

History 502
Topics in African American History
Professor Schweninger

Examining America's great paradox--slavery in a land of liberty--the aim of this course is to discuss important issues involving race and slavery in American history. Beginning with West Africa and the Atlantic Slave Trade, we will consider slavery during the colonial and national periods, emphasizing the years between the American Revolution and the Civil War. We will ask, among other questions, how and why the "peculiar institution" began and endured for more than two centuries.

The required reading will come from three books: Donald Wright, African Americans in the Colonial Era (Wheeling, Illinois: Harlan Davidson Publishers, 2000); John Hope Franklin and Loren Schweninger, In Search of the Promised Land: A Slave Family in the Old South (New York: Oxford University press, 2006) [hereafter ISPL]; and John Hope Franklin and Alfred A. Moss, Jr. From Slavery to Freedom: A History of African Americans, eighth edition (New York: McGraw Will, 2000) [hereafter FSTF]. The schedule of assignments is listed below.

In addition to the required reading, graduate students should read and be prepared to discuss each week two scholarly essays, articles, or book chapters relating to the week=s assignment. Undergraduate students should read and be prepared to discuss one scholarly essay, article, or book chapter relating to the week=s assignment. This selected reading should be of your choice. Many articles can be found on line through Jackson Library=s AJournal Finder@; others can be found in books and periodicals in Jackson Library. At each class session, students should be prepared to summarize briefly the arguments advanced in their outside reading.

Graduate students are required to write a fifteen-page paper and undergraduates a five-age paper examining some aspect of race and slavery in America. The papers are due December 8, 2009, and should include a bibliography. Appended to the papers should be a second bibliography of the selected essays, articles, or book chapters that you read during the semester, along with the title of the general subject for the week as listed on the Schedule of Assignments.

There will be a mid-term and a final examination. Both will include objective and essay questions. At least one question on the final exam will be comprehensive.

Attendance is required. Missing more than one class could result in the lowering of your final grade. One third of the final grade will be your outside reading and your paper, one third on your midterm, one third on your final.

My office is 2105 in the MHRA Building and my hours are Mondays 4:30-6:30, or by appointment.

Schedule of Assignments

- First Week: August 24 Housekeeping matters
Lecture: Historians and African-American History
- Second Week: August 31
Lecture: West Africa
Reading Assignment: Chapter 1 AACE; Chapter 2, FSTF
- Third Week: September 14
Lecture: The Atlantic Slave Trade
Reading Assignment: Chapter 2 AACE; Chapter 3, FSTF
- Fourth Week: September 21
Lecture: Colonial America
Reading Assignment: Chapters 3 AACE; Chapter 4, FSTF
- Fifth Week: September 28
Lecture: Revolutionary America
Reading Assignment: Chapter 4 AACE; Chapter 5, FSTF
- Sixth Week: October 5
Lecture: Blacks in the New Republic
Reading Assignment: Chapter 6, FSTF
- Seventh Week: October 19 mid-term examination
- Eighth Week: October 26
Lecture: The Great Uprooting
Reading Assignment: Prologue, Chapter 1 ISPL; Chapter 7, FSTF
- Ninth Week: November 2
Lecture: The South=s Peculiar Institution
Reading Assignment: Chapter 2, ISPL; Chapter 8, FSTF
- Tenth Week: November 9
Lecture: Slaves= Reaction to Bondage
Reading Assignment: Chapters 3, 4, ISPL
- Eleventh Week: November 16
Lecture: Free Blacks: North and South
Reading Assignment: Chapter 5, ISPL; Chapter 9, FSTF
- Twelfth Week: November 23
Lecture: Pan Africans and Colonization
Reading Assignment: Chapter 10, FSTF, Chapter 6, ISPL
- Thirteenth Week: November 30
Lecture: The Sectional Conflict; Freedom!
Reading Assignment: Chapter 11, FSTF; Epilogue, Afterword, About the Sources, Appendixes, ISPL
- Fourteenth Week: December 7 final examination (papers and bibliographies due)