

HISTORY 350R:
Gender and Slavery in the United States
AFR 374D and WGS 340
Spring 2012
The University of Texas at Austin

Dr. Daina Ramey Berry
Office: Garrison Hall Room 1.104
Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 10am-11am
Office Phone: 512.471.3261
Class: Monday and Wednesday 11:00am-12:30pm
Location: GAR 2.128
Unique: 39395 (HIS) 30440(AFR) and 47035 (WGS)

Course Description:

How did enslavement affect African American men, women and children? Did their experiences differ based on gender, age, location, or time period? From the 1970s to the present, historians have been in conversation about they ways gender informs the experience of captivity. Some approach the subject by identifying the roles enslaved people played in agricultural, nonagricultural, or industrial work settings. While others, focus on collective and individual forms of resistance to the institution. Enslavement also affected interpersonal relationships despite the fact that African American captives spent most of their time at work. This upper division seminar will examine the gendered experience of chattel slavery in the United States. Through critical analysis, students will engage classic and contemporary texts, films, and songs that focus on slave labor, family, community, sexuality, and the economy. Students will also have the opportunity to analyze primary documents such as slave narratives, plantation records, court documents, and legislation that shaped the lives of bondmen and bondwomen in the United States.

Course Objectives:

The primary objective for this course is to help students learn about the gendered nature of enslavement in the United States. In addition, students will participate in the practice of history by reviewing a book, analyzing primary documents, providing an oral presentation, and producing a research paper based on primary and secondary sources. Using this combination of objectives, another goal of the class is to facilitate students' *LEARNING* of Gender and US Slavery rather than the memorization of relevant names, dates, and events. The professor recognizes the importance of knowing key figures and events; but would rather help students develop a solid understanding of the political, social, economic fabric that informed enslaved male and females' personal lives from their arrival through Emancipation.

Class Etiquette:

Each student is expected to attend class, participate in discussions, and complete all reading and writing assignments by the deadlines indicated in this syllabus or any written addenda. Class discussions are an important component and students will be graded on their participation, contributions to discussions and engagement with their peers. It is the student's responsibility to come to class prepared to discuss the reading for this course; therefore, each student must arrive with two discussion questions based upon the weekly readings. Students are not allowed to record class interactions unless they have written permission from the professor. Please arrive to class on time and turn off cell phones and all other electronic devices including laptop computers. There will be a break during class in which students can check voicemails, emails, texts, etc.

Grading Policy:

Please note that this class, like other undergraduate courses at UT, will now utilize plus and minus options for final grades. However, class assignments are based on a point system with an overall course total of 100 points (see below). Class attendance is mandatory and late assignments are not accepted. The professor will consider medical or other emergencies with written documentation and/or prior notification on a case-by-case basis.

Assignments/Deadlines/Grading Percentages:

- | | | |
|--|--------------------|------------|
| 1. Attendance and Participation | Every Week | 20% |
| I expect you to attend <u>every</u> class session on time. I also expect that you will complete the reading assignments prior to class and that you arrive prepared to engage in course discussions. Please be critical readers of the material and bring in questions to interrogate the readings. I expect each student to have meaningful contributions to the bi-weekly meetings, in-class exercises, and peer review activities. <u>Do not underestimate the importance of this portion of your grade.</u> | | |
| 2. Slave Narrative Project | February 15 | 20% |
| As part of this course, you are required to write a 3-5 page comparative analysis of two slave narratives. You may use the "Born in Slavery" collection from the Library of Congress, which contains both audio and written files (http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/snhtml/). However, one narrative must offer the voice of an enslaved woman and the other an enslaved male. You are welcome to use slave narratives found in UNC's Documenting the American South, or in printed primary volumes rather than online sources if that is your preference. In your essay, be sure to discuss the similarities and differences between their experiences through a clearly defined thesis statement. | | |
| 3. Reading Response to Novels | March 7 | 10% |
| The class will be divided into two groups and each group will read either <i>Wench</i> or <i>Property</i> . On March 7 th we will have a class discussion of both novels where | | |

both groups outline and discuss how these forms of creative writing inform the course material. In addition to the class discussion, each student will write a 3-5 page critical response to the novel they read. Consider how the authors choose to remain close to historical events and when they depart from what we know about the enslaved experience.

4. Research Proposal & Bibliography March 21 10%

Each student is required to submit a 2-page research proposal and tentative bibliography for their final paper. As part of the requirements for this course, you are required to write a 8-10 page research paper. The topic you choose is up to you, however you must find a historical problem surrounding gender and slavery in the United States. Keep in mind that the topic must be manageable enough for you to be able to research and analyze in the time period allotted and with the resources at your disposal. Use this proposal to articulate your paper's thesis as well as submit a preliminary bibliography of primary and secondary sources you will use in your final paper. Submitting a formal proposal encourages students to think about their final project, conduct preliminary research, and begin developing a bibliography for the end-of-semester paper. This exercise also provides the professor an opportunity to review and advise students on their respective topics. As in all History courses, the bibliography should use *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 16th Edition or Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers*. Additional instructions for bibliographies and footnote formatting will be posted on Blackboard.

5. Oral Presentations April 23 or 25 10%

During the last two meetings, students will give formal presentations of their final research project to the class. Feel free to use various forms of audio or visual media such as PowerPoint, Keynote, film clips, sound recordings, photographs, etc. Keep in mind, however, that this is an oral presentation and you may not use the entire 15 minutes for this material, rather it should supplement your thoughts, ideas, and thesis. This assignment is worth 10% of the final course grade and will occur on one of the following dates: 4/23 or 4/25.

6. Final Paper Thursday May 10 30%

The major assignment for this course is an 8-10-page research paper on a topic of choice related to the course material. This paper should rely on primary and secondary sources. Students will have the opportunity to submit a rough draft on and receive written feedback from the professor as well as their peers.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS ARE NOT ACCEPTED.

Final Grade Distribution:

| | |
|----|-----------------|
| A | 94-100 |
| A- | 90-93 |
| B+ | 87-89 |
| B | 83-86 |
| B- | 80-82 |
| C+ | 77-79 |
| C | 73-76 |
| C- | 70-72 |
| D+ | 67-69 |
| D | 63-66 |
| D- | 60-62 |
| F | Below 60 points |

Required Readings:

Appiah, Kwame Anthony. *Narrative of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave & Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*. New York: The Modern Library, 2000.

Blassingame, John W. *The Slave Community: Plantation Life in the Antebellum South*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1972, 1979.

Martin, Valerie. *Property*. New York: Vintage Books, 2004.

Perkins-Valdez, Dolen. *Wench: A Novel*. New York: HarperCollins, 2010.

Rose, Willie Lee, ed. *A Documentary History of Slavery in North America*. Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1999.

White, Deborah Gray. *Ar'n't I a Woman? Female Slaves in the Plantation South*. New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1985, 1999.

Electronic readings will be distributed, placed on Blackboard, or available via JSTOR

Policies and Procedures:**University of Texas Honor Code**

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

Plagiarism

The University's *Institutional Rules* (Section 11-802(d)) define plagiarism as including, "but not limited to, the appropriation of, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any other means material that is attributable in whole or in part to another source . . . and presenting that material as one's own academic work offered for credit." In other words, "**handing in someone else's work and taking credit for it as if it were your own.**" Source: History Department statement on Academic Integrity:

<http://www.utexas.edu/cola/depts/history/about/academic-integrity.php>

For examples of plagiarism see the site above or the Student Judicial Services Website.

Documented Disability Statement

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 232-2937 (video phone) or <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd>

Use of E-Mail for Official Correspondence to Students

E-mail is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, you are responsible for reading your e-mail for university and course-related information and announcements. You are responsible to keep the university informed about changes to your e-mail address. You should check your e-mail regularly and frequently—the university recommends daily, but at minimum twice a week—to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-critical. You can find UT Austin's policies and instructions for updating your e-mail address at: <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php>

Email in recent years has often mistakenly become a substitute for office hours and students sometimes abuse email by the nature of their comments, requests, demands, and questions. This practice will not be tolerated. The professor is an advocate of contact with students through office hours and prefers to meet in person. Therefore, this course will utilize email to post discussion questions for upcoming class meetings, notification of schedule changes, announcements for lectures on campus, or any other miscellaneous issues that relate to the course. Please be courteous over email and try to save questions for class discussions so that all students can benefit from the response.

Religious Holy Days

By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a

religious holy day, I will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)

If you are worried about someone who is acting differently, you may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone your concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD).

Call 512-232-5050 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>

Emergency Evacuation Policy:

Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus are required to evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside. Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building. Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class. In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors. Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire Department, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

The professor reserves the right to deviate or modify parts of this schedule. All changes will include advanced written notice.

Week 1

1/16/12 No Class, MLK Holiday

1/18/12 Course Introduction – The First Lady's Slavery Roots

Readings: Rachel L. Swarns and Jodi Kantor, "In First Lady's Roots, a Complex Path From Slavery," *New York Times*, 9 October 2009.

Week 2

1/23/12 The State of the Field: Slave Historiography

Readings: Dylan Penningroth, "Writing Slavery's History" *OAH Magazine of History*, Vol 23. No.2 (April 2009): 13-20.

1/25/12 Course Blueprint: Understanding Gender & Slavery

Readings: Angela Davis, "Reflections on the Black Woman's Role in the Community of Slaves," in *The Massachusetts Review*, Vol. 13, No. 1/2, (Winter - Spring, 1972): 81-100.

Charles Thompson, *Biography of a Slave*, available online through UNC Chapel Hill (<http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/thompsch/thompsch.html>)

Week 3

1/30/12 Early American Slavery – Origins of an Institution
Readings: Rose, Chapter 1, “Slavery in the English Colonies of North America,” 15-58.

Morgan, E. “Slavery and Freedom: The American Paradox.” *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 59, No. 1 (Jun., 1972), pp. 5-29.

2/1/12 Colonial Slavery for Men and Women
Readings: Elizabeth Freeman, Phillis Wheatley, Olaudah Equiano & Anthony Johnson
Primary Document Exercise

Week 4

2/6/12 Understanding Gender – In Theory and Practice
Readings: White, Chapters 2-3, pp. 62-118

2/8/12 Activity: Interpreting Slave Narratives

Week 5

2/13/12 Labor – Non-Agricultural Work in Outbuildings & Industries
Readings: Rose, Chapter 7, “The Slaves’ Work,” pp. 289-333.

2/15/12 Enslaved Women Wet Nurses
Guest Presenter: Ava Purkiss, Doctoral Student in History—Topic: Wet Nurses

Week 6

2/20/12 Labor – Agricultural Work in the Fields
Readings: Berry, “ ‘She do a Heap of Work:’ Female Slave Labor on Glynn County Rice and Cotton Plantations,” *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 82, no. 4 (Winter 1998): 707-734.
Begin Reading *Wench* or *Property*

Guest Presenter: Jermaine Thibodeaux, Doctoral Student in History –Topic: Slave Drivers

2/22/12 **Film:** *Slavery and the Making of America*, Part III (60 min.)

Week 7

2/27/12 Sources in Slavery Studies
Readings: Continue Reading *Wench* or *Property*
Activity: Primary Document Analysis

2/29/12 Using Novels to Teach History
Continue reading *Wench* or *Property*

Week 8

3/5/12 Legislation – Slave Patrols and Other Restrictions
Readings: Rose, Chapter. 5, “The Slave and The Law,” pp. 175-245.
Begin reading Narratives of Frederick Douglass and Harriet Jacobs

3/7/12 Discussion of *Wench* and *Property*

Week 9 – 3/12/12 NO CLASS SPRING BREAK

Week 10 –

3/19/12 Family Life in Slavery – Historians’ Views

Readings: Blassingame, Chapter 4, pp. 149-191.
White, Chapter 5, pp. 142-160.
Continue reading Narratives of Frederick Douglass and Harriet Jacobs

3/21/12 **Reconstructing Enslaved Families**

Week 11

3/26/12 Gender & Family – The Enslaved Perspective

Readings: Douglass (finish reading) & Jacobs (finish reading)
Film: Biography of Frederick Douglass (50 min.)
Suggested Reading: Rose Chapter 9, “Men, Women, and Children,” pp. 395-454.

3/28/12 Discussion of Douglass and Jacobs

Week 12

4/2/12 The Auction Block – Commodification & Trading

Readings: Rose Chapter 4, “Slaves on the Block . . . Slaves on the Road,” pp. 137-172.
Berry, “ ‘We’ m Fus’ Rate Bargain:’ Value, Labor, and Price in a Georgia Slave Community,” in Walter Johnson, ed., *The Chattel Principle*

4/4/12 Activity: Public History and Slavery

Week 13

4/9/12 Resistance

Readings: Rose, Chapter 3, “Revolts, Plots, and Rumors of Plots,” pp. 99-134.
Blassingame, Chapter 5, pp. 192-222.

4/11/12 Activity: Runaway Slave Advertisements
Guest Speaker: Dr. Barbara Krauthamer, UMass Amherst, IHS Fellow at UT

Week 14

4/16/12 **Writing Workshops**

4/18/12 **Peer Review Exercise**

Week 15

4/23/12 **Presentations**

4/25/12 **Presentations**

Week 16

4/30/12 **Presentations**

5/2/12 **Course Summary**

Final Papers Due: Thursday, May 10th no later than 5:00pm
History Department GAR 1.104