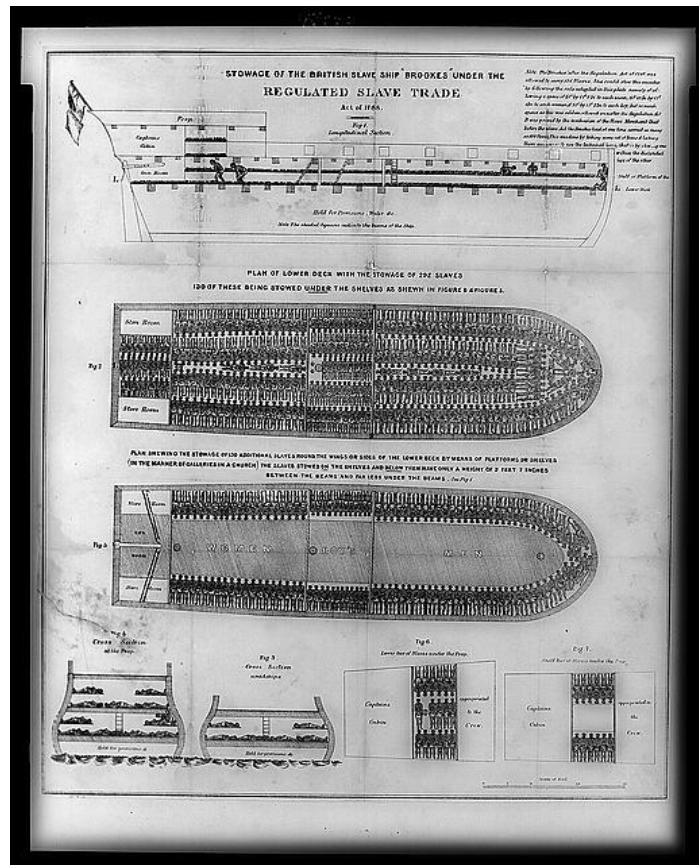


English 206
Fall 2012
Professor Michael Drexler
MWF 11 – 11:52a

Office: 233 Vaughan Lit
570 577-1319
Office Hours: TBA

Slave Narratives

From the 18th- through the early 20th century, expatriated African slaves and their African-American descendants responded to slavery and white supremacy in autobiographies that bore witness to the experiences of human bondage. These texts, more than 100 published between 1740 and 1920, were promoted by the transatlantic abolitionist movement, but also gained a broad popular readership. The narratives are generally written in the first person, and reveal compelling story telling and rhetorical innovation. Sometimes recorded by white writers (amanuenses) and written after successful flight north, slave narratives also testify to the complex relationship between whites and blacks as the nation moved through the Civil War into Reconstruction and more recently through the Civil Rights Era of the 1960s. Slave narrators also inspired some of the United States' most famous authors to appropriate their stories into fiction. From Stowe, Melville, and Twain to William Styron and Toni Morrison, the narrative of the slave continues to animate discussions about race, region, authorship, and political agency. In this class, we will read widely in the genre, beginning in the late 18th century and ending with interviews recorded in the 1930s by the Works Progress Administration, one of the major Depression era interventions in the debilitated labor market.



As a W2, students will be expected to take notes in class, do frequent writing exercises to synthesize knowledge and engage with the readings, and produce 2 finished essays. We will discuss the writing process in class, work on revising prose in peer editing sessions and tutorials out of class.

Learning Goals

Diversity in the United States

We will read work by both black and white authors to explore how slavery was represented and contested in the 19th-century America.

Humanities--Textual Analysis and Interpretation

Students will interpret texts with awareness of the texts' basic orientation in the world and will be able to construct arguments about the genre using evidence and tools of critical analysis current in English Studies. Students will be encouraged to respond creatively and personally to course materials.

Disciplinary Depth

Slave Narratives is an approved W2 writing course.

For English Majors/Minors

Slave Narratives fulfills the English Department African-American/Post-Colonial requirement and the Enlightenment and 19th Century requirement. Under the old major, the course fulfills the 19th Century requirement.

Graded Work

Five short papers (2-4 pages). Topics will be discussed and/or assigned in class at least a week before the assignment is due. Each paper will count toward 8% of the final grade (total=40%).

Two substantial essays (6-8 pages). Topics to be determined between students and professor and based on work done on the shorter paper assignments and writing exercises. Each essay is worth 25% of the final grade (total=50%). Students will revise their work after individual appointments or in-class peer editing sessions. Revised grades will count double the initial grade. (Grade on first draft + Grade on revised draft x 2) divided by 3.

Participation: Participation will be evaluated continuously. Engaging in class discussion both in the whole and in groups is mandatory. You will be called on frequently to discuss your views. 10% of the final grade.

Attendance Policy

Miss more than 6 classes for any reason and fail the course. At my discretion, I will issue a warning about your attendance. After that warning, all future absences will lower your final grade 1/3 of a letter.

Course Materials

Andrews, *Slave Narratives* (Penguin/Library of America)

Melville, *Bartleby and Benito Cereno* (Dover)

Stowe, *Dred; or a Tale of the Dismal Swamp* (UNC Press)

IMPORTANT!

Many of our readings are online only. Links to the readings appear on the syllabus below. You must bring a copy of each reading with you to class on the day we are scheduled to discuss that text. I do NOT care whether you bring the readings as printouts, on your computer screens, or on an electronic reader or tablet. I can help you get the readings onto your device.

Please be familiar with Bucknell's Academic Dishonesty Policy. Cases of suspected plagiarism will be forwarded to the Dean for adjudication.

	Date	Readings	Written work
Wed	22-Aug		
Fri	24-Aug	An Introduction to the Literature of Slavery in the US	
Mon	27-Aug	Legality of Slavery and Citizenship 1. Slave Code of S. Carolina (1740) 2. Resolves of the First Continental Congress (1774); 3. US Declaration of Independence (1776); please also read the rough draft of the declaration, too. 4. Haitian Declaration of Independence (1804); 5. Selections from the Haitian and US Constitutions	
Wed	29-	Warnings and Promises	

	Aug	1. Abraham Johnstone, The Address of Abraham Johnstone, a Black Man, Who Was Hanged at Woodbury , NJ, 1797 (47 pgs)	
Fri	31-Aug	2. Venture Smith, A Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Venture, a Native of Africa , NY, 1798 (32 pgs) 3. Confession of John Joyce , PA, 1808 (36 pgs)	
Mon	3-Sep	4. Continued	Short essay #1 Due in Class
Wed	5-Sep	Free People of Color 1. William Grimes, Life of William Grimes, the Runaway Slave , CT, 1825 (68 pgs)	
Fri	7-Sep	2. Robert Voorhis, Life and Adventures of Robert, the Hermit of Massachusetts: Who Has Lived 14 Years in a Cave, Secluded from Human Society , NJ, SC, MA, 1829 (36 pgs)	
Mon	10-Sep	3. David Walker, A Preamble to the Coloured Citizens of the World , 1830	Short Essay #2 Due in Class
Wed	12-Sep	Workshop	
Fri	14-Sep	Workshop	
Mon	17-Sep	Insurrection 1. Confessions of Nat Turner , Virginia, 1831 (23 pgs) 2. Henry Highland Garnet, An Address to the Slaves of the United States of America, Buffalo , N.Y., 1843 (10 pgs) 3. Harriet Beecher Stowe, <i>Dred: A Tale of the Dismal Swamp</i>	
Wed	19-Sep	4. Stowe	

Fri	21-Sep	5. Stowe	
Mon	24-Sep	6. Stowe	
Wed	26-Sep	7. Stowe 8. Richard Hildreth, The White Slave; or Memoirs of a Fugitive	Short Essay #3 Due in Class
Fri	28-Sep	9. Stowe and Hildreth	
Mon	1-Oct	10. Stowe and Hildreth	
Wed	3-Oct	11. Stowe and Hildreth	
Fri	5-Oct	12. Stowe and Hildreth	Paper #1 Due in Class
Mon	8-Oct	FALL BREAK	
Wed	10-Oct	Workshop	
Fri	12-Oct	Workshop	
Mon	15-Oct	13. Melville, <i>Benito Cereno</i>	
Wed	17-Oct	14. Melville, <i>Benito Cereno</i>	
Fri	19-Oct	15. Melville, <i>Benito Cereno</i>	
Mon	22-Oct	The Antebellum South 1. Henry Bibb, Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Henry Bibb , KY, 1849 (<i>Slave Narratives</i>)	
Wed	24-Oct	2. John Brown, Slave Life in Georgia , GA, 1855 (250 pgs)	Short Essay #4 Due in Class
Fri	26-Oct	3. John Brown	
Mon	29-Oct	The Canonical Male Narrative 1. Frederick Douglass, <i>Narrative of the Life</i> , 1845 (<i>Slave Narratives</i>)	

Wed	31-Oct	2. Douglass	
Fri	2-Nov	3. Frederick Douglass, " What to the Slave is the Fourth of July? "	
Mon	5-Nov	The Canonical Female Narrative 1. Harriet Jacobs, Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl (<i>Slave Narratives</i>)	
Wed	7-Nov	2. Jacobs	
Fri	9-Nov	3. Jacobs	
Mon	12-Nov		Paper #2 Due in Class
Wed	14-Nov	4. William and Ellen Craft, <i>Running a Thousand Miles for Freedom</i> , 1860 (<i>Slave Narratives</i>)	
Fri	16-Nov	5. Craft	
Mon	19-Nov	6. Craft	
Wed	21-Nov	THANKSGIVING BREAK	
Fri	23-Nov		
Mon	26-Nov	Revising/Revisiting the Plantation 1. Joel Chandler Harris	
Wed	28-Nov	2. Charles Chesnutt, "The Conjure Woman" and "Dave's Neckliss"	
Fri	30-Nov	3. WPA Narratives	
Mon	3-Dec		Short Essay #5 Due in Class

