History 272: The Atlantic Slave Trade and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1450-1850

Tuesday/Thursday 10:30-11:45pm Denny 021

Instructor Office Email Office Hours
Jeremy Ball, Ph.D. Denny 019 ballj@dickinson.edu Thursday 1-4pm

Course Overview
During several centuries of European colonization in the New World, a thriving slave trade forced the immigration of millions of Africans across the Atlantic—an immigration far larger than the simultaneous immigration of Europeans to the same regions. We will address not only the workings of the slave trade on both sides (and in the middle) of the Atlantic, but also the cultural communities of West and West-Central Africa and encounters and exchanges in the new slave societies of North and South America. Through examination of work processes, social orders, cultural strategies and influences, ideas about race and geography, across time and in several regions, and abolition, we will explore the crucial roles of Africans in the making of the Atlantic world.

Books

On Reserve

Film & Multimedia

*Amistad*


*Tamango*

A few of the best websites about Africa and the African Diaspora include:

• Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture at The New York Public Library:  
  [www.nypl.org/research/sc/sc.html](http://www.nypl.org/research/sc/sc.html)

• The Stanford University African Studies Center maintains a valuable guide to internet sources for Africa south of the Sahara:  
• W. E. B. Du Bois Institute for African and African American Research:  
  http://dubois.fas.harvard.edu/index.html
• The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database  
  http://www.slavevoyages.org/tast/index.faces

Evaluation
All graded work received on time will be returned as promptly as possible. Late work will receive a reduced grade (1/3 of a letter grade a day) unless you make arrangements well in advance. For information about how to cite sources using The Chicago Manual of Style format consult Diana Hacker, A Writer’s Reference, or library.dickinson.edu/courses/frseminars/bombaro/johnstonwelty.htm.

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Accommodations for Disabilities
In compliance with the Dickinson College policy and equal access laws, I am available to discuss appropriate accommodations than may be recommended for students with disabilities. Requests for academic accommodations are to be made during the first three weeks of the semester (except for unusual circumstances) so that appropriate arrangements can be made. Students are required to register with Academic Resource Services in the Advising Office on the first floor of Biddle House (contact ext. 1080 or waybranj@dickinson.edu) to verify their eligibility for appropriate accommodations.

Academic Honesty
Students are expected to do their own work. Work submitted in fulfillment of academic assignments and provided on examinations is expected to be original, by the student submitting it, and for the course. Collaboration must be noted in writing and requires the consent of the professor. Normally, a paper may be submitted in fulfillment of an assignment in only one course. Exceptions require permission from the instructors. Violations of the standards include cheating and plagiarism. Academic dishonesty may result in an “F” in the course or other additional disciplinary actions. For clarification and details of the official College statement on cheating and plagiarism, please see the Dickinson Writing Program’s website: www.dickinson.edu/departments/writing/plagiarism.html

Essay #1
Due Friday Feb. 20 by 5pm, 8-10 pages. Your essay must draw on a minimum of two primary sources.
Choose one of the following:
   a) How did investors realize profits from a slave voyage?
   b) Why did some African kingdoms participate in the Atlantic Slave Trade?
Essay #2
Due Friday May 1 by 5pm, 10-12 pages. Your essay must draw on a minimum of two primary sources.
Choose one of the following:
   a) What caused the incremental abolition of the Atlantic Slave Trade?
   b) Explain the causes and consequences of one major slave rebellion in the Americas.

Book Review
You will submit a 3-4 page book review for either Rediker, *The Slave Ship: A Human History* or Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil: the Muslim uprising of 1835 in Bahia*. Guidelines will be distributed.

**Rediker Book Review due by 5pm Friday April 3**
**Reis Book Review due by 5pm Friday April 17**

Podcast
Assess the impact of an African culture in a region in the Americas. Guidelines to be distributed. **Script due in class April 7. Presentation of Podcast in class April 14.**

Class Schedule

Week 1: Introduction to Atlantic History and West and West-Central African Cultures
Jan. 20 Introduction

Jan. 22

Week 2: Trade and Commerce between West Africa and Europe. Why Were Africans Enslaved?
Jan. 27
**Map Quiz**
*Electronic Reserve* (22 pages total)
• Eric Williams, “Economics, not Racism, as the Root of Slavery”
• Winthrop D. Jordan, “The Simultaneous Invention of Slavery and Racism”
• David Brion Davis, “Sugar and Slavery from the Old to the New World”

Jan. 29
• Herbert S. Klein, *The Atlantic Slave Trade*, Chpts. 4-5 pp. 74-129.
*Electronic Reserve*
Week 3:
Feb. 3
• Marcus Rediker, *The Slave Ship*, Chpt. 3 “African Paths to the Middle Passage”

Feb. 5
Visit to Special Collections AND meeting with librarian Christine Bombaro
*A couple of primary sources relevant to the Atlantic slave trade available in the College Archive:*

Week 4: The Middle Passage
Feb. 10
• Rediker, *The Slave Ship*, Chpt. 7 “The Captain’s Own Hell”

Feb. 12 Contemporary Views of Slaving and Slavers
Electronic Reserve (25 pages total)
• John Hawkins, “An Alliance to Raid for Slaves, 1568”
• Willem Bosman, “Trading on the Slave Coast, 1700”
• John Newton, “A Reformed Slave Trader’s Regrets, c. 1745-1754”
• Richard Storey, “Kindapping and Retaliation, 1767-1768”
• Osei Bonsu, “Views of the King of Asante, 1820”
• Eyo Honesty II, “Views of the King at Old Calabar, 1850”

Week 5:
Feb. 17

Feb. 19
Demonstration of *The trans-Atlantic slave trade: a database on CD-ROM*
ESSAY #1 Due Friday Feb. 20 by 5pm

Week 6: Slave Resistance
Feb. 24
Lecture: “Conditions Favorable for Revolt and Precautions against Revolt”
Electronic Reserve
Feb. 26
Electronic Reserve
• “A Slave Revolt at Sea and Brutal Reprisals (1845),” in Conrad, pp. 39-42.

Film: View revolt scene from the film *Amistad*.

Week 7:
March 3
• Rediker, *The Slave Ship*, Chpt. 9 “From Captives to Shipmates”

March 5

Week 8:
Spring Break

Week 9: African Identity, Religion and Social Organization in the Americas
March 17

March 19
Electronic Reserve

Week 10: African Culture(s) in Brazil
March 24
Electronic Reserve

March 26
Electronic Reserve
• T. J. Desch Obi, “Combat and the Crossing of the *Kalunga*,” in Linda M. Heywood,

Podcast training with Brenda Landis in Bosler 209 @ 11am.

Week 11:
March 31
Thornton, Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, Chpt. 11.

Electronic Reserve

April 2
Rediker Book Review due by 5pm Friday April 3

Africana Film Series
“Tamango” 8pm, 2 April, Weiss 235
“Traces of the Trade” 8pm, 3 April, Weiss 235
Film attendance is worth extra credit

Africana Studies Conference “Teaching the African Slave Trade,”
Marcus Rediker Keynote, 10am, Weiss 235
http://www.dickinson.edu/departments/africana/
Attendance at Rediker’s Keynote is mandatory

Week 12: The End of the Slave Trade
April 7
•Klein, The Atlantic Slave Trade, Chpt. 8, pp. 183-206.
Podcast script due in class.

April 9
•Reis, João José. Slave Rebellion in Brazil: the Muslim uprising of 1835 in Bahia, Chpts. 1-6, pp. 3-128.

Week 13 Slave Revolt in Brazil
April 14
Podcast presentations

April 16
Reis, Slave Rebellion in Brazil, Chpts. 7-12, pp. 129-232.

Reis Book Review due by 5pm Friday April 17
Week 14: Abolition & Effects in Africa
April 21
Make this week about reading Locke and Adam Smith and discussing the impact of Enlightenment on thinkers such as Jefferson and Clarkson. Schedule for both class times.

Lecture: “Abolishing the Slave Trade to the United States”
Song “Molasses to rum to slaves” from the musical 1776
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8QhyX-__RPuI

Electronic Reserve
• E. Gregory and Edward Fitzgerald, “The British Antislavery Squadron in 1822”
• Eric Williams, “Capitalism and Abolitionism”
• Howard Temperley, “The Idea of Progress”
• Michael Craton, “Slave Revolts and the End of Slavery”

April 23
Electronic Reserve
• Walter Rodney, “The Unequal Parternship Between Africans and Europeans”
• Patrick Manning, “Social and Demographic Transformations”
• David Eltis, “The Economics of African Participation in the Slave Trade”

Week 15: Debate and Conclusions
April 28
DEBATE. Resolved: The United States Government should pay reparations to the descendants of enslaved Africans living in the USA.

April 30
Conclusions

Essay #2 Due Friday May 1 by 5pm