

History 300: Slavery and Abolition, Then and Now
Fall 2012
Tu/Th, 2:30-3:45
Mundelein Rm 403

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I. Introduction

The course will introduce students to the long duree of global slavery as a means to convey slavery's ubiquity across time and space. Slavery has been part of the human condition since the advent of recorded history and has been practiced in various forms by all the peoples of the world. Starting with ancient and classical history and moving all the way into the present, students will confront how societies determined who could and would be enslaved. In the process, they will learn how this process dialectically generated concepts of liberty that evolved in tandem with the development of the world's slave societies. Ultimately, approaching our subject in this fashion will equip students to grapple with the difficulty of arriving at a historical, trans-cultural definition of slavery. Perhaps counter to conventional expectations, defining slavery thus helps us move beyond rhetorical constructions of freedom to inquire into liberty's true substance and nature, in historical and existential terms.

Drawing on our readings from David Brion Davis, Marcus Rediker, and other scholars as well as from research into primary documents, the first two thirds of the course examine slavery in the ancient and medieval world, but will be devoted mainly to the rise and maturation of slavery and slave trading in the early modern Atlantic world (ca. 1500-1865). We will study the rise of the plantation complex in the Portuguese and Spanish empires and the trans-Atlantic trade in enslaved Africans that expanded out of the slave-trafficking network of the medieval Mediterranean Basin. From here we will devote our concentration to slavery and slave-trading in the British Empire and the United States, a system rooted in the commerce and ownership of temporarily enslaved people from Britain and Ireland. By the 18th Century, however, the British and later, their American cousins in the United States, turned toward the racialized version of perpetual slavery first developed on the sugar plantations of the Canary Islands and Brazil two centuries earlier. We will contextualize this study within two world-changing historical processes, the rise of modern nation states through the process of empire building and the transition from the moral economy of the middle ages to the political economy of global capitalism as it existed during the early modern period.

In the process, we learn how two notions of freedom, as expressed in the language of liberty and political constitutions of Great Britain and the United States evolved in reciprocal fashion with the commodification and terroristic brutalization of human beings

from around the Atlantic world, most especially Africa. Committing to an in-depth study of the British and American trade in enslaved Africans will also help students understand how this traffic in human beings laid the foundation for the commercial networks that gave rise to the modern global economy.

The second third of the course concludes with an examination of the stunning and inspiring rise of successful abolitionist movements in Great Britain and the United States. Stunning because within 80 years since the inception of their mass movement, abolitionists' in the U.K. and the U.S. ended a practice within their respective dominions that had existed since the dawn of human history; inspiring because no other political movement in world history had ever been based so clearly and concretely on a single human right; indeed, as we will discover, the abolitionists did much to invent the modern concept of human rights, an ideological tool indispensable to all of our social justice movements in the present.

The last third of the class, based on our readings from Kevin Bales, will chart the resurgence of post-abolition slavery. Part of this study involves comparing and contrasting modern slavery with both the temporary and permanent forms of non-slavery in the early modern British Atlantic. Particular attention will be given to the relationship between race and slavery. We explore slavery in our world today both as a violation of human rights and a problem deeply embedded in the dominant structures and organizing principles of global capitalism. Additionally, after familiarizing ourselves with how abolitionists proceed with their work today, we will discuss and debate the current state of abolition to think about how more successful strategies may be devised.

Ultimately the course strives to advance the Jesuit mission in higher education by uniting scholarship with the pursuit of social justice. More specifically, as the semester unfolds, students who have become scholars of slavery and abolition will become abolitionists themselves, working against the resurgence of slavery in our global economy. Students will thus learn as well as live a critical lesson: that the learning experience should yield something more than the skills necessary to maximize a person's self-interest. Integrating service into scholarship will instead help students grow as citizens (and thus as human beings), moving beyond the self to work for the common good. In this way, the wisdom students distill from their work as scholars can translate directly into their work as citizens of the world, directly engaged in the struggle to promote what the global community recognized as the first human right, freedom from slavery.

II. Course Readings

Kevin Bales, *Slavery Today* (New York: Groundworks Press, 2008)

Kevin Bales, *Ending Slavery: How We free Today's Slaves* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008)

Ira Berlin, "Masters of their Universe," *The Nation* (November 29, 2004)

Trevor Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny, and Desire: Thomas Thistlewood and his Slaves in the Anglo-American World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004)

David Brion Davis, *The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World* (Oxford University Press, 2007)

John Donoghue, "Child Slavery and the Global Economy: Historical Perspectives on a Contemporary Problem," in James Garbarino, ed., *Children and the Right to a Healthy Environment* (New York: Springer Press, 2008)

John Donoghue, "'Out of the Land of Bondage': The English Revolution and the Origins of Abolition," *The American Historical Review* vol. 115, no. 3 (2010), 943-974

Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass: An American Slave, Written by Himself*, ed., David Blight for the Bedford Series in History & Culture [Paperback] (New York: Bedford St. Martin's 2002)

Douglas R. Egerton, "Gabriel's Conspiracy and the Election of 1800," *The Journal of Southern History*, Vol. 56, No. 2 (May, 1990), pp. 191-214.

Marcus Rediker, *The Slave Ship: A Human History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2007)

III. Course Plan

A. Historical Survey of Global Slavery and Abolition

Week 1

Tuesday August 28: course introduction

Lecture topics: Amistad, Ancient and Classical slavery; pre-Columbian Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas; medieval and early modern Mediterranean-basin slave trade; Barbary pirates; West-East relations (Christianity-Islam)

Thursday August 30:

Reading due: Davis, Chapters 3 and 4

Lecture topics: origins of racism; enslavement of Native Americans /enslavement of Africans, Brazil, and the development of the plantation complex

Week 2

Tuesday September 4 [no class]

Reading due: Davis Chapter 5

Thursday September 6

[in-class quiz on Davis, Chapters 3, 4, and 5]

Week 3

Tuesday September 11

Reading due: John Donoghue, “‘Out of the Land of Bondage’: The English Revolution and the Origins of Abolition”

Lecture topics: Capitalism, kidnapping, convict transportation and bond slavery

Thursday September 13

Reading due: Davis, Chapter 6; Rediker Chapter 1

Lecture topics: Capitalism and the shift to racialized slavery in the English Empire and the early American Republic, 1620-1789

Week 4

Tuesday September 18

Reading due: Rediker, Chapters 2, 3, and 7

Lecture topics: the trans-Atlantic Slave trade: Spain, Portugal, France, Netherlands

Thursday September 20

Reading due: Rediker, Chapters 4 and 5

Lecture topics: the trans-Atlantic slave trade: Great Britain

Week 5

Tuesday September 25

Reading due: Berlin, "Masters of the Universe; Rediker, Chapters 8 and 9

Lecture topics: the trans-Atlantic Slave Trade: Great Britain

Thursday September 27

Burnard, Chapters 5, 6, 7

Lecture topic: master-slave relations, slave rebellions

Week 6

Tuesday October 2

Reading due: Davis, Chapter 7; Rediker, Chapter 9

Lecture topics: antislavery, early abolition, and the Age of the Atlantic Revolutions

Thursday October 4

Reading due: Davis Chapter 8 and 11; Egerton, "Gabriel's Conspiracy and the Election of 1800,"

Lecture topics: The Haitian Revolution and its Impact

Week 7

Tuesday October 9

Fall Break [no class]

Thursday October 11

Reading due: Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass;

Lecture topic: Slavery in the Antebellum U.S.

Week 8

Tuesday October 16

MID-TERM EXAM (100 points)

Thursday October 18

Reading due: Davis Chapters 9

Lecture topic: Slavery in the Antebellum U.S.

Week 9

Tuesday October 23

Reading due: Davis, Chapter 10

Lecture topic: British Abolitionism

Thursday October 25

Reading due: Davis, Chapter 11

Lecture topic: American abolition

Week 10

Tuesday October 30

Reading due: Davis Chapter 12

Lecture topic: American abolition

Thursday November 1

Reading due: TBA, but will consist of original abolitionist source material from David Walker, Martin Delaney, Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, and Harriet Beecher Stow

Lecture topic: American abolition

B. Global Capitalism, Slavery after Abolition, and the Modern Abolition Movement (1885-Present)

Week 11

Tuesday November 6

Reading due: James Stewart's essay on slavery in America after abolition

Lecture topics: "slavery by another name," black codes, convict-lease system, debt peonage, capitalism and free and unfree labor, unfree labor in the industrial empires of the late 19th/early 20th C.; the industrial prison complex in 2012 America

Thursday November 8

Reading due: Donoghue, "Child Slavery and the Global Economy"; Bales, *Slavery Today*, Chapters 1 and 3

Lecture topics: post-Cold War global capitalism and modern slavery

Week 12

Tuesday November 13

Reading due: Bales, *Slavery Today*, Chapters 5

Lecture topics: post-Cold War global capitalism and modern slavery

Thursday November 15

Reading due: Bales, *Slavery Today*, Chapter 6; Bales, *Ending Slavery*, Chapters 1 and 2

Lecture topics: post-Cold War global capitalism, modern slavery, and re-inventing the abolitionist movement

Week 13

Tuesday November 20

Term Paper Due (100 points)

Thursday November 22

Thanksgiving

Week 14

Tuesday November 27

Reading due: Bales, *Ending Slavery*, Chapters 3 and 4

Lecture topic: re-inventing the abolitionist movement

Thursday November 29

Reading due: Bales, *Ending Slavery*, Chapters 5 and 6

Lecture topic: re-inventing the abolitionist movement

Week 15

Tuesday December 4

Reading due: Bales, *Ending Slavery*, Chapter 7

Thursday December 6

Reading due: Bales, *Ending Slavery*, Chapter 8

Week 15

Tuesday December 11

FINAL EXAM [9-11am]

IV. Evaluation

- mid-term (essay exam; 100 points; week 6)
- final exam (objective test; 100 points)
- readings or research paper (100 points)**
- class participation (100 points)
 - attendance (maximum of 2 absences)
 - weekly log of service
 - contributions to class content discussion
 - contributions to class reflection discussions

VI. Plagiarism

Any student caught plagiarizing or cheating on any evaluation will automatically fail the course. The following "Statement on Plagiarism" was developed by Profs. Barbara Rosenwein and Timothy Gilfoyle, who are members of the Loyola Department of History. You will be held accountable to the standards regarding plagiarism that they have outlined below.

STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM

"Plagiarism and/or academic dishonesty will result in a final grade of F for the examination or assignment as well a letter, detailing the event, to be placed in the offending student's permanent file in the Dean's office. The definition of plagiarism is:

You plagiarize when, intentionally or not, you use someone else's words or ideas but fail to credit that person. You plagiarize even when you do credit the author but use his [or her] exact words without so indicating with quotation marks or block indentation. You also plagiarize when you use words so close to those in your source, that if your work were placed next to the source, it would be obvious that you could not have written what you did with the sources at your elbow.

-Wayne Booth, Gregory C. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams, The Craft of Research (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), p. 167.

To avoid plagiarism, take notes carefully, putting all real quotes within quotation marks, while summarizing other parts in your own language. This is difficult; if you do not do it correctly, it is better to have all your notes in quotes. The worst thing is to alter a few words from the source, use no quotation marks, and treat the notes as a genuine summary. You will likely copy it out as written in your notes, and thus inadvertently commit plagiarism. Changing around a word, a phrase, or a clause is still plagiarism if it follows the thought sequence or pattern in the original. On the other hand, do not avoid plagiarism by making your paper a string of quotations. This results in poor writing, although it is not criminal.

In any case, do not let this prevent you from quoting your primary sources. As they are the “evidence” on which you build your argument, you will need to quote them at necessary points. Just be sure to put quotation marks around them, or double indent them as in the example above, and follow the quote with a proper foot or endnote.

A final note: The Internet can be a convenient tool for research, but many websites contain unreliable or plagiarized information. **Never** cut and paste from Internet sites without quoting and citing your sources. The university has developed a helpful website. See:

<http://www.luc.edu/is/cease/ai.shtml>

VI. Service

All students will be required to join a committee to plan the symposium. Additionally, all students must engage in at least one of the service activities listed below. They may, of course, engage in multiple activities if they so choose. Students should plan on spending approximately two hours a week on service-related activities; the student will turn in a log of their weekly hours of service at the end of the semester.

- A. NGO work
- B. Linking with LUC partners
- C. Linking with Chicago’s abolitionist network
- D. Raising awareness on campus
- E. Raising awareness in the community
- F. Benefit concert and additional fund-raising
- G. Grant writing
- H. Organizing the symposium