The Slave Trade in Global Perspective  
HIST 535-002  
Thursdays, 7:20-10 pm, Innovation Hall 215 G

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Office: Robinson B369 A  
Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:30-3 pm, or by appointment

Course Description:  
This course will examine the history of the transatlantic slave trade from a global perspective. Our primary focus will be on the major economic, political, and cultural factors that influenced the size and shape of the traffic in coerced labor across the Atlantic between 1500 and 1870. The major factors to be discussed will include conceptions of race in a transatlantic context, African participation and resistance, and global pressures towards abolition. In order to fully address these issues, we will compare this history to the much longer-running slave trade of the Indian Ocean. In addition to writing weekly short papers and assisting with leading discussions, students will be responsible for writing a lengthy historiographical essay on a topic of their choice.

Grading and expectations:  
Participation: This class is participatory and, in order to get the most from class, you need to attend every class prepared and having thought about the assigned reading(s). You will also be expected, on selected weeks, to formulate questions for discussion and begin class by outlining the questions, leading discussion, and then presenting your responses for them.

Weekly Reaction Papers: You will be expected to write a short paper reacting to the assigned readings for the week. These papers must be a page or less in length. Each paper should focus on the most important contribution of the readings, in your opinion. You must submit the paper as an email attachment by noon on Thursday.

Historiographical Essay: In this class you will write a critical review of secondary literature on a topic related to our course. This assignment will consist of four major parts. You will first identify a topic related in some way to the transatlantic slave trade. You might, for instance, focus on scholarship on the topics of slavery, the Atlantic World, early modern globalization, etc. A paper outlining your chosen topic will be submitted in the form of a short proposal describing your research focus and proposed avenues for research. Next, you will submit an annotated bibliography of the secondary sources you plan on using in your paper. You will make a brief presentation of your findings the last week of class, along with your outline for the final paper, and incorporate feedback from this presentation in your final paper (roughly 15-25 pages in length).

Final Grade:  
Class participation (10%), discussion leading (10%), and your weekly reaction papers (30%) will count for half of your grade. The various components of the historiographical essay will count
for the other half of the final grade (topic – 5%, bibliography – 5%, presentation – 10%, paper – 30%).

**Academic Honesty:**
In this course, you will be expected to adhere to the Honor Code at George Mason. It is your responsibility to read and understand the policy (available at http://oai.gmu.edu/honor-code/masons-honor-code/). We will discuss the use of citations and quotations throughout the semester. If you have any questions on how to cite a source, please see the professor. If you are caught plagiarizing or using material written by another student in your work, you will fail the assignment and, in some cases, the course.

**Texts Available for Purchase in the Bookstore:**


The recommended readings listed below are available in the university library.
Course Schedule

August 28: Introduction

Required reading:

September 5: Starting with Africa

Required Reading:
- Parker and Rathbone, *African History*

Recommended Readings:

September 12: Understanding the Numbers * Bring a laptop to class

Required Reading:
- Complete the worksheet on using the Transatlantic Slave Trade Database website (see blackboard)

Recommended Readings:

* Submit topic before class
September 19: Debating the Origins of the Transatlantic Slave Trade

Required Reading:
- Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*

Recommended Readings:
- David Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas*

September 26: Examining Sources

Required Reading:
- Behrendt, Latham, and Northrup, *The Diary of Antera Duke*

Recommended Readings:

October 3:
No class, individual meetings scheduled with the instructor. Please bring your annotated bibliography to the meeting.

October 10: Trans-Oceanic Connections I

Required Reading:
- Sweet, *Recreating Africa*

Recommended Readings:

October 17: Trans-Oceanic Connections II

Required Reading:
- Hawthorne, *From Africa to Brazil*

Recommended Readings:
October 24: Slave Trades in the Indian Ocean Basin

Required Reading:

Recommended Readings:

October 31: An Islamic Slavery?

Required Reading:
- Toledano, As if Silent and Absent

Recommended Readings:
- Slavery, Islam, and Diaspora, eds. Paul Lovejoy, Behnaz Mirzai, and Ismael Montana (Trenton, Africa World Press, 2010).

November 7: European Plantations in the Indian Ocean

Required Reading:
- Vaughan, Creating the Creole Island

Recommended Readings:

November 14: The Shift to Indentured Labor

Required Reading:
- Lai, Indentured Labor.

Recommended Readings:

**November 21:** Global Perspectives on Abolition and Presentations  
*Required Reading:*
- Quirk, *The Anti-Slavery Project*

*Recommended Readings:*

**December 3:** Reflecting on the Transatlantic Slave Trade and Presentations  
*Required Reading:*
- Hartman, *Lose your Mother*

*Recommended Readings:*

**December 5:** Presentations

**Final Papers are due by email on December 13 before 5 pm. No late papers will be accepted!**