

SLAVERY AND FREEDOM: Political Thought Capstone

Mondays, 11:30 – 2:20, Founders College 103

This course examines the theory and practice of freedom in terms of the historical dialectic of slavery and resistance. Emphasis is placed on concepts of freedom developed in the “slave societies” of ancient Greece and Rome and in early-modern Britain, the United States and Haiti in the era of modern plantation slavery and the revolutionary struggle against it.

Required Texts

Orlando Patterson, *Freedom*, volume 1

Domenico Losurdo, *Liberalism: A Counter History*

Edmund S. Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom*

C.L.R. James, *The Black Jacobins* (available at: [http://ouleft.org/wp-content/uploads/CLR James The Black Jacobins.pdf](http://ouleft.org/wp-content/uploads/CLR_James_The_Black_Jacobins.pdf))

PLUS: Readings from Plato, Aristotle, Locke, Hegel and Marx as indicated below

Recommended (and highly relevant to final paper topics):

M. I. Finley, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology*

Yvon Garlan, *Slavery and Ancient Greece (revised edition)*

G. de Ste. Croix, *Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World*

Ellen Meiksins Wood, *Peasant-Citizen and Slave*

Sarah B. Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves*

Sandra E. Joshel, *Slavery in the Roman World*

Daniel P. Mannix, *Black Cargoes: A History of the Atlantic Slave Trade*

Marcus Rediker, *The Slave Ship: A Human History*

Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*

Edward E. Baptist, *The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and . . . American Capitalism*

Greg Grandin, *The Empire of Necessity: Slavery, Freedom and Deception in the New World*

Robin Blackburn, *The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery*

W. E. B. DuBois, *Black Reconstruction in America*

Eric Foner, *Nothing but Freedom: Emancipation and its Legacy*

Marcus Rediker, *The Amistad Rebellion: An Atlantic Odyssey of Slavery and Freedom*

Susan Buck-Morss, *Hegel, Haiti and Universal History*

David Brion Davis, *Slavery and Western Culture*

David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution*

Laurent Dubois, *Avengers of the New World*

Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Robin Blackburn, *An Unfinished Revolution* (with texts from Marx and Engels)

David Roediger, *Seizing Freedom: Slave Emancipation and Liberty for All*

Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*

Grading Scheme

Short essay (2000 words due February 27) – 25%

Five-minute presentation – 10%

Seminar participation – 25%

Final essay (4000 words due April 1) – 40%

January 9 – **Course Introduction**

January 16 – **Ancient Slavery and “the Greek Origins of Freedom”**

Readings: Patterson, Ch. 2-5; and M. I. Finley, “Between Slavery and Freedom” available at davidmcnally.org

January 23 – **Greek Democracy and the Debate over Slavery and Freedom**

Readings: Patterson, Ch. 6-9; Plato, *The Laws*, Book Six, “The Problem of Slavery” through “Women Must Join the Communal Meals” 776-782; Aristotle, *The Politics*, Book I.

January 30 – **Freedom and Servitude from Rome to the Medieval World and to Early European Colonialism**

Readings: Patterson, Ch. 11-15, 20-22; and Morgan, Ch. 1-2

February 6 – **Colonialism, Bonded Labour and New World Slavery in Colonial America**

Readings: Morgan, Ch. 3-6 and Ch. 7, pp. 153-7; Losurdo, Ch. 1

Recommended: Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*; Daniel P. Mannix, *Black Cargoes*

February 13 – **Liberty, Property and Slavery, 1: Locke and English Liberalism**

Readings: Losurdo, Ch. 2- 4; Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, Ch. 3-5, 16, 18 and “The Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina”

Recommended: D. McNally, “Locke, Levellers and Liberty: Property and Democracy in the Thought of the First Whigs,” *History of Political Thought* (1988)

February 20 – READING WEEK

February 27 – **Liberty, Property and Slavery, 2: Racism and the American Colonial Experience**

Readings: Morgan, Ch. 11-13, 15-16, 18

March 6 – **Beyond Slavery: From Hegel to the Black Jacobins**

Readings: Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, B.IV.A (“Lordship and Bondage”); C.L.R. James, Ch. 1-6; Losurdo, Ch. 5

Recommended: Susan Buck-Morss, *Hegel, Haiti and Universal History*

March 13 – **The Politics of Emancipation: From Haiti to America and Europe**

Readings: James, Ch. 7-13; Losurdo, Ch. 6

March 20 – Research week (preliminary work on final essay)

March 27 – **The West and the Barbarians: Racial Domination after Slavery**

Readings: Losurdo, Ch. 7-9; Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, Ch. 1

April 3 – **Freedom Dreams**

Readings: Toussaint L’Ouverture, “Proclamation,” August 29, 1793, and Letters of July 1792 and November 1797, available at davidmcnally.org; also:

- Marx, “Address of the International Working Men’s Association to Abraham Lincoln,” first published, January 7, 1865:
<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/iwma/documents/1864/lincoln-letter.htm>
- Salome Lee, “Until We are All Abolitionists: Marx on Slavery, Race and Class” available at: davidmcnally.org
- Lucy Parsons, Speeches to the Founding of the Industrial Workers of the World:
https://www.google.ca/search?q=Lucy+Parsons,+Speeches+to+the+Founding+of+the+Industrial+Workers+of+the+World&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8&gws_rd=cr&ei=fAVsWLa6EundjwSFvpWABg
- Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, Conclusion (available in PDF)