


HISTORY 4518:
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY AND SLAVERY

R U N A W A Y



THE 18th Instant at Night from the Subscriber, in the City of New-York, four Negro Men, Viz. LESTER, about 40 Years of Age, had on a white Flannel Jacket and Drawers, Duck Trowsers and Home-spun Shirt. CÆSAR, about 18 Years of Age, clothed in the same Manner. ISAAC, aged 17 Years clothed in the same Manner, except that his Breeches were Leather; and MINGO, 15 Years of Age, with the same Clothing as the 2 first, all of them of a middling Size, Whoever delivers either of the said Negroes to the Subscriber, shall receive TWENTY SHILLINGS Reward for each beside all reasonable Charges. If any person can give Intelligence of their being harbour'd, a reward of TEN POUNDS will be paid upon conviction of the Offender. All Masters of Vessels and others are forewarn'd not to Transport them from the City, as I am resolv'd to prosecute as far as the Law will allow. **WILLIAM BULL.**
N. B. If the Negroes return, they shall be pardon'd. - 88

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In recent years, historians at a number of schools—Brown, Harvard, Yale, Princeton, and the University of Maryland among others—have begun to excavate how slavery and its legacies shaped these institutions, raising important and necessary questions about the relationship between past and present. What might a similar project at Columbia University teach us, especially given the fact that New York City was, according to the New-York Historical Society, “the capital of American slavery for more than two centuries”?

This seminar is part of an on-going, multiyear effort to grapple with such questions and to share our findings with the Columbia community and beyond. Working independently, students will define and pursue individual research projects. Working together, the class will create digital visualizations of these projects.

Research Paper: Using primary and secondary sources, students will each research and write a 25-page paper on an aspect of the relationship between Columbia University and the institution of slavery in New York City, the South, and the Caribbean. Students will

work with faculty support to investigate a topic of their choosing. Research will be conducted at Columbia University's Rare Book & Manuscript Library, the New-York Historical Society, the New York Public Library, and other relevant repositories in the metropolitan area. Students should expect to devote at least one morning or afternoon each week to working on the research project.

Digital Project: Over the course of the semester, we will collectively participate in the creation of a website on the history of Columbia University and Slavery. This project will combine digitized archival exhibitions with visualizations of historical data. It might take the form of a historical map showing the networks of slaver merchants in and out of New York City. Or it might be a series of images related to an individual Columbia student or faculty member. To support this work, we will learn how to create and structure a digital repository, examine the standards for creating metadata, and consider different ways to visualize and interpret our sources. The creation and use of archival metadata is the key mechanism by which unique historical artifacts, texts, and images become usable in a digital platform context. These skills will be useful to students beyond the boundaries of the course.

We will be using Omeka, an archival curation platform tailored to create digital exhibitions of archival objects. The final project will be accomplished in a series of interim steps. These waypoints will develop skills and content necessary for the completion of the end product. Finished digital projects will be evaluated for accurate representation of historical evidence, creative use of sources, and the relationship between digital presentation and theoretical argument.

Public History: This seminar focuses not only on the production of historical knowledge but also on the question of how best to share this knowledge with the larger community. During the course of the semester, students will present on their research to President Bollinger, attend a conference on slavery and the university at Harvard, and create web-based presentations. Please feel free to consult at any time with the professor and/or the teaching assistant if you have any questions about these aspects of the class.

Academic Integrity: Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Should students have any question as to what constitutes appropriate academic behavior, they are encouraged to consult with the professor and to revisit the Faculty Statement on Academic Integrity, available on-line at:
<https://www.college.columbia.edu/academics/integrity-statement>

Any breach of this intellectual responsibility is a breach of faith with the rest of our academic community. It undermines our shared intellectual culture, and it cannot be tolerated. Students failing to meet these responsibilities should anticipate being asked to leave Columbia.

Grades: Grades will be computed according to following formula:

Class Participation: 25%

Intermediate Tasks: 25%

Digital Project: 20%

Final Paper: 30%

Please turn off laptops and cell phones for the duration of the class.

Required texts, available at Book Culture (536 West 112th Street) and on reserve at Butler Library:

Leslie Harris, *In the Shadow of Slavery: African Americans in New York City, 1626-1863*

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

Craig Wilder, *Ebony and Ivy: Race, Slavery, and the Troubled History of America's Universities*

Readings marked with [CW] in the syllabus are on Courseworks

Weekly Schedule of Class Meetings and Readings:

January 19: Introduction

In-class presentations from Jordan Brewington and Danny Echikson, members of last year's seminar

Please watch before class: "Ebony & Ivy: Race, Slavery, and the Troubled History of America's Universities, 2014": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SqH1XzBHUc4>

January 26: Slavery, Crimes Against Humanity, and the University

"Harvard and Slavery": <http://www.harvardandslavery.com/resources/>

"Slavery and Justice: Report of the Brown University Steering Committee on Slavery and Justice": http://www.brown.edu/Research/Slavery_Justice/report/index.html

"Yale, Slavery, and Abolition": <http://www.yaleslavery.org/YSA.pdf>

"Knowing our History: African American Slavery and the University of Maryland": <http://cdm16064.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p266901coll7/id/2614>

"University of North Carolina: Slavery and the Making of the University": <https://exhibits.lib.unc.edu/exhibits/show/slavery/introduction>

"Northwestern University: Report of the John Evans Study Committee": <http://www.northwestern.edu/provost/committees/equity-and-inclusion/study-committee-report.pdf>

Eric Foner, "Columbia and Slavery: A Preliminary Report" [CW]

Marilyn H. Pettit, "Slavery, Abolition, and Columbia University" [CW]

January 30 (Monday): 4 PM Launch of "Columbia and Slavery" website, Low Library

February 2: Slavery and the Archive

Meet in Room 523 in Butler Library with Thai Jones, Lehman Curator for American History, for workshop on research techniques

Craig Wilder, *Ebony and Ivy*, 1-146

David Cole, "Race and Renaming: A Conversation with Peter Salovey, President of Yale" [CW]

Corinne Ruff, "Many Colleges Profited from Slavery. What Can They Do About it Now?" [CW]

February 9: Slavery and the University

Craig Wilder, *Ebony and Ivy*, 149-288

Robert A. McCaughey, *Stand, Columbia*, 1-210, 256-299

Metadata Task Due in Class

February 16: Initial Presentation of Topics

Having met with instructor and TA, students will each present a five-minute summary of their topic and research plan. These reports will include a working thesis, a description of how the work will add to our knowledge of the history of Columbia and slavery, and a bibliography of primary and secondary sources.

February 23: Slavery in New York

Leslie Harris, *In the Shadow of Slavery*, 1-289

“Slavery and the Making of New York”: <http://www.slaveryinnewyork.org/>

Archival Research Assignment Due in Class

March 2: no class / March 3: Field Trip to Harvard University’s “Universities and Slavery: Bound by History” Conference

<https://www.radcliffe.harvard.edu/event/2017-universities-and-slavery-conference>

March 9: Slavery and Public History

James Oliver Horton and Lois E. Horton, *Slavery and Public History: The Tough Stuff of American Memory*, 1-224

Thesis Statement and Literature Review Due Before you leave for Spring Break

***** SPRING BREAK *****

March 23: Slavery and Capitalism

Seth Rockman, “Northern Manufacturers, Southern Slavery, and the Antebellum Origins of American Business Ethics” [CW]
Historiography Workshop [CW]

March 30: Slavery and Ideology

Barbara Fields, “Whiteness, Racism, and Identity” [CW]
Walter Johnson, “On Agency” [CW]

April 6: Slavery and the Environment

Catherine McNair, “The Swinish Multitude” [CW]

Digital Group Task Due

April 13: Slavery and Gender

Adrienne Davis, “‘Don’t Let Nobody Bother Your Principle’: The Sexual Economy of American Slavery” [CW]

April 17 (Monday): 6 PM Lecture by Sarah Gronningsater at Columbia RBML on slavery and abolition in New York

Sarah Gronningsater, “‘On Behalf of His Race and the Lemmon Slaves’: Louis Napoleon, Northern Black Legal Culture, and the Politics of Sectional Crisis.” [CW]

April 20: Practice presentations before meeting with president.

April 27: Meet with Bollinger at President’s House, 60 Morningside Drive

Final Digital Project Due: May 5

Final Research Paper Due: May 12