

AS 100.489**Bondage & Culture in the Atlantic****A copy of this syllabus is publicly available at****<http://jhunix.hcf.jhu.edu/~plarson/main/syllabi/489/syllabus.html>**

Professor: Pier M. Larson

Office: 404 Gilman

Telephone: 410-516-5582

Email: larson@jhu.eduWeb: <http://jhunix.hcf.jhu.edu/~plarson/>**Scope and Purpose**

This seminar explores cultural transformations in the context of slavery and the slave trade. It is a study of the massive African diaspora of the last half-millennium focused primarily on the Atlantic but moving beyond it into the African interior and the Indian Ocean. Scholarship on slavery and cultural transformations in the Atlantic world has tended to focus on societies to which slaves were forcibly removed, especially in the Americas but to some extent also within Africa, and to ignore the places from which they originated. We shall read selectively from an ever expanding literature on culture and slavery to investigate a range of experiences in the diaspora, including those traditionally ignored in diaspora studies. To this end some of the reading takes us into the Indian Ocean, but we begin within Africa itself. Africa is, of course, the diaspora homeland and it lies at the very center of that human dispersion, its people forcibly migrating both eastward and westward in the early modern and modern eras.

While this is an historiographical seminar, the very short time available to us (a mere ten course meetings) will not permit us to read deeply in any one geographical area or particular historical theme. Rather, the seminar will provide you with a sense of how a variety of scholars have approached the wide-ranging issues of culture and slavery in the context of the African diaspora. In the Americas, the primary interest in this respect has been the formation of African American cultures. In the Africas, which were both source and destination societies for slaves, the issues are more complex and involve the reshaping of the societies from which slaves were drawn, the creation of trade diasporas that moved slaves along their "ways of death," and the formation and transformation of culture in the African destination societies of slaves. Each of these represents a fruitful terrain for investigation because, as we shall see, as many new slaves were created and retained within Africa as were forcibly sent across the oceans.

Course Requirements

1. Reading & attendance. Seminar participants must read the assigned reading weekly and be in class to participate in the discussions. The reading is heavy, generally one book each week. You will need to hone your reading skills to extract from the readings what the core arguments and supporting evidence are rather than moving through the books at a slow and even pace from first page to last. Skillful reading requires paying very careful attention to the structure and argumentation of a book, the nature of the

supporting evidence, key terms and phrases, and reading much faster through the peripheral parts than through those that are key to the author's purpose.

2. Weekly reaction papers. You should come to each class meeting with two copies of a 1-2 page paper (single-spaced), informally written, that a) summarizes the core arguments of the assigned reading; and b) raises several issues for consideration in the class discussion. Although they do not need to be polished, your reaction papers should be typed. I will collect one copy of your reaction papers each week. Reaction papers will not be returned to you unless I feel you need to change the way you prepare your papers. If I do not return a reaction paper to you, you can assume that you are satisfactorily fulfilling the requirement.

3. A 5-7 page historiographical paper (double-spaced); co-leading a discussion. These are linked. Each seminar participant will take responsibility for leading one course discussion, along with me. You will choose your date during our first meeting. You should read the week's assigned reading especially carefully and prepare a strategy for keeping the discussion going (notes, a series of written questions, etc.). For the same meeting, you will prepare a short historiographical paper surveying several other works related to that particular week's reading, using them to answer a basic question (you may also refer to the required reading in your paper). You should come to class with enough copies of your paper to share one with each seminar participant. Your task in the short historiographical paper is to provide the seminar participants with a sense of the key issues and arguments raised in a particular set of works. You should also report your findings verbally in class. In this way, all the seminar participants will increase the breadth of their knowledge of culture & slavery through the shared work of their peers. At the end of the course, you will each have several historiographical papers for future reference. You do not have to produce an informal reaction paper on the week you are "up" for this task. You must come to office hours at least once while preparing your historiographical paper to consult with me about your work.

4. A project. These can and will vary considerably depending upon your particular circumstances and whether you are a graduate or an undergraduate student. You may expand your short historiographical paper by developing it with respect to additional readings; you may write a new historiographical paper surveying the literature on a particular (and different) theme or geographical area (you may also do an additional course discussion/historiographical paper as outlined in #3 if no one else is doing that particular set of readings); you may work on a research paper of some sort; or you may, with special permission, work on something you are already working on, incorporating insights gained from this seminar (and possibly producing some additional work). I will design a unique arrangement with each student to fit his or her interests and needs. You should think about what you would like to do early and discuss your plans with me as soon as possible, but not later than our *second* meeting together. You are welcome to email me at larsen@jhu.edu to discuss your options, but you must come to see me during office hours at least twice during the semester to consult about your work on the project.

Reading Schedule

14 September. Introduction & Discussion about reading

21 September. Slavery in Africa: Orientations

Required

- Paul Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

Historiographical Essay

- Task: What was the demographic impact of the slave trade on Africa and how useful is the term "slavery" in the context of African societies?
- Patrick Manning, *Slavery and African Life: Occidental, Oriental, and African Slave Trades* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), esp. 38-85.
- John Thornton, "The Slave Trade in Eighteenth Century Angola: Effects on Demographic Structures," *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 14,3 (1980), 417-27
- Suzanne Miers and Igor Kopytoff, "African 'Slavery' as an Institution of Marginality," in Suzanne Miers and Igor Kopytoff, eds., *Slavery in Africa: Historical and Anthropological Perspectives* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1977), 3-81.
- Joseph E. Inikori, "Slavery in Africa and the Transatlantic Slave Trade," in Alusine Jalloh and Stephen E. Maizlish, eds., *The African Diaspora* (Arlington, 1996), 39-72.
- Frederick Cooper, "The Problem of Slavery in African Studies," *Journal of African History* 20,1 (1979), 103-25.

28 September. Gender & Experiences of Enslavement

Required

- Claire C. Robertson and Martin A. Klein, "Women's Importance in African Slave Systems," in Claire C. Robertson and Martin A. Klein, eds., *Women and Slavery in Africa* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983), 3-25.
- David Eltis and Stanley L. Engerman, "Was the Slave Trade Dominated by Men?" *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 23,2 (1992), 237-57.
- Marcia Wright, *Strategies of Slaves and Women: Life-Stories from East/Central Africa* (New York: Lilian Barber, 1993), 1-121.
- Swema's narrative of enslavement, online at:
<http://jhunix.hcf.jhu.edu/~plarson/main/syllabi/122/reading/swema/swema.htm>
- Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative*, selections online at
<http://jhunix.hcf.jhu.edu/~plarson/main/syllabi/122/reading/equiano/equiano.htm>

Historiographical Essay

- Task: Using all the narratives of enslavement, above and below, describe how Africans were enslaved and reached the African coastline. You may generalize sufficiently to create a working model. Did gender structure experiences of enslavement? If so, how? If not, why?
- Marcia Wright, *Strategies of Slaves and Women*, 125-223.
- W.F. Baldock, "The Story of Rashid Bin Hassani of the Bisa Tribe, Northern Rhodesia," in Margery Perham, ed., *Ten Africans* (London, 1963), 81-119.
- Petro Kilekwa, *Slave Boy to Priest: The Autobiography of Padre Petro Kilekwa* (Westminster, 1937), 9-17.
- Philip Curtin, *Africa Remembered: Narratives by West Africans from the Era of the Slave Trade* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1967), 3-59, 193-216, 289-333.

October 5. The Impact of the Slave Trade on Africa: Identities & Cultural Practices

Required

- Pier M. Larson, *Identities of a Crisis: Enslavement, Cultural Transformation and Historical Memory in Highland Madagascar, 1770-1822* (book manuscript).

Historiographical Paper

- Task: Briefly summarize the various (non-demographic) impacts of the slave trade on Africa and the variety of scholarly approaches to the issue of impact as represented in the following works.
- Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (Washington, D.C., 1982), 95-103.
- Anthony Hopkins, *An Economic History of West Africa* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1973), 87-123.
- J.E. Inikori, "Introduction," in Joseph E. Inikori, ed., *Forced Migration: The Impact of the Export Slave Trade on African Societies* (London, 1982), 13-60.
- Charles Becker and Victor Martin, "Kayor and Baol: Senegalese Kingdoms and the Slave Trade in the 18th century," in Joseph E. Inikori, ed., *Forced Migration: The Impact of the Export Slave Trade on African Societies* (London, 1982), 100-25.
- Paul Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery* (previously read selections concerning the impact).
- Rosalind Shaw, "The Production of Witchcraft/Witchcraft as Production: Memory, Modernity and the Slave Trade in Sierra Leone," *American Ethnologist* 24,4 (1997), 856-76.
- Robert Baum, "The Slave Trade in Diola (Senegal) Oral Tradition," paper presented at the Conference on "The Atlantic Slave Trade in African and African American Memory," University of Chicago, May 1997.

October 19. Slaves in African Society: Culture & Resistance

Required

- Jonathon Glassman, *Feasts and Riot: Revelry, Rebellion, and Popular Consciousness on the Swahili Coast, 1856-1888* (Portsmouth, 1995).

Historiographical Paper

- Task: What are some of the salient issues in the study of culture and slavery (in destination societies) in Africa? What are some of the debates regarding these issues?
- Suzanne Miers and Igor Kopytoff, "African 'Slavery' as an Institution of Marginality," in Suzanne Miers and Igor Kopytoff, eds., *Slavery in Africa: Historical and Anthropological Perspectives* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1977), 3-81.
- Frederick Cooper, "Islam and Cultural Hegemony: The Ideology of Slaveowners on the East African Coast," in Paul E. Lovejoy, ed., *The Ideology of Slavery in Africa* (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1981), 271-307.
- Margaret Strobel, *Muslim Women in Mombasa, 1890-1975* (New Haven, 1979), 8-21, 156-81, 196-217.
- Carol Eastman, "Women, Slaves and Foreigners: African Cultural Influences and Group Processes in the Formation of Northern Swahili Coastal Society," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 21,1 (1988), 1-20.
- John E. Mason, "Hendrik Albertus and His Ex-Slave Mey: A Drama in Three Acts," *Journal of African History* 31 (1990), 423-45.

October 26. Approaches to the Making of African American Cultures

Required

- Sterling Stuckey, *Slave Culture: Nationalist Theory and the Foundations of Black America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 3-97.
- Sidney W. Mintz and Richard Price, *The Birth of African-American Culture: An Anthropological Perspective* (Boston, 1992).
- Paul Lovejoy, "The African Diaspora: Revisionist Interpretations of Ethnicity, Culture and Religion under Slavery," online at <http://h-net2.msu.edu/~slavery/essays/esy9701love.html>.

Historiographical Paper

- Task: Summarize the arguments of the "cultural autonomists" and "survivalists" represented in the following works. What evidence underlies these models of African American culture? What are the strengths and weaknesses of these approaches?
- Melville Herskovitz, *The Myth of the Negro Past* (Boston: Beacon, 1941 [1990]), 1-32 (Chapter 1).
- Sterling Stuckey, *Going Through the Storm: The Influence of African American Art in History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 3-18, 32-80.

- Lawrence W. Levine, *Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), esp. 3-135.
- Joseph Holloway, ed., *Africanisms in American Culture* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), ix-18, 34-97, 148-84 (essays by Joseph E. Holloway, Jessie Gaston Mulira, Margaret Washington Creel, and Robert F. Thompson).

November 1. Black and White in Eighteenth Century Virginia

Required

- Mechal Sobel, *The World they Made Together: Black and White Values in Eighteenth-Century Virginia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987).

Historiographical Paper

- Task: Discuss the variety of ways in which the following scholars of North America understand the general issue of culture and slavery. What kinds of evidence do they employ and what kinds of conclusions do they reach? What are the strengths and weaknesses of these approaches?
- Ira Berlin, "Time, Space and the evolution of Afro-American Society on British Mainland North America," *American Historical Review* 85 (1980), 44-78.
- Ira Berlin and Philip D. Morgan, "Labor and the Shaping of Slave Life in the Americas," in Ira Berlin and Philip D. Morgan, eds., *Cultivation and Culture: Labor and the Shaping of Slave Life in the Americas* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993), 1-45.
- Alan Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slaves: The Development of Southern Cultures in the Chesapeake, 1680-1800* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), esp. 317-420.
- Daniel C. Littlefield, *Rice and Slaves: Ethnicity and the Slave Trade in Colonial South Carolina* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1981).

November 8. Black and White Women Negotiate Slavery: South Carolina

Required

- Marli F. Weiner, *Mistresses and Slaves: Plantation Women in South Carolina, 1830-1880* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1998).

Historiographical Paper

- Task: How do the following works on women and slavery in North America conceptualize the "problem" of slavery and culture? What evidence do the arguments rest upon? How do the works differ in their approach to this issue?

- Jacqueline Jones, *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow: Black Women, Work, and the Family from Slavery to the Present* (New York: Basic Books, 1985).
- Deborah Gray White, *Ar'n't I a Woman?: Female Slaves in the Plantation South* (New York: Norton, 1985).
- Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, *Within the Plantation Household: Black and White Women of the Old South* (Chapel: University of North Carolina Press, 1988).

November 15.

- Readings to be arranged

November 22. Religion and Resistance in Brazil

Required

- João José Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil: The Muslim Uprising of 1835 in Bahia* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993).

Historiographical Paper

- Task: The two following works represent recent approaches to African religions in the Americas. Review them. Which of the ways of understanding African American culture that we have previously encountered do these studies most closely resemble?
- Sandra Barnes, ed., *Africa's Ogun: Old World and New* second expanded edition (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997).
- George Brandon, *Santeria from Africa to the New World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993).

November 29. Culture & Race Revisited: An Africanist writes African American History

Required

- Michael Gomez, *Exchanging our Country Marks: The Transformation of African Identities in the Colonial and Antebellum South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998).

Historiographical Paper

- Task: How does knowing the African origins of American slaves influence the writing of African American history?
- Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Africans in Colonial Louisiana: The Development of Afro-Creole Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1992).
- Peter Caron, " 'Of a Nation Which the Others do not Understand': Bambara Slaves and African Ethnicity in Colonial Louisiana, 1718-60," *Slavery and Abolition* 18 (1997), 98-121.
- Daniel H. Usner, "From African Captivity to American Slavery: The Introduction of Black Louisiana to Colonial Louisiana," *Louisiana History* 20 (1979), 25-48.
- Philip D. Morgan, "The Cultural Implications of the Atlantic Slave Trade: African Regional Origins, American Destinations and New World Developments," *Slavery and Abolition* 18 (1997), 122-.

OR

- Task: Review Philip Morgan's new book by situating it within the historiography of slavery and culture we have encountered in this seminar.
- Philip D. Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint: Black Culture in the Eighteenth-century Chesapeake and Lowcountry* (Chapel Hill : University of North Carolina Press, 1998).

OR

- Task: Summarize and review the variety of approaches to African American cultural history represented in the following works.
- John K. Thornton, "'I am a Subject of the King of Congo': African Political Ideology and the Haitian Revolution," *Journal of World History* 4,2 (1993), 181-214.
- John K. Thornton, "African Dimensions of the Stono Rebellion," *American Historical Review* 96,4 (1991), 1101-13.
- Douglas B. Chambers, "My own nation': Igbo Exiles in the Diaspora," *Slavery and Abolition* 18 (1997), 72-97.

OR

- Task: What is the archaeology of slavery and what light does it shed on slavery and culture?
- Theresa A. Singleton, ed., *The Archaeology of Slavery and Plantation Life* (Orlando: Academic Press, 1985).
- Anne E. Yentsch, *A Chesapeake Family and their Slaves: A Study in Historical Archaeology* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), esp. 3-50, 171-215.
- Roderick A. McDonald, *The Economy and Material Culture of Slaves: Goods and Chattels on the Sugar Plantations of Jamaica and Louisiana* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1993).

OR

- Task: Compare and contrast Mullin's and Gilroy's approaches to Black culture history.
- Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993).
- Michael Mullin, *Africa in America: Slave Acculturation and Resistance in the American South and the British Caribbean, 1736-1831* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992).