

- *the kind of work they did on the Monticello plantation*
- *their experiences of their father compared with the experiences of his White children and grandchildren*
- *how they became free*
- *their experiences in the free Black community*
- *or the possible reasons for and the nature of their lives passing as white.*

The challenge is to try and read between the lines of the sources, and say something about the people and their lives and experiences. We rarely have their own words, so be prepared to imagine a little, but within limits (we can imagine one of them feeling frightened in certain situations, feeling pride in their family but having mixed feelings about the relationship between their mother and father, etc. etc.). When you write be careful with the language to differentiate between what we know to be true and what you are imagining might be true: for example:
"Thomas Eston was born in 1808, the fifth and last child of Thomas Jefferson and his enslaved mistress Sally Hemings." (This is a fact that we know to be true).
"It is likely that Thomas and his mother Sally occasionally heard from his brother Beverly and his sister Harriet. He may well have learned from them about how different their lives had become because they were no longer on a plantation and were passing as White and free." (We don't know this as a fact, but it is quite possible, so using words and phrases like 'It is likely that' or 'He may well have' show the reader that you can't prove this, but that it seems logical).

Submit this on Canvass by 11.59pm on Friday October 6.

Also, bring one copy of your piece to class, as we will use these during class.

Week 6, Tuesday October 17: researching and writing the (hi)stories of freedom seekers

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Please note, I will not be holding regular office hours this week. Please contact me by email if you would like to arrange an online meeting.

There will be no class meeting this week, but there are class assignments.

ASSIGNMENT:

Download two class PowerPoint lectures ("Week 6, Ppt 1" & ("Week 6, Ppt 2"). You can either listen to the lecture as you view each slide, or read the lecture text by clicking on 'View' in the menu bar of PowerPoint, and selecting 'Notes Page.' Each of these provides a case study of how to research a single freedom seeker newspaper advertisement.

Continue researching the five advertisements. Write about one page of double-spaced text for each of two of the advertisements, and submit these on Canvas by 11.59PM on Friday October 20.

Write a response to ***two*** *of the one-page drafts written by your fellow students (I will assign two to each of you). Read the drafts carefully and think about what might be useful to the author as they continue researching and revising. Saying "This is great!" or "I don't like this" really doesn't help the author. Thoughtful and constructive suggestions can be really helpful. Consider the following as you write your responses:*

- *Are there ways in which the author might make his or her points more clearly?*
- *Does the author make a good case for her or his interpretation of the freedom seeker? Are there aspects that are weak, and not as well argued and supported? Can you think of ways that the author might strengthen or improve this interpretation?*
- *Has the author made good use of research into other sources to support his or her analysis of the freedom seeker? What would you like to know more about, and can you suggest other kinds of research the author might do to bring in more background information?*
- *As you read the advertisement on which the paper is based, are there things that strike you that the author has not yet considered, but which you think are with exploring?*

Each response should be 150-200 words in length. Post your responses on Canvas by 11.59PM on Monday October 23, and then look at the responses to your work.

The Canvas page will include an example of a one-page piece about a freedom seeker, and a critical response to it, designed to give you some guidance in completing this assignment.

Week 7, Tuesday October 24: Darby's journey

REQUIRED READINGS:

Read the excerpt of Chapter 6 of Prof. Gloria Whiting's forthcoming book, and come to class prepared to discuss how Prof. Whiting has reconstructed six-year-old Darby's long walk to freedom through the battlefields surrounding revolutionary Boston.

ASSIGNMENT:

Come to class prepared to ask questions and discuss with Prof. Whiting how she researched Darby's long walk to freedom, and how and why she decided to tell his story in the way that she did.

There are no written assignments for this week, and you should be continuing to research your runaway advertisements. If you would like to discuss these with me, you are welcome to come to my zoom office hours or arrange a meeting.

Week 8, Tuesday October 31: imagining place, sights, and sounds of plantation societies

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REQUIRED READINS:

Read Newman, "Hidden in Plain Sight: escaped slaves in late-18th and early-19th century Jamaica" (June 2018), OI Reader, https://oireader.wm.edu/open_wmq/ (You will need to register with your name and email address, but no financial information or payment is required).
Note: this is a digital article, with film, sound, music etc., so you will need to view this article on a computer or tablet with sound.

ASSIGNMENT:

Read Newman, "Hidden in Plain Sight: escaped slaves in late-18th and early-19th century Jamaica" (June 2018), OI Reader, https://oireader.wm.edu/open_wmq/ (You will need to register with your name and email address, but no financial information or payment is required). Please let me know if this is a problem for you, and I'll try and make alternative arrangements.
Note: this is a digital article, with film, sound, music etc., so you will need to view this article on a computer or tablet with sound.

Come to class prepared to discuss the content of this article, but also different ways of communicating the sights, sounds, and experiences of the past.

Some topics and questions for class discussion:

- *Think about how modern media (film, music, spoken word etc.) can illuminate our understanding of the lives of enslaved people in the past.*
- *Does hearing the words of historical actors read aloud by modern actors change our understanding of sources we would usually read on the page?*

- *What effects do modern photographs and film have? Are they effective in communicating aspects of historical phenomena that were similar yet very different?*
- *What are the disadvantages and dangers of using such media?*
- *The essay focuses on how a White man saw—and didn't see—the enslaved Africans who surrounded and outnumbered him. Can this approach help us to understand the enslaved people who left no words and records of their own, especially those who escaped and then disappeared from view?*
- *How you might develop some alternative content in your own projects on freedom seekers.*

Week 9, Tuesday November 7: finding the enslaved through White eyes

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REQUIRED READINGS:

Read the Thomas Thistlewood document. Thistlewood was as enslaver in Jamaica who kep a very detailed diary (The Thomas Thistlewood diaries are at Yale and have been digitized: you can see these images of the diary at https://archives.yale.edu/repositories/11/resources/1050). The packet contains excerpts from his diary relating to two enslaved people, Lincoln and Phibbah, as well as material from Trevor Burnard's book *Master, Tyranny, and Desire: Thomas Thistlewood and his Slaves in the Anglo-Jamaican World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), pp.2-7, 138-170, 211-213.

TRIGGER WARNING: *Thomas Thistlewood's diary is a very challenging source because Thistlewood was unusually truthful in recounting his relations with enslaved Africans, and he mixes mundane everyday activities with accounts of brutal violence and sexual predation.*

ASSIGNMENT:

Before class choose either Lincoln or Phibbah, and write 3 pages (double-spaced) in which you explore some aspect of their lives and experiences. We know Lincoln and Phibbah only through the diary entries of Thomas Thistlewood: you will need to start with what you have in Thistlewood's words, what you can learn and imagine of Lincoln or Phibbah from the diary entries, of who they were, of why they acted as they did, and of what slavery was like for them.

Submit this work on Canvas by 11.59PM on Sunday November 5, and come to class prepared to discuss the lives of the enslaved in Jamaica.

Week 10, Tuesday November 14: Freedom Seeker 'case studies'

With Prof. Antonio Bly (Peter H. Shattuck Endowed Chair in Colonial American History, California State University, Sacramento) and Prof. Billy G. Smith (Distinguished Professor of Letters & Science Emeritus, Montana State University)

ASSIGNMENT:

Draft a 3-5 page (double-spaced) paper about the freedom seeker in one of the five advertisements you have been researching. Submit this on Canvas (by 11.59PM on Friday November 10), and bring a hard copy to class.

In class we will workshop these with Professors Bly and Smith, who are experts on freedom seekers and members of the UW Madison Freedom Seekers project team.

You should also take the time to review the drafts written by your classmates.

Week 11: Thanksgiving

There will be no class meeting this week because of Thanksgiving. However, you should be working on the research, writing, and editing of your paper on a freedom seeker.

Please note, I will not be holding regular office hours this week. Please contact me by email if you would like to arrange an online meeting.

Week 12, Tuesday November 28: freedom seeker (hi)stories (1)

I will arrange to meet with each of you individually during the week to discuss your essays.

ASSIGNMENT:

I will divide the members of the class into two groups, Group 1 and Group 2.

Each member of Group 1 will submit the current 3-5 page draft of their final essay based on one of their freedom seeker advertisements. These must be submitted on Canvas by 11.59PM on Sunday November 26.

Members of Group 2 should read all of the essays submitted by members of Group 1. Each member of Group 2 will be assigned two of the Group 1 essays, and must prepare a review of the essay, using the guidelines below. This will involve summarizing what the essay does, how it does it, the research in which it is based, and an evaluation of the essay's strengths and weaknesses.

Think about what might be useful to the author as they move towards completing their research, writing, and revision. Consider the following as you write your responses:

- *Are there ways in which the author might make his or her points more clearly?*
- *Does the author make a good case for her or his interpretation of the freedom seeker? Are there aspects that are weak, and not as well argued and supported? Can you think of ways that the author might strengthen or improve this interpretation?*
- *Has the author made good use of research into other sources to support his or her analysis of the freedom seeker? What would you like to know more about, and can you suggest other kinds of research the author might do to bring in more background information?*
- *As you read the advertisement on which the paper is based, are there things that strike you that the author has not yet considered, but which you think are with exploring?*

We will discuss each of the Group 1 essays, with a view to helping authors make them even stronger.

Week 13, Tuesday December 5: freedom seeker (hi)stories (2)

ASSIGNMENT:

Each member of Group 2 will submit the current 3-5 page draft of their final essay based on one of their freedom seeker advertisements. These must be submitted on Canvas by 11.59PM on Sunday December 3.

Members of Group 1 should read all of the essays submitted by members of Group 2. Each member of Group 1 will be assigned two of the Group 2 essays, and must prepare a review of the essay, using the guidelines below. This will involve summarizing what the essay does, how it does it, the research in which it is based, and an evaluation of the essay's strengths and weaknesses.

Think about what might be useful to the author as they move towards completing their research, writing, and revision. Consider the following as you write your responses:

- *Are there ways in which the author might make his or her points more clearly?*
- *Does the author make a good case for her or his interpretation of the freedom seeker? Are there aspects that are weak, and not as well argued and supported? Can you think of ways that the author might strengthen or improve this interpretation?*

- *Has the author made good use of research into other sources to support his or her analysis of the freedom seeker? What would you like to know more about, and can you suggest other kinds of research the author might do to bring in more background information?*
- *As you read the advertisement on which the paper is based, are there things that strike you that the author has not yet considered, but which you think are with exploring?*

We will discuss each of the Group 2 essays, with a view to helping authors make them even stronger.

Week 14, Tuesday December 12: bringing freedom seeker (hi)stories to the screen

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ASSIGNMENT:

Submit your final paper (3-5 pages) on Canvas by 5pm on Friday December 15.

We will watch several tv and movie representations of freedom seekers and discuss these in class. Students will submit final versions of their freedom seeker 'stories.'

You will also complete online course evaluations