

“Arts and Cultures of the Slave South”
CCFA 202/ARTH 263/ARH 242
Maurie D. McInnis and Louis P. Nelson
MW 3:30-4:45
Physics 203

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“Arts and Cultures of the Slave South” is an undergraduate, interdisciplinary course that covers the American South to the Civil War. While the course centers on the visual arts—architecture, material culture, decorative arts, painting, and sculpture—it is not designed as a regional history of art, but an exploration of the interrelations between history, material and visual cultures, foodways, music and literature in the formation of Southern identities. The course will cover subjects ranging from African American spirituals to creolization and ethnicities in Louisiana, from the plantation architectures of both big house and outbuildings to the narratives of former slaves. In the process, students will be introduced to the interpretive methods central to a wide range of disciplines, from archaeology and anthropology, to art and architectural history, to material culture, literature, and musicology. In addition to two weekly lectures by co-faculty Maurie McInnis and Louis Nelson, students will also attend weekly discussion sections and special events including guest lectures, field trips, movie nights, and demonstrations and samplings of traditional southern foods.

Course Requirements

Semester Paper	25%
Group Presentation	10%
Class Participation	15%
Field Trip Paper	5%
Mid-Term Exam	20%
Final Exam	25%

Dates to remember

Jan. 31	Last day to drop
Feb. 24	Field Trip
Feb. 28	Midterm
Mar. 19	1 st Paper due
Mar. 21	Last day to withdraw
Mar. 24/25	Southern Foodways
Apr. 22	Movie Night
Varies (see below)	2 nd Paper due
May 5	Final exam 2-5

Policies

- Attendance in weekly section is required.
- More than two absences will result in lowering your section grade by ten points per absence.
- Make-up policy. In order to be eligible for a make-up you must have your absence approved beforehand.
- Writing assignments are to be handed in at the beginning of class on the day they are due. Those submitted late will lose one letter grade for every 24 hours (A to B, etc.) or portion thereof. Writing assignments may not be submitted by e-mail.

Semester Project

At the beginning of the semester, students will be broken into working groups of three or four from within their discussion sessions, and each group will select one of the many visual arts objects from the class web site. Each object will have a series of research questions and a short bibliography to assist in initial research. These questions will range widely often branching into different disciplines and non-visual modes of artistic expression. Students will be responsible for selecting an object as a group and selecting their individual research questions. These projects are designed to be simultaneously group and individual research projects. While students are encouraged to share research within the group, each individual will be responsible for researching one of those questions and developing a contextual interpretation of the object.

Working together as a group will allow students to share research and information. But, more importantly, giving each student their own research agenda will demonstrate — through experience—the diversity of interpretive possibilities of any one object. The

breadth of the questions will send students to unexpected sources of knowledge to help build the context necessary to answer the question.

In-Section Oral Presentation

Beginning the week of Apr. 16, section meetings will be dedicated to 20 minute illustrated group presentations. Each team will be responsible for introducing their object to the section and then each individual will summarize the findings from his/her research. This will provide the entire section the opportunity to see the multiple interpretive possibilities of objects very different from their own.

Paper

Each student will turn in a 5-7 page research paper [12 point font, double spaced] based on his/her research question. Papers are due (in section) one week after the in-class presentation. For those presenting the week of Apr. 23-27, papers will be due Thursday May 3, by 5 p.m. in the TA's mailbox in Fayerweather Hall.

Field Trip

This class includes a required field trip to a site that expands upon the course material. We have planned a visit to Shirley Plantation in Charles City, County. The house was built in the 1730s and the property has a number of late 18th-century outbuildings. Students will have an opportunity to see the 1st floor of the main house and tour a number of the outbuildings. We will also visit Cloverfields Plantation in Albemarle County. The plantation is privately owned and features a mid-19th-century main house and a number of late 18th to mid-19th-century outbuildings including a smokehouse/dairy, kitchen, and a slave quarter. Visiting the two plantations allows us to discuss differences between 18th and 19th-century plantations as well as Chesapeake and Piedmont sites.



Students may opt to visit an alternative site, but should get approval from faculty beforehand. Students are expected to write a 2-3 page response paper (12 point font, double spaced) in which they consider some aspect of the site in relation to material presented in class or readings.

Exams

The exams in this class will be essay questions driven by pairs of slides. Students will be shown two objects familiar from readings or lectures and asked a question that concentrates less on factual information and more on broader contextual and analytical issues. Like the mid-term, the final will have a series of slide pairs. In addition, there will be one long essay question. Well before the exam, four essay questions will be handed

out. Two will appear on the exam; you will be expected to write on one. You are encouraged to work together in groups in preparing answers for these final essays; part of the learning process is learning from your peers. You will ultimately have to judge whether you find their insights worthy of your answer. Your answers to these essay questions should reference bibliography covered in the class.

Texts (available at the UVa bookstore)

Required

Wood, Betty. *Slavery in Colonial America, 1619-1776*. Oxford: Roman and Littlefield, 2005.

White, Shane and Graham White. *The Sounds of Slavery: Discovering African American History through Songs, Sermons, and Speech*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2005.

McInnis, Maurie D. *The Politics of Taste in Antebellum Charleston*. University of North Carolina Press, 2005.

Before Freedom Came. Richmond, VA: Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities, 1996.

Reading packet at Brillig Books, Elliewood Avenue



Weekly Class Schedule

NOTE: An asterisk(*) denotes readings in the course packet.

Framing the Slave South

January 17: Introduction

January 22: The South in 1700

Readings:

Betty Wood, *Slavery in Colonial America, 1619-1776*. Oxford: Roman and Littlefield, 2005. Read chapters 1 & 2, primary documents 1B, 1C, 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D

*Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982, 1999. Read: “The Setting and the Action.”

(Dis)Continuities?

January 24: January 24: Material Africanisms

January 29: Guest Lecture--Scott Deveaux, McIntire Department of Music

Readings:

*Richard Westmacott, *African-American Gardens and Yards in the Rural South*, (University of Tennessee Press, 1992), 9-20.

Shane White and Graham White, *The Sounds of Slavery: Discovering African American History through Songs, Sermons, and Speech* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2005), chapters 2 and 3.

*Mechal Sobel, *The World They Made Together: Black and White Values in Eighteenth-Century Virginia* (Princeton University Press, 1987), pp. 100-126.

Georgianization

January 31: The Georgian South

February 5: In Pursuit of Refinement

Readings:

*Kevin M. Sweeney, "High-Style Vernacular: Lifestyles of the Colonial Elite," *Of Consuming Interests: The Style of Life in the Eighteenth Century* edited by Cary Carson, Ronald Hoffman and Peter J. Albert (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1994): 1-58.

*Karin Calvert, "The Function of Fashion in Eighteenth-Century America," *Of Consuming Interests: The Style of Life in the Eighteenth Century* edited by Cary Carson, Ronald Hoffman and Peter J. Albert (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1994): 252-283.

Maurie D. McInnis, *The Politics of Taste in Antebellum Charleston* (University of North Carolina Press, 2005), chapter 9.

"Washington's Rules of Civility"

<http://www.history.org/Almanack/life/manners/rules2.cfm>

*Shane White and Graham White, *Stylin': African American Expressive Culture from Its Beginnings to the Zoot Suit* (Cornell University Press, 1998), pp. 5-36.

Plantation Landscapes

February 7: Plantations I

February 12: Plantations II

February 14: Guest Lecture--Fraser Neiman, Monticello

Readings:

Campbell and Rice, eds. *Before Freedom Came*, pp. 1-101.

Betty Wood, *Slavery in Colonial America, 1619-1776*. Oxford: Roman and Littlefield, 2005. Read chapters 3 & 4, primary documents 3A-3C, 4A-4C.

- *Dell Upton, "White and Black Landscapes in Eighteenth-Century Virginia," in *Material Life in America, 1600-1860* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1988), pp. 357-69.
- *Clifton Ellis, "The Mansion House at Berry Hill Plantation: Architecture and the Changing Nation of Slavery in Antebellum Virginia," *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture* 13.1 (2006): 22-48.
- Deborah Gray White, "Female Slaves in the Plantation South," in *Before Freedom Came*, pp. 101-123.
- *Catherine Clinton, *The Plantation Mistress: Women's World in the Old South* (Pantheon, 1982), pp. 3-15.

Southern Landscapes

February 19: Religious Landscapes

February 21: The Urban South

February 24: (Saturday) Field Trip

February 26: Constructing the South

Readings:

- *Louis P. Nelson, "Word, Shape, and Image: Anglican Constructions of the Sacred," in *American Sanctuary: Understanding Sacred Spaces*.
- *Catherine W. Bishir, "Black Builders in Antebellum North Carolina," *Southern Built: American Architecture, Regional Practice* (University of Virginia Press, 2006), pp. 69-109.
- Maurie D. McInnis, *The Politics of Taste in Antebellum Charleston*, chapters 1-2.
- David R. Goldfield, "Black Life in Old South Cities," in *Before Freedom Came*, pp. 123-153.
- *John Davis, "Eastman Johnson's *Negro Life at the South* and Urban Slavery in Washington D.C.," *Art Bulletin* 80.1 (1998): 67-92.
- Shane White and Graham White, *The Sounds of Slavery: Discovering African American History through Songs, Sermons, and Speech* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2005), chapter 8.

February 28: Midterm

March 3-11: Spring Break

Cultural Engagement

March 12: Native Americans

March 14: Backcountry and Creoles

March 19: African-Americans

Readings:

- *Jonathan Prown, "The Backcountry," *Southern Furniture, 1680-1830: The Colonial Williamsburg Collection* (Colonial Williamsburg Foundation: 1997): 35-46.
- *Charles W. Joyner, *Down by the Riverside: A South Carolina Slave Community* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984): pp. 203-209, 235-240.
- *Jay D. Edwards, "Cultural Identifications in Architecture: The Case of the New Orleans Townhouse," *Traditional Dwellings and Settlement Review* 5 (Fall 1993): 16-32.
- *Jay D. Edwards, *A Creole Lexicon*, (Louisiana State University Press, 2004), pp. xix-xxvii.
- *Christopher C. Fennell, "Conjuring Boundaries: Inferring Past Identities from Religious Artifacts," *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 4.4. (2000): 281-313.

Musical Engagements

March 21: Guest Lecture--Eric Lott, English Department

March 26: Guest Lecture--Richard Will, McIntire Department of Music

Readings:

- *Paul Farnsworth and Laurie Wilkie, "Fish and Grits: Southern, African and British Influences on Bahamian Foodways," in *Caribbean and Southern*, pp. 34-72.
- *Damon Lee Fowler, ed. *Dining at Monticello* (University of North Carolina Press, 2005), pp. 19-46.

Southern Foodways

March 24: Group 1

March 25: Group 2

March 28: NO CLASS

African American Religions

April 2: Guest Lecture--Melvin Butler, McIntire Department of Music

April 4: Guest Lecture--Valerie Cooper, Department of Religious Studies

Readings:

- Shane White and Graham White, *The Sounds of Slavery: Discovering African American History through Songs, Sermons, and Speech* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2005), chapter 6.

- Betty Wood, *Slavery in Colonial America, 1619-1776*. Oxford: Roman and Littlefield, 2005. Read chapters 5, primary documents 5A-5C.
- *Martha Ward, "Where Circum-Caribbean Afro-Catholic Creoles Met American Southern Conjurors: Origins of New Orleans Voodoo," in *Caribbean and Southern*, pp. 124-138.

Politics, Personalities, and Places

April 9: The Politics of Consumption

April 11: George Washington's Mount Vernon

April 16: Denmark Vesey's Charleston

Readings:

- *T. H. Breen, "An Empire of Goods: The Anglicization of Colonial America," *The Journal of British Studies* 25 (October 1986): 467-99.
- Theresa A. Singleton, "The Archaeology of Slave Life," in *Before Freedom Came*, pp. 155-175.
- Maurie D. McInnis, *The Politics of Taste in Antebellum Charleston* (University of North Carolina Press, 2005), chapter 5.
- Betty Wood, *Slavery in Colonial America, 1619-1776*. Oxford: Roman and Littlefield, 2005. Read chapter 6.
- Maurie D. McInnis, *The Politics of Taste in Antebellum Charleston* (University of North Carolina Press, 2005), chapter 6 and 8.
- *Jean B. Lee, ed. *Experiencing Mount Vernon: Eyewitness Accounts, 1784-1865* (University of Virginia Press, 2006), pp. 26-53.
- *Lionel H. Kennedy and Thomas Parker, "An Official Report of the Trials of Sundry Negroes," (Charleston, 1822), pp. 41-73, 140-146.

Film Screening

April 22, 5 p.m.: Portions of *Gone with the Wind* and *Roots*

Southern Legacies

April 18: Guest Lecture--Lisa Woolfork, Department of English

April 23: Guest Lecture--Ed Ayers, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences

April 25: Dell Upton--Department of Architectural History

April 30: The South in 1900

Readings:

- *Kirk Savage, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument in Nineteenth-Century America* (Princeton University Press, 1997), pp. 52-88.
- *Ed Ayers, "What We Talk About When We Talk About the South," *What Caused the Civil War: Reflections on the South and Southern History* (NY: Norton, 2005), pp. 37-64.
- Film: *Gone With the Wind* and *Roots* (reserve in Clemons)

May 5: Final Exam (14:00-17:00)