

Professor Kathleen Brown Spring 2024



DO YOU KNOW PENN'S  
HIDDEN HISTORY?

TAKE THE TOUR  
TODAY

**HISTORY/AFRICANA 3173  
PENN & SLAVERY PROJECT RESEARCH SEMINAR**

**DRAFT SYLLABUS SUBJECT TO CHANGE (dates will be reformatted for Spring 2024)**

This research seminar provides students with instruction in basic historical methods and an opportunity to conduct collaborative primary source research into the University of Pennsylvania's historic connections to slavery, medical racism, racist science, and the lives of Black people in Philadelphia. We will meet together weekly on Tuesdays from 1:45-3:45. During the rest of the weekly class time, students are expected to meet in smaller breakout groups and to pursue individual and collaborative research at university and area archives and on online research sites.

After an initial orientation to the P&SP's findings to date and to archival research methods, students will plunge into actual research. Students will receive special training in online archival research with a certified genealogist, Scott Wilds, who has worked closely with the Penn and Slavery Project, as well as with archivists at the Kislak Center and the University Archives. We will also take advantage of online resources at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, the American Philosophical Society, and the Library Company. During the final month of the semester, students will begin drafting research reports and preparing for a final public presentation of the work. There will be opportunities to collaborate with and seek guidance from former student researchers and to get involved in the project's ongoing activities including its augmented reality campus tour and participation in the project's website.

Goals for the seminar:

- 1) Learn basic historical research methods
- 2) Produce accurate, original research about Penn's historic connections to slavery and about the lives of African-descended people in Philadelphia and elsewhere
- 3) Develop skills in collaboration, transparency, clear communication, and fair acknowledgement of the work of other researchers
- 4) Learn about the importance of historical context for understanding the past
- 5) Learn about the historian's ethical responsibilities to the people of the past and the people of the present
- 6) Develop skills in communicating and presenting original research

Required final project:

- Produce a research product with a public "face:" an article for publication, a pop-up exhibit at the library, a substantial contribution to the PSP website, a public presentation, or an idea of your own on any of the following:
  - Penn faculty, students, trustees, or alumni who supported or facilitated slavery through their institutional, academic, or professional endeavors

- the enslaved people whose labor was appropriated to support the growing university
  - follow up on Zarina Inman's work on the Long Island enslavers who sent their children to school in Philadelphia
  - follow up on AnnaLisa Lowenstein's work on the people enslaved by the Cadwalader family
- the Penn Medical School's leading role in producing, articulating, and justifying scientific racism
  - specific suggestion: follow up on the physicians discussed in Marie Jenkins Schwartz's *Birth of a Slave*. Do any of them have Penn connections?
  - Specific suggestion: follow up on Professor Brown's recommendations for examining southern medical students
- the lives of African Americans connected to Penn during the era of Penn's continued institutional support of racist medicine, whether or not they were enslaved
  - specific suggestion: follow up on Mona Haggagid's work on free Black Philadelphians who rented property from Penn at the end of the eighteenth century. What happens to them?
- the participation of Penn students and alumni in the national and local conflicts over abolition
  - specific suggestion: follow up on Sophie Nichols's work on student participation in anti-abolition and anti-Black actions in the city
- the participation of Penn students and alumni in the national and local conflicts over the status of refugees from slavery: participation in local Vigilance Committees, and the legal defense of refugees as well as the enforcers of federal Fugitive Slave Laws, especially after the passage of the 1850 Fugitive Slave Law.
- the links between Penn and race medicine as developed and practiced on African Americans and Native Americans
- translations and repurposing of PSP archival materials and research reports into K-12 classroom usable resources
- publicizing the P&SP Augmented Reality Project

**Grading:**

- Regular attendance and steady progress on your research and final project: 40%
- Respectful collaboration with others 10%
- Mastery of basic historical research techniques 20%
- Public presentation or public facing project 10%
- Final research report 10%

Class meetings: All classes and individual meetings will be face to face

**Aug. 30** Introductory Meeting: all students

- Introduction to course; see website <http://pennandslaveryproject.org>
- Introduction to the Augmented Reality project
- Instructions about completing reading assignments

**Sept. 6** Research methods and sources

Presentation by Mr. Jim Duffin, UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

**Sept. 13** Research methods and sources

Presentation by Mr. John Pollack, KISLAK CENTER

**Sept. 20** Online research

- Presentation by Mr. Scott Wilds, genealogist, about the online research methods that will be crucial to supplement your archival research

**Sept. 27** Discussion of previous PSP research and assigned reading

**Reading due:** Craig Wilder, *Ebony and Ivy* (selections)

Gary Nash, *Forging Freedom* (e-book)

R.H. Blackett, *The Captive's Quest for Freedom* (selections from section on Pennsylvania)

Morey and Willoughby, eds, *Medicine and Healing in the Age of Slavery* (selections)

Selected P&SP reports on website

**Oct. 4** Individual meetings with Professor Brown/research proposal/begin your research

**Oct. 11** Individual meetings with Professor Brown/research proposal/begin your research

**Oct. 18** Class discussion of proposals and research

**Oct. 25** Class discussion of proposals and research

**Nov. 1** RESEARCH/Individual meetings

**Nov. 8** RESEARCH/Individual meetings

**Nov. 15** RESEARCH/Individual meetings

**NO CLASS DURING THANKSGIVING RECESS WEEK**

**Nov. 29 DUE:** Drafts of Research Reports or Final Projects

**Dec. 6** Class discussion—plan for presentation

Pop up presentations: **TBA Friday Dec. 9**

**Final presentation: TBA MONDAY Dec. 12**

**DUE Dec. 16 Final research reports or projects**