

HIS 4485/5485: Spring 2007

Slavery in the British and French Caribbean

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The Caribbean is a vibrant mixture of races, classes, and cultures in continuous struggle to forge new national identities. Throughout the course of this semester, we will see how the processes of colonial exploitation, the formation of plantation societies, the enforcement of slavery, and the domination of sugar in the Caribbean's development and underdevelopment shaped these struggles. We will also study the different levels at which slavery was resisted and finally overthrown--both at the ideological realm of the abolitionists' world and the actions of revolutionary slave rebels and runaway maroons. We will conclude with the study of the socio-cultural legacies of slavery influenced and shaped the modern struggle to forge new identities of nationhood in the Caribbean.

Required Reading: (additional readings will be placed on reserve and are listed under their assigned dates in the Course Outline)

1. Hilary Beckles, *Natural Rebels: A Social History of Enslaved Black Women in Barbados*. Rutgers University Press, 1989.
2. Laurent Dubois, *Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution*. Belnap Press, 2004.
3. Franklin W. Knight, *The Caribbean: The Genesis of a Fragmented Nationalism*. Oxford University Press, 1990.
4. Sidney W. Mintz. *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History*. Penguin, 1985.
5. Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*. University of North Carolina Press, 1944, 1994.

Additional Reading for Graduate Students:

1. Margaret Cezair Thompson, *The True History of Paradise*. Plume, 2000.

Learning Outcomes for undergraduate students:

- An understanding of the important developments in the history of slavery and sugar in the Caribbean
- An understanding of how this history has created a legacy of slavery in the modern Caribbean
- An understanding of important historiographical questions in the field regarding resistance, gender, capitalism, and labor
- An understanding of the methods used in the historical discipline
- The opportunity to improve writing and critical thinking skills through exam essays, as well as both formal and informal written assignments, class discussion, and careful reading of primary and secondary sources.

Learning Outcomes for graduate students:

- An understanding of the important developments in the history of slavery and sugar in the Caribbean
- An understanding of how this history has created a legacy of slavery in the modern Caribbean
- An understanding of important historiographical questions in the field regarding resistance, gender, capitalism, and labor
- An understanding of the methods of historical inquiry, analysis, and research
- The opportunity to improve writing and critical thinking skills through exam essays, as well as both formal and informal written assignments, class discussion, and careful reading of primary and secondary sources
- The production of a book review of publishable quality

Evaluation and Grading:

The course will be evaluated on a ten point scale. Emphasis will be on clarity of ideas, extent of research, reading, writing, analytical skills, class participation, and overall presentation. Participation in class discussions and lectures is encouraged and will form a component of the written assignment grades. There will be no extra credit offered in this class, so don't ask.

Book Reviews.

Undergraduate and Graduate students will read and review one scholarly or literary book dealing with some aspect of slavery in the British and French Caribbean. The books need not be entirely on slavery and sugar in the Caribbean, but you should discuss it at some length. These review should be 5 pages long, double spaced with 1 inch margins in a 12 point font. **All books must be approved by me before being reviewed.** This will be 15% of your grade. Book reviews are due April 26.

In addition to the book review mentioned above, Graduate Students will also review Margaret Cezair Thompson's *The True History of Paradise* as part of their Graduate Requirements for the course. Questions for this review will be given at a later date. This review will count as 15% of your grade. This review is due Monday, April 30.

Undergraduate Mid-Term Exam: 20% Graduate Mid-Term Exam: 15%

Your mid-term exam will be in the form of a take home exam. Questions will be given two weeks before the due date, which is Thursday, March 15. Please turn in your mid-term exams in my mailbox in the Department of History no later than **5PM on March 15**. Email submissions are not accepted, nor are late papers. There will be no make-up exam.

Undergraduate Final Exam: 20% Graduate Final Exam: 15%

Your final exam will be in the form of a take home exam. Questions will be given two weeks before the due date, which is Thursday, May 3. Please turn in your mid-term exams in my mailbox in the Department of History no later than **5PM on May 3**. Email submissions are not accepted, nor are late papers. There will be no make-up exam.

Class Participation: 20%

Undergraduate Reaction Papers: 25%

Graduate Reaction Papers: 20%

Students will complete 5 writing assignments based on the required readings throughout the course of the semester. These papers will be evaluated on content, form, grammar, and spelling and should represent a sustained effort on the part of the student. Topics for these papers will be given two weeks before the papers are due in order to give students time to prepare your thoughts and write a quality analytical paper. Each paper should be 3-5 pages in length.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Plagiarism is strictly forbidden in this class. If any student plagiarizes another person's work, or is caught cheating on the mid-term exam, they will fail this course. Furthermore, they will be turned into the university for immediate expulsion.

Course Outline and Schedule

Thursday, Jan 11: Introduction to the Course

Thursday, Jan 18: The Emergence of a Colonial Order

Pre-colonial Caribbean society--Native American Identities, European Encounters and Colonization of the Caribbean, The shaping of colonial society

Readings: Knight Chapters 1-3

Thursday, Jan 25: Emergence of Sugar and Slavery in the Caribbean--A General Overview

The Rise of the Sugar Plantations--Organization of Land and Labor in the Caribbean, The Emergence of Plantation Slave Society

Readings: Knight Chapter 5; Williams Chapters 1 & 2

Thursday, Feb 1: The Bittersweet History of Sugar as Gold

The Emergence of Sugar as a Colonial Product and Patterns of Sugar Consumption

Readings: Mintz Chapters 1-4

Thursday, Feb 8: The Slave Trade and its Impact on Africa, Europe and the Caribbean

Methods of Enslavement, The Middle Passage, The Organization and Uses of the Triangular Trade, Slave Resistance

Readings: Williams Chapters 3-5; Winston McGowan "The Origins of Slave Rebellions in the Middle Passage" (on reserve)

Thursday, Feb 15: Labor and Punishment

Labor Divisions, Sexual Division of Slave Labor, Punishment and Slave Codes

Readings: Beckles Chapters 2-3, Heather Cateau "The New 'Negro' Business: Hiring in the British West Indies, 1750-1810" (on reserve), Karl Watson, "Capital Sentences Against Slaves in Barbados in the Eighteenth Century: An Analysis" (on reserve)

Thursday, Feb 22: Race and Gender

Readings: Beckles Chapters 5-7, Bernard Moitt "Women, Work and Resistance in the French Caribbean During Slavery" (on reserve)

Thursday, March 1: Slave Life and Family

Patterns of Slave Life on Plantations, The Master Slave Relationship

Readings: Beckles Chapter 1 & 4, Virginia Bernhard “Families, White and Black (Bermuda)” (on reserve), Alvin Thompson “Enslaved Children in Berbice, with Special Reference to the Government Slaves, 1803-31” (on reserve)

Thursday, March 8: Ethnicity and Afro-Caribbean Traditions

African Cultural Identity, Maintenance and Reinvention of African Traditions and Beliefs, the Creation of a Caribbean Identity

Readings: Edward Braithwaite “The ‘Folk’ Culture of the Slaves” (on reserve), Colin Palmer “Africa in the Making of the Caribbean” (on reserve), Lucie Pradel “African Legacy in the Caribbean” (on reserve)

Thursday, March 15: No Class MID TERM DUE BY 5P in my mailbox

Thursday, March 22: No Class—Spring Break

Thursday, March 29 Slave Resistance

The Slave Rebels, Methods of Resistance

Readings: Beckles Chapter 8; Williams Chapter 12, Verene Shepherd “Petticoat Rebellion?: The Black Woman’s Body and Voice in the Struggles for Freedom in Colonial Jamaica” (on reserve); you may want to begin reading Dubois here, but it is not required.

Thursday, April 5 The Haitian Revolution

Causes, Rebellion, and the Consequences and Impact on the Region

Readings: finish Dubois

Thursday, April 12: The Williams Thesis and Debates

The Debates over Capitalism and slavery, and The Williams Thesis

Readings: Williams Introduction by Colin Palmer, Chapters 6-9

Thursday, April 19 Abolition and Emancipation

The Disintegration of the system, The Abolitionists, Apprenticeship

Readings: Knight Chapter 6, Williams Chapter 11, Vasconcellos “‘To Fit You All for Freedom:’ Jamaican Planters, Afro-Jamaican Mothers, and the Struggle to Control Afro-Jamaican Children during Apprenticeship, 1833-1840” (on reserve)

Thursday, April 26 Questions of Legacy and Identity

Challenges facing Contemporary Caribbean in the Aftermath of Slavery, Nation building in the English Caribbean, Pan African Identities

Readings: Knight Chapter 10-11, Kenneth Ramchand “Marcus Garvey and the African Dream” (on reserve), Percy Hintzen, “Race and Creole Ethnicity in the Caribbean” (on reserve)

Undergraduate Book Reviews and Graduate Book Review 1 Due

Graduate Review of Cezair-Thompson DUE: April 30

Final Exam DUE: no later than 5P on May 3