This course counts toward the GSFS Major

Words of Caution: This course will engage many messy and potentially uncomfortable topics in American history and culture. If a particular class threatens to provoke feelings of panic or trauma in you, please talk with us in advance.

Purchase the following books at the Oberlin Bookstore (Note: if you wish to purchase these books elsewhere, you must be sure to purchase the editions listed here).

Schedule of Classes

Week 1: Introductions

Tuesday, September 1: Introductions to the professors, the students, the course, the syllabus, and the book, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, itself.

Thursday, September 3: Starting Points: What knowledge and assumptions do we bring with us to our reading of UTC? What are your first reactions?

In addition, we will check in on your reactions to the UTC chapters assigned for today.

Assignments:
- Read the syllabus for English/History 344 carefully, and post any questions about the course or the syllabus on the Piazza section of the class BlackBoard site by 8 pm on Wednesday, September 2.
- Read UTC, Preface and Chapters 1-11.
- Come to class ready to discuss what surprised you in your reading; what was unexpected? What was hard to understand?

*Uncle Tom's Cabin* was runaway bestseller in the US and abroad when it was published in novel form in 1852. Never out of print, it has been, and remains, one of the most influential and controversial books ever penned by an American writer. It played a critical role in broadening anti-slavery sentiment as slavery moved into the political foreground in the decade before the Civil War.

In the 1850s it spawned Southern re-writes which purported to correct its false representations of slavery and slave owners. In the century and a half since its publication, the novel has been attacked for its endorsement of colonization, its portrayal of Black characters, and the submissive nature of Christianity; promoters, white others have welcomed its racial egalitarianism. Feminist scholars continue to grapple with its gender politics. Literary critics disagree about its merits as literature.

*Uncle Tom's Cabin* rapidly became the cultural icon it has remained in part because an enormous archive developed from it. Its characters, motifs, and certain aspects of its plot became part of popular culture, circulating in the form of figurines, games, "Tom" shows and much more. Why has the novel remained such a cultural touchstone, and what do we learn about literature, history, American culture, and ourselves when we explore this book today? As we explore the novel and its afterlives we will also address questions of disciplinary, interdisciplinary and perhaps non-disciplinary approaches. In what ways can distinct perspectives enhance the reading of the novel and understanding of its historical contexts and ongoing impact? Professors Lasser and Zagarell are wrestling with such questions and invite you to join us.
Thursday, September 24: Researching Reactions to UTC

Reading:
- Review in Christian Examiner and Religious Miscellany, January 1, 1852 (to be provided)

This is a "laboratory session" in the Library in which we will demonstrate how to research antebellum reactions to UTC, and you will find at least two, about which you will post and also report to the class on Tuesday, September 29.

Week 5: Rereading UTC in Historical Context

Tuesday, September 29: Press and Periodical Reaction to Uncle Tom's Cabin

Assignment:
- Post your findings from your library research and write a short analysis (250 to 500 words) of your findings. Did anything surprise you?
- Prepare to present your findings to the class.

Thursday, October 1: UTC in the World of Slave Narratives

Assignments:
- Either
  - Josiah Henson, Life of Josiah Henson (1849) at http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/henson49/henson49.html
  - Or
  - Lewis Clarke, Narrative of the Sufferings of Lewis Clarke (1845) at http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/clarke/clarke.html
- For Everyone: Frederick Douglass, My Bondage and My Freedom (1855), excerpt on Blackboard

For Everyone: Linda Brent (Harriet Jacobs), Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl (1861), Chapter X, "A Fervid Passage in The Slave Girl's Life" (Blackboard)

Week 6: Black and White Responses to UTC

Attend for Extra Credit:
Monday October 5 at 7 pm
Professor Marcus Rediker, University of Pittsburg
Prof. Rediker will show his film: Ghosts of Amistad

Recommended
Tuesday, October 6 at Noon:
Roundtable on Ghosts of Amistad
Professor Rediker with Professor Charles Osgood
Professor Yvonne Atias
Professor Tamika Hanley

Tuesday, October 6:

No class, but every student will be scheduled for a required meeting with the professors at which your paper topic will be discussed.

Suggested topics will be distributed in advance. Papers will be 1,000 to 1,250 words in length (4 to 5 pages—NO MORE!)

Assignment:
- Post by noon on Tuesday, October 6 at least two paragraphs about ideas you are considering developing in the paper due October 15.
Week 7: Consuming Uncle Tom in the Age of Stowe: Popular and Consumer Culture

Tuesday, October 27: UTC as Popular and Consumer Culture, a presentation by Professor Zagarel

Assignment:
- Eric Lott, "Uncle Tomitudes: Racial Melodrama and Modes of Production," from Love and Theft, pp. 211-233 (BlackBoard)
- Louise Stevenson, "Virtue Displayed: The Tie-Ins of Uncle Tom's Cabin," at http://jacobean.library.virginia.edu/interpret/interframe.html then, click on "Interpretive Exhibits," and scroll down to find this essay
- Posting about your PhotoBucket research

Thursday, October 29: Reconstructing Uncle Tom: Taking the Show (and the Illustrations) on the Road

Assignment:
- K. Stephen Prince, "Spectacle and Politics in Gilded Age "Tom Shows," in Stories of the South, pp. 199-206 (BlackBoard)
- John W. Frick, Chapter 4: "O' It Was a Sight Worth seeing": Uncle Tom Hits the Road," in Uncle Tom's Cabin on the American Stage and Screen (BlackBoard)
- Review Billings Illustrations: http://jacobean.library.virginia.edu/uncletom/illust/52ll6f.html
- Look also at Illustrations from the 1888 edition: http://jacobean.library.virginia.edu/uncletom/illust/52ll6f.html
- Please also look at the minstrel playbills (posters advertising minstrel shows) at http://jacobean.library.virginia.edu/minstrel/minstlibhp.htm#elements

Week 8: Uncle Tom and Jim Crow

Tuesday, November 3: Historical Memory: Race in America at the Turn of the 20th Century

Assignment:
- David Blight, "A Quarrel Forgotten or a Revolution Remembered? Reunion and Race in the Memory of the Civil War, 1875-1913," pp. 120-152 in Beyond the Battlefield: Race, Memory, and the American Civil War (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002) (on BlackBoard)
- Booker T. Washington, "Speech at the Atlanta Exposition" (1895) from Up From Slavery (on BlackBoard)
- W.E.B. DuBois, "Of Mr. Booker T. Washington and Others" from The Souls of Black Folk (1903) (on BlackBoard)
- Pliny vs. Ferguson (1896), excerpts (BlackBoard)

Thursday, November 5: Putting Uncle Tom on Screen

Assignment:
- Revisiting the Keywords: After you have completed the preparation for the class on Thursday, November 5, please take time to reflect on the keywords discussed earlier this semester, now that the course has moved into the twentieth century. Select one keyword and write 250-400 words that will help shape class discussion. Post your work by 9 pm, Wednesday, November 4.
- John Frick, Chapter 5: "Long Live Uncle Tom: Uncle Tom's Cabin in the Twentieth Century," pp. 149-182 (BlackBoard)
- Please read the description of the film Uncle Tom's Cabin, Edison/Porter (1903) edition at http://jacobean.library.virginia.edu/ontage/films/aw03ip.html
- Please watch at least part of the 1927 Film Version of Uncle Tom's Cabin
  - Part 1: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FFcTv5vPFB
  - Part 2: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0hRfA6oMSxI
  - Part 3: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VXSRMJoSAxM
  - Part 4: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=awNZ0d77FG
- Also watch Jungle Jacks: Uncle Tom and Eva (1939) at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TOoDVJ
- Please watch part of "Dimples" available at http://jacobean.library.virginia.edu/ontage/films/camer/hollywood.html (you must scroll down to find the film—and you may want to browse other films)

Weeks 9 and 10

Uncle Tom from the Stowe Centennial to the Civil Rights Movement

Tuesday, November 10: Stowe, Segregation, and the Heritage of Slavery

At this class we will also talk about final papers.

Assignments/Reading

- Mary Church Terrell on Celebrating Harriet Beecher Stowe's Centenary at Oberlin College
  - Exchange Between Mary Church Terrell and Oberlin College President Henry Churchill King, February-October 1911 (on BlackBoard)
  - Mary Church Terrell, Harriet Beecher Stowe: An Appreciation (1911) at http://jacobean.library.virginia.edu/africam/afsamct.html
- Barbara Hochman, "Devouring Uncle Tom's Cabin: Black readers between Pliny vs. Ferguson and Brown vs. Board of Education, "In
A Precis (250-500 words) of your final project is due December 7 at 6pm
Please Post Your Precis on BlackBoard

December 8 and 10: Student Presentations and wrap up

Property of Harriet Beecher Stowe Center, Hartford, CT
Photograph for research and educational purposes only.

According to College Regulations
Your Final Paper is due Saturday, December 19 at 9 pm
Extensions can only be arranged by presentation of an
Official incomplete issued by the Dean of Studies Office
The text of your paper should be 10-12 pages in length, 2,500-3,000 words.
Your prose should be polished. Your paper should be thoroughly proofread.
Your citations should be professional.

Class Requirements and Assignments

Preparation: You are expected to complete assignments, including readings, by the
class for which they are due.
Participation: Your regular presence and genuine participation in discussion will be
important aspects of your contribution to the class. Attendance is mandatory unless you
are ill and can bring documentation; if you have an emergency situation, speak to one of
your professors (or email us) – in advance if possible.

Evaluation: You cannot pass the course unless you have completed all the assignments
including readings, postings, worksheets, projects and papers. Grading is an art, not a
science. Grades will be basically determined as follows:
* Approximately one-third based on class participation, including
  presentations
* Approximately one-third based on shorter written work

* Approximately one-third on your final project, including all interim
  stages.
For all assignments you are expected to meet the deadlines.
Written work submitted late will be penalized and may not receive written
comments.

Honor Code
All assignments are governed by the Oberlin College Honor Code. For more information see
http://www.oberlin.edu/consortium/academic-resources-and-support/honor-code.do
And

CONTACT US:
Professor Sandy Zagarrell
Sandra.zagarrell@oberlin.edu
Rice 126, X58585
Office Hours: Wednesday 2-4 and Thursday 1-2 (in Rice 315)
Professor Carol Lasser
Carol.lasser@oberlin.edu
Rice 315, X56712
Office Hours: Wednesday 1:30-3 and Thursday 1-2 (in Rice 315)

Re: Email:
We check email regularly during weekdays and will try to respond to emails quickly.
However, that only goes for weekdays; and it only goes for emails during regular
workday hours.

Disability Accommodations
Please notify your professors by September 10 if you have a diagnosed disability that
will require special accommodations.

No Cell Phones During Class!
Cell Phones Must Be Turned Off During Class!
If your cell phone rings, you will be required to bring treats to feed the class as
part of your public shaming and apology.

Final Notes
We don’t want to have to say these things but...
Sometimes people come to class late or drift in and out to use the bathroom or for
other reasons. That’s disruptive and it breaks the flow of the class. Please get to class on
time and try to take care of all needs before class begins (We understand, of course, that
emergencies cannot be foreseen). You’re welcome to bring beverages to class.

Be sure to bring whatever text we’re working with to class every time we’re
discussing it

Joint Office Hours: 1-2 pm Thursday: we will be in Rice 315, Prof. Lasser’s office.