

SPRING 2013

PROFESSOR STEPHANIE MCCURRY

315C College Hall

Office Hours: M 2-4 and by appointment

HISTORY 170

MW, 11-12, CH 200

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**THE AMERICAN SOUTH TO 1865:
RISE AND FALL OF THE SLAVE SOUTH**

This course explores the history of the American South from its formation as a marginal colony on the edge of the Atlantic world to its rise as the wealthiest slave society in the western world and its fall with the defeat of the slaveholders' republic in the American Civil War. In the process it necessarily poses a series of big questions about the relationship of slavery, capitalism and democracy in the U.S. and world history.

Over the course of 14 weeks the course engages a range of critical subjects in southern and American history: the Atlantic slave trade; the emergence of slavery, the plantation system, its racial order and the master-slave relationship in the antebellum period; African-American life under slavery; the changing gender and class relations of southern society; the intellectual defense of slavery and the road to secession and Civil War. It ends with a focus on the Confederacy and its undoing in the course of the nation's bloodiest war.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

The following texts are required for the course and are available at the Penn Book Center. Books are also on reserve in the library. The additional readings and documents are on Blackboard.

Ira Berlin, **Generations of Captivity: A History of African-American Slaves**

Thomas Jefferson, **Notes on the State of Virginia**

Drew Faust, ed., **The Ideology of Slavery: Proslavery Thought in the Antebellum South, 1830-1860**

Harriet Jacobs, **Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl Written by Herself**

Walter Johnson, **Soul By Soul: Life Inside the Antebellum Slave Market**

Craig Simpson and William Freehling, eds., **Secession Debated: Georgia's Showdown in 1860**

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Students are required to attend lectures and weekly recitations and to complete all assignments.

EVALUATION METHOD:

Final grades for the course will be determined by a midterm exam (25%), an 8-10 page paper (30%), a take home final exam (35%), and participation in recitation (10%). Students should note that the reading for the term paper is in addition to the weekly readings listed on the syllabus. For the paper students can write on an assigned topic or on one of their own choice, subject to approval of Professor McCurry.

PREREQUISITES:

None.

TOPICS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

Week 1. Rise and Fall of the Slave South

Jan. 9. Introduction

Reading: Olaudah Equiano, **The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano**, introduction and chapters 1 and 2 on Blackboard.
Berlin, **Generations of Captivity**, p. 1-49.

Week 2. Slavery and the Making of the Atlantic World

Jan. 14. The Atlantic World

Jan. 16. The African Slave Trade

Reading: "Laws of Virginia, 1662"
Kathleen Brown, "Engendering Racial Difference," both on Blackboard.
Berlin, **Generations of Captivity**, pp. 51-96.

Week 3. Unfreedom on the Plantation Periphery

Jan. 21. NO CLASS: MLK DAY

Jan. 23. Servitude and Slavery on the Periphery

Reading: Letter of William Byrd II to Charles Boyle, Earl of Orrery, 5 July 1726,
On Blackboard.
Berlin, **Generations of Captivity**, pp. 99-157.

Week 4. Origins of a Slave Society

Jan. 28. Emergence of Southern Slavery

Jan. 30. William Byrd's World

Reading: Earl of Dunmore, **Proclamation**, 7 November 1775 on blackboard.
Berlin, **Generations of Captivity**, pp. 161-230.

Week 5. Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution

Feb. 4. The Planters' Revolution

Feb. 6. The Slaves' Revolution

Reading: Jefferson, **Notes on the State of Virginia**, pp. vii-xxi, Query VI (28-79),
Query XI (98-113), Query XIV (137-55), Query XVII (163-67), Query
XVIII (168-70), and pp. 265-87.
"The Declarations of Jefferson and the Congress," on Blackboard.
David Walker, **David Walker's Appeal**, Article 1 on Blackboard.

Week 6. The New Republic

Feb. 11. Jefferson and Slavery

Feb. 13. Empire of Cotton

Reading: Johnson, **Soul By Soul**, pp. 1-77.

Week. 7. The World the Slaveholders' Made (I)

Feb. 18. **MIDTERM**

Feb. 20. Masters and Slaves

Reading: Faust, **The Ideology of Slavery**, Stringfellow, "A Brief Examination of Scripture Testimony"; Hammond, "Letter to an English Abolitionist"; and Nott, "Two Lectures on the Natural History of the Caucasian and Negro Races."

Johnson, **Soul By Soul**, pp. 78-161.

Week. 8. The World the Slaveholders Made (II)

Feb. 25. The Plantation Regime

Feb. 27. Slave Communities

Reading: Johnson, **Soul By Soul**, pp. 162-220.

Week. 9. **SPRING BREAK**

Mar. 4 **NO CLASS**

Mar. 6 **NO CLASS**

Week 10. The World the Slaves' Made

Mar. 11. Religion and Culture

Mar. 13. The Politics of Slaves

Reading: Ella Gertrude Clanton Thomas, "Trials: Life, Women, Slavery."
"Dear Missis, July 1849," Lavinia's Letter to Her Mistress.
Stephanie McCurry, "Two Faces of Republicanism."
Steven Hahn, "The Yeomanry of the Non-Plantation South."
Stephanie McCurry, "The Politics of Yeoman Households."
All on Blackboard.

Week. 11. The Slaveholders' Republic

Mar.18. Yeoman Farmers and the White Man's Democracy

Mar. 20. Southern Women Slave and Free

Reading: William Cooper, "The Jackson Party and Southern Politics,"
William Cooper, "The Territorial Issue,"

William Cooper, "Political Revolution," All on Blackboard.

Week 12. Impending Crisis

Mar. 25. Democracy and Empire or The Problem of the Territories

Mar. 27. Collapse of the Political System

Reading: Freehling and Simpson, eds., **Secession Debated: Georgia's Showdown in 1860**, Introduction and Selected Speeches: Thomas R. R. Cobb, Alexander Stephens, and Governor Joseph Brown
Hahn, **A Nation Under Our Feet**, prologue and chapter 1 on Blackboard.

Week 13. The Big Gamble

Apr. 1. The Lower South Secedes

Apr. 3. The Upper South Follows

PAPER DUE IN CLASS APRIL 3

Reading: Alexander Stephens, "Cornerstone Address," (March 21, 1861),
McCurry, "Women Numerous and Armed," both on Blackboard.

Week 14. Slaveholder Nation

Apr. 8. Making the White Man's Republic

Apr.10. The Modern Slave Regime at War

Reading: The History of William Webb, Composed by Himself
Document A. Lemuel Conner's Record of Slave Testimony Before the Examination Committee, Second Creek, Adams County, Mississippi, Mid-Sept. 1861
Hahn, **A Nation Under Our Feet**, chapter 2
All on Blackboard.

Week 15. The Reckoning

Apr. 15. The Inner Civil War

Apr. 17. The Slaves' Civil War

Reading: Major-General Patrick Cleburne et al to Commanding General, Army of Tennessee, January 1862. On Blackboard.
Berlin, **Generations of Captivity**, pp. 246-70.

Week 16. Review

Apr. 22. Review Session

TAKE HOME FINAL DISTRIBUTED IN CLASS