

HISTORY 100, FALL 2022
THE RISE AND FALL OF NEW WORLD SLAVERY

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Office Hours: M, W 2:30-4 p.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course serves as an introduction to the study of history by examining slavery in the Americas, with an emphasis on the United States. Rather than a “blip” in an otherwise happy story of progress, slavery informed key aspects of the history of the United States: its rise as a nation rooted in an economic system of capitalism, notions of freedom and equality, and the making of a continental nation from the east to the west coast of North America. The course emphasizes the experiences of the enslaved. Slave traders, slaveholders, and the various laws and institutions that supported slavery will be examined, but mainly to illuminate the lives of enslaved peoples.

As with other iterations of History 100, this course introduces you to the academic discipline of history. It seeks to bring to life the creative processes of consuming and producing history. One of the main goals of the course is to provide you with an opportunity to experience the kind of curiosity about the past that compels people to write history books. Our method in helping you understand history will be in providing you with many opportunities to do the work of an historian. You will learn by doing.

Throughout the course, you will be challenged to discover how historians pose and answer historical questions. By the end of the course, you will have a much better sense of what it means to study the past. And, you will better understand connections between the past and the present.

Most of you will not go on to become historians, but all of you will benefit from a better understanding of how historians go about their work. How will you benefit? You will be introduced to systematic methods of synthesizing a lot of material through reading, listening, writing, speaking, and watching. You will improve your ability to determine the main points of written documents and the thoughts shared by fellow classmates. Finally, you will gain practice at determining what you think of the vast amount of material in the course, and then presenting your thoughts orally and in writing based on evidence. These are skills that will serve you well throughout your college years and beyond.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Read, watch, and/or listen to assigned material each week and *think about the material* before each live discussion.
2. Communicate with Prof. Al about any concerns immediately.
3. Read your email daily to keep up with the latest news about the course, including last minute instructions or class session details.
4. Turn in your assignments by the deadlines, but if you need extensions or other flexible arrangements, do NOT be afraid to ask for them. Prof. Lacson expects you to ask for help, and he is happy to provide it.
5. Consult and follow the rules for Academic Honesty in the Grinnell College Student Handbook and the college catalog. You can see the academic catalog policies on academic honesty here: http://catalog.grinnell.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=2537#Honesty_in_Academic_Work
6. Follow University of Chicago (17th Edition) style citations in footnotes or endnotes for all assignments in this course, unless the assignment directs you explicitly to do something else. You may consult the *Chicago Manual of Style* online through the Grinnell College Library catalog here (you will need to log into the Library through its proxy server): <https://www-chicagomanualofstyle-org.grinnell.idm.oclc.org/book/ed17/frontmatter/toc.html>

ACCOMMODATIONS:

If you have specific physical, psychiatric or learning disabilities and require accommodations, please let me know early in the semester so that your learning needs may be appropriately met. You will need to provide documentation of your disability to John Hirschman, Coordinator of Student Disabilities Resources: hirschma@grinnell.edu or 641-269-3089.

COURSE MATERIAL:

I have assigned three books for the course: John Arnold, *History: A Very Short Introduction*; Andréz Reséndez, *The Other Slavery*; and Clint Smith, *How the Word is Passed*. You will find the rest of the material for the course in the course hub (also referred to as the course website) on PioneerWeb. Most of the material will take the form of reading assignments in PDFs. You will also find links to videos and webpages in the course hub

ASSIGNMENTS:

Weekly Short Assignments: Every Monday, you will submit a one paragraph assignment connected to the week's assigned material. This must be submitted via PioneerWeb by 10 a.m. You must also submit a cover letter for the same assignment by 11:59 p.m. that same Monday.

Class Participation: The success of our class sessions depends heavily on your ability to read *and think about* the class material before each class session. I know that it can be difficult to speak up in class, but I encourage you to try—even if you are only sharing half-baked thoughts. In fact, I welcome quarter-baked thoughts. The goal of our class discussions is not to demonstrate how smart and insightful we are. The goal is to gain a better understanding of the questions at hand. This means that we are exploring together. Our exploration is enhanced when we are willing to respond honestly to one another. VERY IMPORTANT: while I encourage quarter-baked thoughts, I want us to root our comments in the assigned reading. It is very difficult for the rest of the class to respond to your thoughts if they are not based on shared texts.

Annotated Bibliography: Your final assignment for this class will be to write an 8-10 page annotated bibliography on a topic related to our course materials. An annotated bibliography is a focused list of sources, with descriptive or evaluative notes about each source. In this case, you will be putting together a coherent set of primary and secondary sources on the topic that interests you and writing evaluative notes. This is a way to do research on a topic, to pick out the most important, notable, and helpful sources, and to present them to an audience with your evaluation. Your bibliography will essentially serve as a research guide to someone interested in your topic.

GRADING:

Weekly Short Assignments	30%
Class Participation	10%
Cover letters	20%
Annotated Bibliography	40%

Monday, August 29:

Read:

1. John Arnold, *History: A Very Short Introduction*, Ch. 1
2. Excerpts from the William Byrd diary (Documents)

Submit one paragraph response on PWeb:

In one paragraph, explain what you find most “strange” about the world of slavery that Byrd inhabited. Review John Arnold’s discussion of history as a “foreign country” on pages 6-8 of *History: A Very Short Introduction* for ideas on how to frame your paragraph.

Wednesday, Aug. 31:

Read:

1. Arnold, *History*, Ch. 2

2. Andrés Reséndez, *The Other Slavery*, Introduction

Be prepared to discuss the following questions in class:

1. What does the purpose of *The Other Slavery* say about our present. (Arnold's chapter will help you understand what this means.)
2. According to Arnold, "history is to society what memory is to the individual" (p. 33). According to Reséndez, what are the consequences of forgetting about the "other slavery"? To answer this, you must have a clear sense of what Reséndez means by the "other slavery." Also, you must know what Arnold means when he says that "history is to society what memory is to the individual." What does memory do for us, as individuals?

Friday, Sept. 2:

Read:

1. Arnold, *History*, Ch. 3
2. Nikole Hannah-Jones, "Origins" (Documents & hard copy handed out on first day)

Be prepared to discuss the following question in class: According to Arnold, religious conflict was the driving motivation for writing history in previous centuries. Based on your analysis of Hannah-Jones' essay, "Origins," what do you think animated her interest in writing about the history of slavery in the United States? How is her motivation different from and similar to the motivation for writing history in the past?

How do historians make visible the experiences of the invisible?

Mon., Sept. 5

Read: Arnold, *History*, Ch. 4

Watch: "A Midwife's Tale"

How to view:

1. Go to the Burling Library website.
2. Click on "Databases A-Z"
3. Click "F"
4. Click "Films on Demand: Master Academic Collection"
5. Do a search for "A Midwife's Tale"
6. Watch the entire documentary (length: 1:29:57)

Submit Assignment #2 by 10 a.m.: One paragraph (double-spaced) in which you explain how Laurel Ulrich was able to tell the story of someone whose experiences have largely been invisible to previous scholars.

Submit by 11:59 p.m.: cover letter for Assignment #2.

What role did African societies play in the trans-Atlantic slave trade?

Fri., Sept. 9

Read:

1. Arnold, *History*, Ch. 5
2. Walter Rodney, "African Societies Were Transformed by the Slave Trade" (Documents)

Mon., Sept. 12

Read:

1. John Thornton, "African Societies Voluntarily Participated" (Documents)

Wed., Sept. 14

Read: Job Ben Solomon documents. (Documents)

Class prep: Read and analyze the Job Ben Solomon documents. How do his documents either confirm or challenge the arguments put forth by Rodney and Thornton about African participation in the trans-Atlantic slave trade?

Fri., Sept. 16

1. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., "Ending the Slavery Blame Game," April 20, 2010, *New York Times* (Documents)
2. Letters in Response to Gates (Documents)

Written Assignment #3: Choose what you see as the most important issue brought up by Gates in his opinion piece and write a one paragraph response letter to the editor of the New York Times based on your analysis of the Rodney and Thornton articles.

Wed., Sept. 21

Reading:

1. Michael Gomez, *Exchanging Our Country Marks: The Transformation of African Identities in the Antebellum South*, Ch. 3, Talking Half African: Middle Passage, Seasoning, and Language (Documents)
2. North Carolina Runaway Slave Advertisements, 1750-1865. Click on "browse ads" and read at least a dozen. <https://dlas.uncg.edu/notices/>

Mon., Sept. 26

Watch: "Ethnic Notions"

You can find it by doing a title search on the Burling Library digital catalog. You should also be able to get to the video by clicking on this

link: https://grinnell.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01GCL_INST/1g018f9/alma991011237405804641

Wed., Sept. 28

Read: Andrés Reséndez, *The Other Slavery*, Ch. 1

Fri., Sept. 30

Read Andrés Reséndez, *The Other Slavery*, Ch. 2

Mon., Oct. 3

Read: Ira Berlin, *Time, Space, and the Evolution of Afro-American Society* (Documents)

Wed., Oct. 5

Read: Berlin, *Time, Space, and the Evolution of Afro-American Society* (II)

Fri., Oct. 7

No class.

Mon., Oct. 10

Read: Walter Johnson, *Soul by Soul*, Chapter 1 (Documents)

Assignment due: Johnson argues that the "chattel principle" explains much about the experiences of enslaved people. In one double-spaced paragraph, make an argument for what you consider to be the most important implication of the chattel principle for the daily lives of the enslaved.

Wed., Oct. 12

Read: Walter Johnson, *Soul by Soul*, Chapter 3 (Documents)

Mon., Oct. 24

No class

Wed., Oct. 26

Read: Nash Ch. 3, Primary Documents (Documents)

Fri., Oct. 28

Read: David Lester, Marcus Rediker, and Paul Buhle, *Prophet Against Slavery Benjamin Lay: A Graphic Novel*

Mon., Oct. 31

Read: Resendez, *The Other Slavery*, Ch. 6

Wed., Nov. 2

Read: Resendez, *The Other Slavery*, Ch. 7

Fri., Nov. 4

No Class

Mon., Nov. 7

Read: Resendez, *The Other Slavery*, Ch. 10

Wed., Nov. 9

Read: Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, Title Page-p. 48. Read on Google Books:

https://www.google.com/books/edition/Incidents_in_the_Life_of_a_Slave_Girl/1RwEAAAAYA_AJ?hl=en&gbpv=0

Fri., Nov. 11

Read: Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, p. 49-104

Mon., Nov. 14

No reading.

In-class writing assignment on annotated bibliography

Wed., Nov. 16

Read: Wendy Anne Warren, "'The Cause of Her Grief': The Rape of a Slave in Early New England"

Fri., Nov. 18

Read Clint Smith, *How the Word is Passed: A Reckoning with the History of Slavery Across America*, Title page-page 51.