**Slavery and the Constitution:**



**From Colonial Slave Codes to the 13th Amendment NOVEMBER 14-16, 2014** } **AGENDA**

**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2014**

4:00–5:00 p.m. **Check-In**

6:00–7:00 p.m. **Opening Dinner**

7:00–7:15 p.m. **Welcome & Agenda Overview**

7:15–8:30 p.m. **Opening Activity: Finding Solutions for the Intractable Problem of American Slavery**

― **Holt Merchant,** *Professor of History, emeritus, at Washington and Lee University*

― **Lynn Uzzell,** *Scholar in Residence, Robert H. Smith Center for the Constitution at James Madison’s Montpelier*

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2014**

8:00–9:00 a.m. **Breakfast**

9:00–10:30 a.m. **Slavery and its Appearance in British North America**

― **Holt Merchant**

*Essential Questions/Themes Addressed:*

* What is slavery?
* Why and how did slavery evolve in Virginia? In North America?
* What conditions led historian David Brion Davis to conclude that the emergence of slavery in Virginia was all but inevitable?
* What Questions did the Declaration of Independence force slave holders to confront?

*Readings to be Addressed:*

* David Brion Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, chapter 6
* Eugene Genovese *Roll, Jordan, Roll*, pp. 3-7
* Winthrop Jordon, *White over Black*, pp.66-85
* Philip Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint*, pp. 1-23
* Declaration of Independence, introduction only
* Northwest Ordinance of 1787

10:30–10:45 a.m. **Break**

10:45 a.m.–12:15 p.m. **Slavery in the States and in the Constitution**

― ***Lynn Uzzell***

*Essential Questions/Themes Addressed:*

* What was the status of slavery within the states before the Constitutional Convention?
* What reasons did the South give for wanting full representation for the slaves, and the North none at all? How important was the question of direct taxation to the final three-fifths compromise?
* Why did the Convention agree to allow the slave trade to continue for 20 years?
* In what ways did the different states understand the Constitution differently during the ratifying debates?

*Readings to be Addressed:*

* Declarations of Rights from Virginia and Massachusetts, with Commentary
* Pennsylvania’s Gradual Abolition Act
* Selections from the debates at the Constitutional Convention
* Selections from the Ratifying Debates

12:15–1:00 p.m. **Working Lunch**

1:00–3:00 p.m. **Enslaved Community Tour**

3:00–3:15 p.m. **Break**

3:15–4:15 p.m. **Breakout Discussion**

4:15–5:30 p.m. **“We Have the Wolf by the Ear”: The Earliest Constitutional Divisions over Slavery**

― ***Lynn Uzzell***

*Essential Questions/Themes Addressed:*

* What limitations did the Constitution place on Congress regarding slavery? Consider the individual clauses as well as the structure of the Union.
* What could Congress have done to ameliorate the slavery problem that they failed to do? What did Congress do to exacerbate the problem of slavery under the new Constitution?

*Readings to be Addressed:*

* Joseph Ellis, “The Silence,” from *Founding Brothers*
* Madison’s speeches in the First Congress on the $10 tax
* Reactions to the debates in Congress (Ben Franklin’s “Historicus” and James Madison to Benjamin Rush)
* Abolishing the Slave Trade: Jefferson’s State of the Union and Congress’s response
* The “Guarantee Clause,” a few interpretations
* The Fugitive Slave Act of 1793
* *Prigg v. Pennsylvania*, selections

5:30-6:00 p.m. **Reception**

6:00-7:00 p.m. **Dinner**

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2014**

8:00–9:00 a.m. **Breakfast**

9:00–10:15 a.m. **New Controversies in the Expanding Republic**

― ***Holt Merchant***

*Essential Questions:*

* Why did Americans begin working for a variety of reforms during the 1830s?
* Why did Americans focus on emancipation as the most critical of those reforms?
* How did Americans try to accomplish those reforms? What obstacles did they face? How successful were their efforts?
* How did the expansion of the nation into the West complicate their efforts?

*Readings to be Addressed:*

* Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, Queries #14 & 18
* *Missouri Compromise*
* *Garrison’s Declaration,* Liberator*, first issue*
* *Compromise of 1850*
* *Kansas-Nebraska Act*
* *Lincoln Douglas Debates, excerpts*
* *David Potter, Impending Crisis*, Chpts. 1 and 17

10:15–10:30 a.m. **Break**

10:30–11:45 a.m. **Competing Theories of the Constitution and Slavery**

― ***Lynn Uzzell***

*Essential Questions/Themes Addressed:*

* Based on our readings of the Constitutional Convention, can Frederick Douglass’ interpretation of the Constitution be supported?
* Both Justice Taney and Abraham Lincoln interpreted the Constitution in light of their understanding of the Declaration of Independence. How do their interpretations differ? Is Alexander Douglas’ opinion about Jefferson more in line with Taney or Lincoln?
* What is the “authentic” reading of the Constitution with regards to slavery? What was Congress empowered to do, constitutionally, to work toward the abolition of slavery?

*Readings to be Addressed:*

* *William Lloyd Garrison, “On the Constitution and the Union,” and an account of his burning of the Constitution*
* *Frederick Douglass, “The Constitution of the United States: Is It Pro-Slavery or Anti-Slavery?”*
* *John C. Calhoun, “Speech on the Oregon Bill”*
* Dred Scott v. Sandford*, selections*
* *Alexander Stephens, “Cornerstone” Speech*
* *Stephen Douglas on the Declaration of Independence*
* *Lincoln, “Speech on the Repeal of the Missouri Compromise,” Oct. 16, 1854, excerpts*
* *Lincoln on Dred Scott*

11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m. **Working Lunch**

12:30–1:45 p.m. **The Civil War: The Beginning of the End of American Slavery**

― ***Holt Merchant***

*Essential Questions/Themes Addressed:*

* How did Lincoln deal with slavery before 1860? Before 1863? In 1865?
* How did the Federal Constitution complicate his efforts to contain slavery? To abolish slavery?
* How did the Democratic Party in the North complicate Lincoln’s efforts?
* How did Lincoln finally abolish slavery?

*Readings to be Addressed:*

* Lincoln’s First and Second Inaugural
* Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation
* David Donald, *Lincoln*, chpts 13 and 16.

1:45–2:45 p.m. **Review, Summation, and Discussion/Q&A**

**― *Holt Merchant***

**― *Lynn Uzzell***

*Essential Questions/Themes Addressed:*

* How has your understanding of the problem of American slavery been changed, if it has been changed at all, during this weekend?
* Has anything we discussed since yesterday afternoon changed your thinking on your individual group assignment?
* Are there any further questions that should have been addressed?

2:45–3:00 p.m. **Evaluation Session**

3:00 p.m. **Adjourn**