

Tues. 1:15-4:00
Trotter 210
Spring 2015

Bruce Dorsey
Trotter 214 x8095 bdorsey1
Office Hours: T. & W 11:30-12:30

HISTORY 43
ANTISLAVERY IN AMERICA
[A Writing Course]

This course is a research seminar in which students explore the history of antislavery, abolitionist, and emancipationist movements in North America from the earliest Atlantic World protests through slavery's ultimate demise as a result of the American Civil War. Abolitionism was one of the most significant and controversial social movements of organized activism in the history of the modern world. The story of its ideas, strategies, literature, and participants is inextricably bound with the history of capitalism, nationalism, citizenship, race, gender, and sexuality. The course will therefore include a deep reading and analysis of antislavery thought and culture, African American protest and freedom movements, personal narratives, the popular culture of antislavery, and the historical memory of abolitionism and emancipation.

This research seminar is also a Writing ("W") Course. As such, we will devote a considerable portion of the class to analyzing and practicing the craft of writing within the context of historical narratives. Students will have the opportunity to produce their own work of original historical scholarship, to revise and resubmit drafts of their writing, and to make verbal presentations and critiques of their own and fellow students' research projects.

The semester will be divided into two parts. In the first part, the class will examine writings on diverse aspects of antislavery in America, including both primary source texts by antislavery activists and writers and recent scholarship (secondary sources) by historians of antislavery. These readings offer examples of distinctive ways in which authors use sources—documents, material culture, performances, and other forms of evidence—and historical imagination to create historical narratives, arguments, and interpretations. In the second part of the semester, students will design and execute individual research projects that culminate in a final paper (typically 15-20 pages) and a classroom presentation of their projects. These two parts reflect the seminar's twin and interrelated goals: 1) to develop a deep understanding of the history of antislavery, and 2) to learn how historians practice the craft of research and writing, using sources to develop significant questions and interpretations.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Class participation: Students are required to attend all class meetings, complete all assigned readings (purchased books & Moodle), and be prepared to discuss the readings each week. Thoughtful preparation on the part of all students is essential for a seminar to be a positive learning environment for everyone. Hence, a student's participation in the seminar will be an important part of the final assessment by the professor.

Writing Assignments:

1) **Discussion questions and research topics:** Each week (weeks 2-8) you will post a question for discussion or a topic worth further research to a discussion board [“blog”] on Moodle. Posts should typically be 1-2 sentences.

2) **Short Analysis of Historical Writing:** In this assignment (about 3-4 double-spaced pages) you identify the following aspects of a class reading (a chapter or an article from the syllabus, required or suggested, your choice): statement of problem or topic, thesis and premise; what sources the author used, whether the author seemed to pursue a particular research strategy. Did the author treat historiography in this reading? Did the author develop a persuasive narrative/explanation based on the particular research/sources? **Due anytime between Week 3 and spring break (Mar. 6).**

3) **Document Analysis:** The document analysis essay (2-3 double-spaced pages) should be a narrative interpretation of a particularly revealing or challenging document that you find at the beginning of your research. The purpose of the assignment is to allow you to practice and showcase your skills in original historical interpretation. Think of this as the first draft of one small part of your larger research paper. **Due: Mar. 24.**

4) Research Paper Assignments:

A) Preliminary Topic (one paragraph) and short Bibliography (including some primary sources). **Due: Mar. 17.**

B) First Draft of Paper (at least 10 double-spaced pages). **Due: Apr. 7.**

C) Class Presentation and Peer Critique. **Due: Week 12 or 13.**

D) Final Version of Research Paper. **Due: May 16.**

Note: Students must complete all writing assignments and oral presentations to receive credit for the course.

Course Readings:

The following books have been ordered for you at the bookstore. They are also on General Reserve at McCabe Library.

Richard S. Newman, *The Transformation of American Abolitionism* (UNC, 2002).

John Stauffer, *Black Hearts of Men: The Radical Abolitionists and the Transformation of Race* (2002).

Eric Foner, *Gateway to Freedom: The Hidden History of the Underground Railroad* (2015).

Note: I have also ordered copies of James B. Stewart, *Holy Warriors* (rev. ed., 1997). This is the best brief survey of American abolitionism. This is an optional reading, but you will likely find it useful for getting an introduction to this topic.

All other required readings for the course will be available on Moodle.

Research Materials & Assistance

There is an abundance of primary-source research documents available for students on the shelves in McCabe Library, in the microfilm and digital database collections in McCabe/Tripod, in the Friends Historical Library, the Quaker Collection at Haverford College Library, and in Philadelphia’s rare book and historical libraries. In addition, Social Sciences Librarian, Sarah Elichko, will assist us in creating a research guide for the course, and she will make a presentation on researching on Feb. 17. You will want to use her knowledge and guidance when conducting your research.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Week 1 [Jan. 20]: Introduction to the Course

Readings (in class):

Petition to the New Hampshire Legislature, 1779, from Isaac W. Hammond,
 "Slavery in New Hampshire," *Magazine of American History* 21 (1889), 63-64.
 Images of abolitionism.

Week 2 [Jan. 27]: Quakers & the Origins of Antislavery in the Revolutionary Atlantic / The Antislavery (Capitalism) Debate

Readings:

T. Bender, ed. *The Antislavery Debate* (1992), 107-79, 188-99.
 Thomas C. Holt, "Explaining Abolition," *Journal of Social History* 24 (1990), 371-78.
 Maurice Jackson, "The Social and Intellectual Origins of Anthony Benezet's
 Antislavery Radicalism," *Pennsylvania History* 66 (1999), 86-112.

Documents:

John Woolman, *Some Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes* (1754).
 A. Benezet, *A Caution and Warning to Great Britain and Her Colonies ...* (1767).
 A. Benezet, *Short Observations on Slavery* (1781).

Suggested:

C. Brown, *Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism* (2006), 78-119, 391-450.
 Brycchan Carey, *From Peace to Freedom: Quaker Rhetoric and the Birth of American
 Antislavery, 1657-1761* (2012), ch. 2, 4-5.
 Maurice Jackson, *Let This Voice Be Heard: Anthony Benezet, Father of Atlantic
 Abolitionism* (2009), 52-137.

Week 3 [Feb. 3]: Early American Antislavery: Gradualism, Colonization, Revolution

Readings:

R. Newman, *The Transformation of American Abolitionism* (2002), 1-130.
 Manisha Sinha, "To 'cast just obliquely' on Oppressors: Black Radicalism in the Age
 of Revolution," *William and Mary Quarterly* 64.1 (2007), 149-60.
 Joanne Melish, *Disowning Slavery* (1998), 163-223.

Documents:

African American Freedom Petitions, Mass., 1773 & 1777.
 Samuel Hopkins, *A Dialogue Concerning the Slavery of the Africans* (1776).
*Resolutions and Remonstrances of the People of Colour against Colonization to the Coast of
 Africa* (1818).
 David Walker, *An Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World* (1829).

Suggested:

Gary B. Nash and Jean Soderlund, *Freedom by Degrees* (1991), ch. 3 & 7.
 Margot Minardi, *Making Slavery History: Abolitionism and the Politics of Memory in
 Massachusetts* (2010), ch. 1 & 4.

Timothy Patrick McCarthy, "'To Plead Our Own Cause': Black Print Culture and the Origins of American Abolitionism," in *Prophets of Protest*, ed. J. Stauffer & T. P. McCarthy (2006), 114-44.
 Peter P. Hinks, *To Awaken My Afflicted Brethren: David Walker and the Problem of Antebellum Slave Resistance* (1997).

Week 4 [Feb. 10]: Moral Crusade of Immediate Abolitionism

Readings:

R. Newman, *The Transformation of American Abolitionism* (2002), 131-83.
 J. B. Stewart, *Holy Warriors*, rev. ed. (1997), 35-74.
 Beth Salerno, *Sister Societies: Women's Antislavery Organizations in Antebellum America* (2005), 79-118.
 Elizabeth B. Clark, "'The Sacred Rights of the Weak': Pain, Sympathy, and the Culture of Individual Rights in Antebellum America," *Journal of American History* 82 (1995), 463-93.

Documents:

[W.L. Garrison], "To the Public," *The Liberator*, Jan. 1, 1831.
 [W.L. Garrison], "Truisms," *The Liberator*, Jan. 8, 1831.
 T. D. Weld, *American Slavery As It Is* (1839).
 Lydia M. Child, *An Appeal in Favor of That Class of Americans Called Africans* (1833).
 Sarah Moore Grimké, *An Epistle to the Clergy of the Southern States* (1836).

Suggested:

Robert Abzug, *Cosmos Crumbling: American Reform and the Religious Imagination* (1994), 129-162.
 Margaret Abruzzo, *Polemical Pain: Slavery, Cruelty and the Rise of Humanitarianism* (2011), ch. 4.
 Lawrence Friedman, *Gregarious Saints* (1982), ch. 2.
 W. Caleb McDaniel, *The Problem of Democracy in the Age of Slavery* (2013).

Week 5 [Feb. 17]: Gender & Sexuality in Antislavery Activism & Writing / Workshop on Library Resources & Research Tools

Readings:

Bruce Dorsey, *Reforming Men and Women* (2002), 136-194.
 Donald Yacovone, "Abolitionists and the 'Language of Fraternal Love,'" in *Meanings for Manhood*, ed. Mark Carnes and Clyde Griffen (1990), 85-95.

Documents:

Maria W. Stewart, *Lecture Delivered at Franklin Hall* (1832).
 Letters exchanged between A. Grimké, T. D. Weld & J. G. Whittier (1837).
 Angelina Grimké, *An Appeal to the Women of the Nominally Free States* (1838).
 Sarah Grimké, *Letters on the Equality of the Sexes, and the Condition of Woman* (1838).

Suggested:

Julie Roy Jeffrey, *The Great Silent Army of Abolitionism* (1998), ch. 2-3.
 C. Faulkner, *Lucretia Mott's Heresy* (2011), ch. 4-5 & 7.
 Susan Zaeske, *Signatures of Citizenship: Petitioning, Antislavery and Women's Political Identity* (2003), 29-46, 73-104.

Week 6 [Feb. 24]: “Radical Abolitionism,” Race, and Black Activism

Readings:

J. Stauffer, *Black Hearts of Men* (2002), 1-181, 208-81.

Documents:

Henry Highland Garnet, *Address to the Slaves of the United States* (1843)

Frederick Douglass, “What to the Slave is the 4th of July?” (1852)

John Brown & the Principle of Non-Resistance, *The Liberator*, Dec. 16, 1859.

Suggested:

Patrick Rael, *Black Identity & Black Protest in the Antebellum North* (2002), ch. 2, 5-6.

Lewis C. Perry, *Radical Abolitionism* (1973; rept. 1995), ch. 3, 6, 8.

Week 7 [Mar. 3]: Vigilance & Resistance - The Underground Railroad

Readings:

Foner, *Gateway to Freedom: The Hidden History of the Underground Railroad* (2015).

Documents:

William Still, “Moses Arrives with Six Passengers,” *The Underground Railroad* (1883).

Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1860).

Suggested:

David W. Blight, “Introduction” & “Why the Underground Railroad, and Why Now?,” in Blight, ed., *Passages to Freedom: The Underground Railroad in History and Memory* (2004), 1-10, 233-47.

Graham Hodges, *David Ruggles: A Radical Black Abolitionist and the Underground Railroad in New York City* (2010), ch. 3 or 4.

Milton Sernett, *Harriet Tubman: Myth, Memory, and History* (2007), ch. 1-2.

Stanley Harrold, *Subversives: Antislavery Community in Washington, D.C., 1828-1865* (2003), 146-73.

Short Analysis of Historical Writing Due. [Due anytime between Feb. 3 and Mar. 6]

Spring Break

Week 8 [Mar. 17]: Politics & the Antislavery Origins of the Civil War

Readings:

Eric Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party Before the Civil War* (1970), 11-72.

James Oakes, *The Scorpion’s Sting: Antislavery and the Coming of the Civil War* (2014), 13-76.

Andrew Delbanco, *The Abolitionist Imagination* (2012), 3-108.

Documents:

“Abolition at the Ballot-Box,” *The Liberator*, June 28, 1839.

Wendell Phillips, “The Constitution, a Pro-Slavery Document” (1845).

Charles Sumner, “Freedom National, Slavery Sectional” (1852).

Abraham Lincoln, Speech on the Kansas-Nebraska Act in Peoria, Ill. (1854).

Suggested:

James Brewer Stewart, "Reconsidering Abolitionists in an Age of Fundamentalist Politics," *Journal of the Early Republic* 26 (2006), 1-24.

Jonathan Earle, *Jacksonian Antislavery & the Politics of Free Soil, 1824-1854* (2004), 123-43, 163-80.

Preliminary Topic and Short Bibliography Due.**Week 9 [Mar. 24]: Document Analyses**Readings:

Patrick Rael, Bowdoin College, "How to Read a Primary Source."

<http://www.bowdoin.edu/writing-guides/>

Student's choices of primary source documents

Document Analysis Essay Due.**Week 10 [Mar. 31]: Individual Conferences with Professor****Week 11 [Apr. 7]: Independent Research****First Draft of Research Paper Due.****Week 12 [Apr. 14]: Presentations of Student Research & Peer Critiques****Week 13 [Apr. 21]: Presentations of Student Research & Peer Critiques****Week 14 [Apr. 28]: Individual Conferences with Professor****Final Paper Due at end of the semester. [May 16]**

POLICIES:Evaluation/Grading:

Class participation, Blog Posts, & Peer Critique	20%
Short Analysis of Historical Writing	15%
Document Analysis	15%
Research Paper (topic, draft & final version)	50%

Note: Students must complete all writing assignments to pass this course.

Attendance & Communication: The following is the History Department policy on attendance & communication: *“Students are required to attend all classes. Unexcused absences will result in a lower grade for the course. If you are having a medical or personal emergency, please contact the Dean’s Office as well as the instructor of the course. It is your responsibility to inform your instructor as soon as possible. It is essential that you check your email on a regular basis since History professors will contact you via email. We also expect you to use email to contact History professors.”*

Laptops & Electronic Devices: Electronic devices are a distraction from careful listening and engaging conversation that are essential for a good seminar. Since we will use some ebooks and scanned pdfs for course readings, it’s okay to bring a laptop or tablet to class, but such devices should be closed whenever we are discussing other readings or course materials. Refrain from internet searches, email, or social networks. Please silence and put away your cellphone before class.

Accommodations for disability: If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact Leslie Hempling in the Office of Student Disability Services (Parrish 113) or email lhempli1@swarthmore.edu to arrange an appointment to discuss your needs. As appropriate, she will issue students with documented disabilities a formal Accommodations Letter. Since accommodations require early planning and are not retroactive, please contact her as soon as possible. For details about the accommodations process, visit the Student Disability Service website at <http://www.swarthmore.edu/student-life/academic-advising-and-support/student-disability-service.xml> . You are also welcome to contact me privately to discuss your academic needs. However, all disability-related accommodations must be arranged through Leslie Hempling in the Office of Student Disability Services.