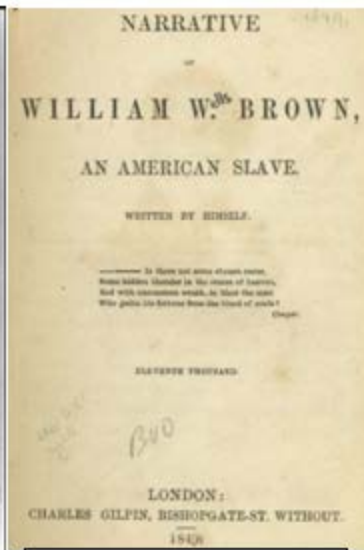




Sheet Music, Library of Congress  
<https://www.loc.gov/resource/cph.1a.1046b/>



Slave Narrative, Documenting the American South  
<http://docsouth.unc.edu/tpn/brown/w/brown.html>



Photographic Portrait, Library of Congress  
<https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/cph.3a.10453/>

## Runaway Slaves and Digital History

### COURSE GUIDE\*

HIS 511A.WI/SI

Spring 2018

Prof. L. Tolbert

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Email: [lctolber@uncg.edu](mailto:lctolber@uncg.edu) (this is the quickest way to reach me)

Hours: by appointment

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History Department Website: <https://his.uncg.edu/>

*\*Note that this syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. Any necessary changes in the syllabus or course schedule will prioritize effectiveness for student learning.*

## Scope and Purpose of the Course

This course will take advantage of special events in the spring. We are excited to have Pulitzer Prize winning author, Colson Whitehead, and the founding Director of the National Museum of African American History and Culture, Lonnie Bunch, coming to campus. To coordinate with these events students in this 511 section will be researching the history of runaway slaves using resources in our Digital Library of North Carolina Runaway Slave Ads. Students will read Whitehead's book, *The Underground Railroad* and work on a digital exhibit on the history of runaway slave experience in North Carolina. We will explore the impact of digitization on historical research and interpretation.

## Course Learning Objectives

By the end of the semester students should be able to:

1. Inquiry and Creativity: Think creatively about different kinds of research questions inspired by primary source documents.

2. Courage and Historical Thinking: Ask interesting questions whose answers you don't know and recognize the kinds of questions that can be addressed by historical research.
3. Analysis: Contextualize primary source documents in different ways; interpret different types of primary sources.
4. Research: Identify and evaluate appropriate scholarship and primary sources for investigating different kinds of research questions. Use research results to improve your questions.
5. Synthesis and communication: Present research findings in a digital format that offers audiences a clear understanding of the complexity of the topic.
6. Recognize how writing is integral to the research process.
7. Professional Ethics: Practice history with integrity based on the American Historical Association Standards of Professional Conduct: <http://www.historians.org/pubs/Free/ProfessionalStandards.cfm>
8. Critical Thinking: Use peer review, instructor feedback, self-analysis, and research findings to effectively revise research design and written communication.
9. Collaboration: Work effectively in collaborative teams to improve research design and communication of research findings at different stages in the research process.

## Writing and the Historical Research Process

It is appropriate that you will be earning writing intensive credit for this course. Not because of the sheer volume of writing you will be doing. But because writing is so integral to the research and discovery process in the discipline of history. From the skills of effective note-taking and accurate transcription in the initial data collection process, to the first stages of analysis when you begin to identify patterns in what your evidence shows, to the ultimate interpretation of what the evidence means, different kinds of writing are essential for every stage of the research process. You will practice all of these forms of writing as your research develops. Along the way you will be learning to engage in peer review of writing as an important tool for sharpening your thinking about what your evidence means. You will practice writing for different audiences in presenting your research findings online and in a final scholarly research report.

## Required Readings

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### ***Style Guide:***

Rampolla, Mary Lynn. *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 2007. This will serve as our writing and citation standard.

### ***Historical Fiction:***

Whitehead, Colson. *The Underground Railroad*. NY: Doubleday, 2016.

### ***Primary Sources:***

Jacobs, Harriet A. *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl: Written By Herself*. <http://docsouth.unc.edu/fpn/jacobs/jacobs.html>

### ***Digital History and Public History:***

Bunch, Lonnie. "Embracing Ambiguity: The Challenge of Interpreting African American History in Museums." *Museums & Social Issues*, 2:1 (2007): 45-56.

Cohen, Daniel J. and Roy Rosenzweig, *Digital History: A Guide to Gathering, Preserving, and Presenting the Past on the Web*, <http://chnm.gmu.edu/digitalhistory/>

Horton, James Oliver & Lois E. Horton, eds. *Slavery and Public History: The Tough Stuff of American Memory*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009. Originally published by NY: The New Press, 2006.

Rosenzweig, Roy. "Scarcity or Abundance? Preserving the Past in a Digital Era" originally published in *American Historical Review* Vol.108, No. 3 (June 2003): 735-562. <http://chnm.gmu.edu/essays-on-history-new-media/essays/?essayid=6>

Seefeldt, Douglas and William G. Thomas. "What Is Digital History? A Look at Some Exemplar Projects." *Perspectives on History* (May 2009): <http://www.historians.org/perspectives/issues/2009/0905/0905for8.cfm>.

Sandweiss, Martha A. "Artifacts as Pixels, Pixels as Artifacts: Working with Photographs in the Digital Age." *Perspectives on History* (November 2013): 7 pp. <https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/november-2013/material-culture-in-the-digital-frame/artifacts-as-pixels-pixels-as-artifacts>

Smith, Carl, "Can You Do Serious History on the Web?" This article was originally published in *AHA Perspectives* (February 1998) <http://chnm.gmu.edu/resources/essays/serioushistory.php>

### ***Historical Context:***

Blackwood, Sarah. "Fugitive Obscura: Runaway Slave Portraiture and Early Photographic Technology." *American Literature*. Vol. 81, No. 1 (March 2009): 93-125.

Camp, Stephanie. *Closer To Freedom*.

Franklin, John Hope and Loren Schweninger. "Profile of a Runaway." In *Runaway Slaves: Rebels on the Plantation*, pp. 209-233. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Nathans, Sydney. *To Free a Family*.

**Recommended Reading:** If you need to brush up on the research skills you learned in either HIS 391 or HIS 430, I highly recommend:

Presnell, Jenny L. *The Information-Literate Historian: A Guide to Research for History Students*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.

## Evaluation

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Research Development Assignments	30%
Final Research Report	30%
Team Project: Digital Exhibit	40%

### **Research Development (30%)**

These assignments are designed to help you practice historical analysis of primary sources and develop your research project in stages. Formats may vary. This category includes research proposal, preliminary research report with annotated bibliography, primary source analysis, and team presentations.

### **Research Report (30%)**

You will submit a final research report documenting the research you completed for the digital exhibit and interpreting primary sources related to the history of runaway slaves in North Carolina. Your research report will include a bibliography of scholarly books and journal articles and appropriate primary sources. The final report should be about 10-12 pages typed and double-spaced, with Turabian-style footnotes and bibliography. We will be developing this assignment throughout the semester.

### Digital Exhibit (40%)

You will work in research teams to develop a digital exhibit on the history of runaway slaves in North Carolina for the Digital Runaway Slave Ad Database. You will develop the concept for the exhibit, complete research in primary and secondary sources, and implement the exhibit online.

## Course Policies

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### Participation and Attendance Policy

1. Consistent attendance— Attendance is mandatory. This is a seminar, not a traditional lecture course. We will be critically evaluating the content of the readings and practicing the application of analytical skills during each class period. You will not be able to make up for your absences by copying someone else's notes. For this reason, consistent attendance is essential to your learning in this course. I will take attendance at the beginning of every class. You must attend at least one hour of the class period to be counted for full attendance for the class. If the University is closed for snow you will not, of course, be counted absent. If it snows and the University is open, class will be held as scheduled and attendance counts. If I am unable to attend class due to unforeseen circumstances I will distribute an email message and post an announcement to Canvas at least two hours (if possible) before class is scheduled to begin. Documentation for absences will not be collected except in cases where an extended absence may be necessary (for example, hospitalization). **There will be a 3% reduction of the student's final grade for each absence after the first 2.** Beyond even this penalty, a student who seriously neglects attendance and class preparation risks failing the course. If you are experiencing a personal crisis that requires you to miss more than 2 classes, please let me know *at that time* (not afterwards).
2. Thorough preparation for class—readings must be completed before class and assignments must be turned in on time, including ungraded Discussion Board postings. **Failure to submit Discussion Board postings by the deadline will result in 2 points subtracted from your Research Development average for each skipped Discussion Board assignment.** Postings must be complete and must fully address the question for credit.
3. Regular contributions to class discussions—participation is not formally graded as a specific percentage of the final grade but the success of this course for your learning depends on active intellectual engagement with your peers. Peer review will be integral to development of your archive project.

### Academic Integrity

UNCG considers academic dishonesty to be a serious offense. Dishonest behavior in any form, including cheating, plagiarism, deception of effort, and unauthorized assistance, may result in such sanctions as a failing grade on an assignment or failure in the course depending on the nature of the offense. Students must follow the guidelines of the [University Policy on Academic Integrity](#) .

### Electronic Communication

Students are responsible for checking Blackboard and UNCG email on a regular basis. Students are encouraged to utilize email and other forms of digital communication when interacting with the instructor (lctolber@uncg.edu). When using email, students are to be professional and courteous. Students should also remember email is an asynchronous form of communication. Thus, while a prompt response may be desired, it may not always be possible (especially late at night and on weekends). Students should allow at least 24 hours (48 hours on weekends) for a response. That said, the instructor answers emails in the timeliest fashion possible.

### Late Assignment Penalty

Meeting deadlines is an essential element of professional behavior. Please note that *unless arrangements have been made well in advance of due dates*, assignments will be penalized by a **3% reduction in the final assignment grade for every day the assignment is late**. Assignments later than one week will not be accepted for credit without an extremely impressive explanation. Using effective quantitative reasoning, your grade average can recover from an F on an individual assignment more successfully than it can recover from a “0”. It is better to turn in an incomplete assignment on time than to turn in nothing at all.

## Course Schedule

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8 January      Introductions

15 January     MLK Holiday

### Part I. Defining Exhibit Themes: Approaches to the History of Runaway Slaves

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- Context and Authority: evaluating the context in which a source was created—who, what, why, how, and when; questioning the creator’s motives, biases, and reliability as a source.
- Extracting Information and Evidence from the records: understanding differences in information and evidence; inferring evidence and drawing conclusions; defining historical significance.
- Following the Leads: uncovering the clues in documents that lead to other sources; creative thinking for moving to the next phase of research.
- Differences between primary and secondary sources; varieties of primary and secondary source materials
- Delineating the project’s scope; defining topic; and outlining sources needed for project
- Search strategies: listing terms, continuous refinement of topic and search strategies, using online catalogs and search engines.
- Using finding aids: navigating the description and arrangement of a collection.
- Historiography: Assessing historians’ agreements and disagreements about what the evidence means.

22 January      **What Stories Can the Database Tell? Defining Preliminary Themes**  
                      **Mining Metadata**  
                      Meet in the Library Citi Lab

**Read:**

Franklin, John Hope and Loren Schweningen. “Profile of a Runaway.” In *Runaway Slaves: Rebels on the Plantation*, pp. 209-233. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Rosenzweig, Roy. “Scarcity or Abundance? Preserving the Past in a Digital Era” originally published in *American Historical Review* Vol.108, No. 3 (June 2003): 735-562. <http://chnm.gmu.edu/essays-on-history-new-media/essays/?essayid=6>

Smith, Carl, “Can You Do Serious History on the Web?” This article was originally published in *AHA Perspectives* (February 1998) <http://chnm.gmu.edu/resources/essays/serioushistory.php>

**Research Development Assignment:** Search Assignment. See instructions posted to Canvas. **Due by noon on 21 January.**

**29 January**     **Imagining the Runaway Experience/Public Audiences and Uses of the Database**

**Read:**

Whitehead, Colson. *The Underground Railroad*. NY: Doubleday, 2016, pp. 1-196.

Jacobs, Harriet A. *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl: Written By Herself*. <http://docsouth.unc.edu/fpn/jacobs/jacobs.html>  
pp. 145-248.

**Research Development Assignment: Writing Assignment:** Imagining the Runaway Experience--Compare Harriet Jacobs and Cora (750 words). **Due by noon on 28 January.**

**5 February**     **Library Workshop/Working in the Archive**

Meet in the Library Citi Lab

Part 1; Locating secondary and primary sources,

Part 2—slave narratives exhibit and locating visual sources.

Organize Research Teams

**Research Development Assignment:** Evaluate Research Methods, see instructions posted to Canvas. **Due by noon on 4 February.**

**8 February**     **Colson Whitehead @ 8:00-9:30 p.m., School of Music Recital Hall**

**12 February**     **Contextualizing Runaway Experience**

What is History? How is History Constructed?

**Read:**

Sydney Nathans, *To Free a Family*, Chapters 1 & 2

Stephanie Camp. *Closer to Freedom*, Chapters 1 & 2

**Research Development Assignment:** Preliminary Research Proposal with secondary source bibliography **due by noon on 18 February.**

**19 February**     **What is Public History/Digital History?**

**Read:**

Cohen, Daniel J. and Roy Rosenzweig, *Digital History: A Guide to Gathering, Preserving, and Presenting the Past on the Web*, <http://chnm.gmu.edu/digitalhistory/> (Read the complete section, "Exploring the History Web" <http://chnm.gmu.edu/digitalhistory/exploring/> )

Seefeldt, Douglas and William G. Thomas. "What Is Digital History? A

Look at Some Exemplar Projects." *Perspectives on History* (May 2009):

<http://www.historians.org/perspectives/issues/2009/0905/0905for8.cfm>.

Horton, James Oliver & Lois E. Horton, eds. *Slavery and Public History: The Tough Stuff of American Memory*. Chapel Hill:

University of North Carolina Press, 2009. Originally published by NY: The New Press, 2006.

Chapters 1, 2, 3, 7, 10, and 11.

**26 February**     **Runaway Slaves in American Culture**

**Read:**

Blackwood, Sarah. "Fugitive Obscura: Runaway Slave Portraiture and Early Photographic Technology." *American Literature*. Vol. 81, No. 1 (March 2009): 93-125.

### Research Development Assignment:

Exploring primary sources documenting runaway slave experience—team presentations; include bib, visual, connect to a runaway ad, explain how your primary source helps to contextualize the runaway ad(s).  
Sheet music  
Slave narratives  
Historical Fiction—Uncle Tom’s Cabin  
Legal Documents: petitions

5 March      **\*\*\*\*\*Spring Break\*\*\*\*\***

## Developing Your Own Interpretation: The Digital Exhibit

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- Critical Evaluation of Sources: individual and collective analysis of records and the development of a thesis.
- Synthesis: drawing of ideas, information and evidence around a thesis
- Effective Quoting and Paraphrasing
- Citation: Efficient methods of tracking sources during research; proper methods of citation; scholarly and ethical responsibilities, avoiding plagiarism.
- Beyond reporting findings: writing as integral to discovery and the research process in history; presenting research findings in digital/visual format

12 March      **Designing for the History Web**

#### Read:

Cohen, Daniel J. and Roy Rosenzweig, *Digital History: A Guide to Gathering, Preserving, and Presenting the Past on the Web*, <http://chnm.gmu.edu/digitalhistory/> (Read the complete section, “Designing for the History Web” <http://chnm.gmu.edu/digitalhistory/designing/>)

Sandweiss, Martha A. “Artifacts as Pixels, Pixels as Artifacts:

Working with Photographs in the Digital Age.” *Perspectives on History*

(November 2013): 7 pp. <https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/november-2013/material-culture-in-the-digital-frame/artifacts-as-pixels-pixels-as-artifacts>

Bunch, Lonnie. “Embracing Ambiguity: The Challenge of Interpreting African American History in Museums.” *Museums & Social Issues*, 2:1 (2007): 45-56.

16 March      **Research Development Assignment: Preliminary Research Report with Annotated Bibliography including primary and secondary resources. Post to Canvas by 5:00 p.m. on March 16.**

19 March      **Team Work Session**

Note: Teams must schedule a face-to-face presentation consultation appointment with the Speaking Center in advance of team presentations next week. <https://speakingcenter.uncg.edu/services/face-to-face-consultations/>

26 March      **Team Presentations and Peer Review**

Class meets in Hodges Reading Room

**Research Development Assignment: Draft Website Due**

27 March Lonnie Bunch keynote address for the Harriet Elliot Lecture Series

2 April Documenting Your Research on the Web

Read:

Cohen, Daniel J. and Roy Rosenzweig, *Digital History: A Guide to Gathering, Preserving, and Presenting the Past on the Web*, <http://chnm.gmu.edu/digitalhistory/> (Read the complete section, "Owning the Past?" <http://chnm.gmu.edu/digitalhistory/copyright/2.php>)

**Research Development Assignment:** Revised Research Report due by noon on 8 April.

9 April Writing Workshop: Draft Revision/Peer Review

16 April Team Work Session: Website Revision and Peer Review

**Final Research Report due 16 April.**

23 April Last class meeting. **Final Website due.**