

Slavery and Inequality Lecture: Professor Aslakson

- I. Introduction
 - A. Road Map
 1. Themes of course- construction, perpetuation, and effects of inequality
 2. Previous speakers
 - a. Sargent- construction of inequality in Europe in Early modern era: Dutch
 - b. Doyle- role of inheritance in construction of inequality
 - c. O' Keefe – effects of inequality in Schenectady- racial implications of this
 3. In a sense, I want to start to bridge this gap between early Modern Era and today
 - a. European commercial capitalism brought to New World (U.S.)
 - b. The prominent role that enslavement of African Americans played in this
 - c. Leading to perpetuation of inequality across the pond
 - d. Also discuss the effects of inequality – creating enormous wealth for not just slaveholders, but others implicated in slave system
 - e. On the backs of unpaid labor
 4. Go Through outline on power point
- II. Falconbridge
 - A. **IMAGE: Stowage on a British Slave Ship**
 - B. Who is Alexander Falconbridge
 1. A surgeon on British slave ships in the late 18th century
 2. Became an abolitionist
 - C. **Passage from Falconbridge**
 - D. Falconbridge goes on to describe other aspects of the transatlantic slave trade
 1. Forcing slaves to eat by threats of hot coals in their mouths
 2. Forced dancing
 3. Rape of women
 4. Widespread disease (every morning would check on slaves and remove the dead)
 - E. Given this horror- how do we understand the transatlantic slave trade? As an extremely lucrative business
- III. Profits of Plantations
 - A. Who profited?
 1. Slave ship owners (20 – 50% profit)
 2. Slave traders
 3. Plantation owners
 - a. Required large investment (between 3K and 10K lbs)
 - b. But returned enormous profits
 - c. Common for value of plantations to increase 3 fold in a decade

- 4. Factory owners
 - a. Textiles
 - b. Sugar refineries and distilleries
 - c. Bottling factories
 - d. Gun makers (4000 of them sending 100,000 guns a year to Africa)
 - 5. Ports
 - 6. Bankers
 - 7. Ordinary people – with jobs in the factories
 - B. Sugar- the driving force behind African slavery in the New World
 - 1. By the end of the 18th century, 4 million pounds annually coming into England from West Indian sugar plantations, compared to 1 million from the rest of the British empire
 - 2. Profits from sugar plantations helped capitalize the industrial revolution in England
- IV. Slavery in Early Virginia (**documents**)
- A. British North America on periphery of plantation zone- centered in Caribbean and Brazil
 - B. **IMAGES: Go through the documents**
 - C. While sugar drove the plantation complex in the Caribbean and Brazil, tobacco was the crop being grown with enslaved labor in Virginia
 - 1. In early 17th century, the majority workforce was composed of indentured servants
 - 2. By 1700, it tobacco workers almost exclusively enslaved people of African descent
- V. Plantation revolution in Virginia
- A. Increasing cost of indentured servants
 - B. Decreasing cost of slaves
 - C. Bacon’s Rebellion
- VI. Slavery in the Age of Revolution
- A. While tobacco grown with enslaved labor drove Virginia’s economy in 1700, by the time of the American Revolution it was on the decline
 - B. In addition, the revolution posed serious challenges to Slavery
 - 1. Disruption of War- Dunmore’s Proclamation
 - 2. Ideological Challenges to Slavery
 - 3. Most Virginians were able to rationalize, stifle their consciences
 - 4. But a few Virginians took this to heart
 - C. Richard Randolph example: Israel on the Appomattox
 - 1. His life
 - a. A descendant of one of the “first families of Virginia”
 - b. Cousin of Thomas Jefferson
 - c. Profoundly influenced by the age of Revolution

2. His will
 - a. Died in 1796, in his mid 20s
 - b. Freed over 200 slaves in his will
 - c. Gave them 400 acres of land
 - d. **His form of private reparations to the slaves he owned and their families**
 - e. His will reads like an abolitionist manifesto in which he begs forgiveness from his slaves
 - f. So controversial that it took over 14 years to probate.
3. The Land
 - a. Prime farming land on a hill overlooking the Appomattox River- grew wheat
 - b. Named it Israel Hill
 - c. Whites were their neighbors- some whites leased land from them
 - d. Land- the key to freedom
- D. Cotton Gin and Industrial Revolution lead to resurgence of slavery
 1. While slavery is declining in importance in Virginia- it takes off in Deep South
 2. **IMAGES: Centers of Slavery in 1796 and 1860**
 3. Cotton Gin of 1793
 4. Industrial Revolution in England
- E. Sectionalization
 1. Isolation of slave South
 2. Development of pro-slavery defenses
 3. When reality of Slavery is confronted with ideology of the revolution, one has two choices
 - a. Abolish slavery
 - b. Find exceptions
- VII. King Cotton and Slaves
 - A. Value of Slaves (in 1860)
 1. **IMAGE: Sale of Slaves and Stock**
 2. \$1000 would be about 25,000 in today's prices
 3. Labor income value (expected net income produced by a slave) would be 130 K in today's dollars
 4. 3x that invested in railroads and manufacturing
 5. 3x that invested in Banks
 6. 7x the value of total currency in circulation
 7. 12x the value of the entire US Cotton crop
 8. 48x the expenditure of the Federal Government
 - B. Value of Cotton
 1. Leading US export from 1803 to 1937
 2. Instrumental in the development of northern cities, especially New York
 3. In 1860 Southern staples grown with enslaved labor amounted to 3/5ths of all exports, Cotton alone was over 40%
 4. **IMAGE: Hammond Quote**

- C. And Great Britain as well
 - 1. Southern Cotton amounted to 80% of its raw materials used in factories
 - 2. In turn, textile mills accounted for 40% of British exports
 - 3. Intimately linked
 - 4. **IMAGE: Lincoln statue in Manchester, England**
 - D. **runaway slave ads and/or slave sales**
 - E. Made South Rich, so much so that willing to go to War-
- VIII. Civil War
- A. Why did the South Secede?
 - B. **IMAGE: Lincoln's Second Inaugural**
 - C. Reconstruction (**Jourdan Anderson letter**)

Alexander Falconbridge on Treatment of the Slaves

The man negroes, on being brought aboard the ship, are immediately fastened together, two and two, by hand-cuffs on their wrists, and by irons riveted on their legs. They are then sent down between the decks, and placed in an apartment partitioned off for that purpose. The women likewise are placed in a separate apartment between decks, but without being ironed. And an adjoining room, on the same deck, is besides appointed for the boys. Thus are they all placed in different apartments.

But at the same time, they are infrequently stowed so close, as to admit of no other posture than lying on their sides. Neither will the height between decks, unless directly under the grating, permit them the indulgence of an erect posture; especially where there are platforms, which is generally the case. These platforms are a kind of shelf, about eight or nine feet in breadth, extending from the side of the ship towards the centre. They are placed nearly midway between the decks, at the distance of two or three feet from each deck. Upon these the negroes are stowed in the same manner as they are on the deck underneath.

In each of the apartments are placed three or four large buckets, of a conical form, being near two feet in diameter at the bottom, and only one foot at the top, and in depth about twenty-eight inches, to which, when necessary, the negroes have recourse. It often happens, that those who are placed at a distance from the buckets, in endeavoring to get to them, tumble over their companions in consequence of their being shackled. These accidents, although unavoidable, are productive of continual quarrels, in which some of them are always bruised. In this distressed situation, unable to proceed, and prevented from getting to the tubs, they desist from the attempt; and as the necessities of nature are not to be repelled, ease themselves as they lie. This becomes a fresh source of broils and disturbances and tends to render the condition of the poor captive wretches still more uncomfortable. The nuisance arising from these circumstances is not infrequently increased by the tubs being much too small for the purpose intended, and their being usually emptied but once every day. The rule for doing this, however, varies in different ships, according to the attention paid to the health and convenience of the slaves by the captain.

About eight o'clock in the morning the negroes are generally brought upon deck. Their irons being examined, a long chain, which is locked to a ring-bolt, is run through the rings of the shackles of the men, and then locked to another ring-bolt, fixed also in the deck. By this means fifty or sixty, and sometimes more, are fastened to one chain, in order to prevent them from rising, or endeavouring to escape. If the weather proves favourable, they are permitted to remain in that situation till four or five in the afternoon, when they are disengaged from the chain, and sent down....

They are commonly fed twice a day, about eight o'clock in the morning and four in the afternoon.

To my old master,
Colonel P.H. Anderson, Big Spring, Tennessee.

Sir,

I got your letter, and was glad to find that you had not forgotten Jourdan, and that you wanted me to come back and live with you again, promising to do better for me than anybody else can. I have often felt uneasy about you. I thought the Yankees would have hung you before this for harboring the Rebs they found at your house. I suppose they never heard about your going to Colonel Martin's to kill the Union soldier that was left by his company in their stable. Although you shot at me twice before I left you, I did not want to hear of your being hurt, and am glad you are still living. It would do me good to go back to the dear old home again, and see Miss Mary and Miss Martha and Allen, Esther, Green, and Lee. Give my love to them all, and tell them I hope we will meet in a better world, if not in this. I would have gone back to see you all when I was working in the Nashville Hospital, but one of the neighbors told me that Henry intended to shoot me if he ever got a chance.

I want to know particularly what the good chance is you propose to give me. I am doing tolerably well here. I get \$25 a month, with victuals and clothing; have a comfortable home for Mandy. The folks here call her Mrs. Anderson, and the children Milly, Jane, and Grundy go to school and are learning well. We are kindly treated. Sometimes we overhear others saying, "Them colored people were slaves down in Tennessee." The children feel hurt when they hear such remarks; but I tell them it was no disgrace in Tennessee to belong to Colonel Anderson. Many darkeys would have been proud, as I used to be, to call you master. Now if you will write and say what wages you will give me, I will be better able to decide whether it would be to my advantage to move back again.

As to my freedom, which you say I can have, there is nothing to be gained on that score, as I got my free papers in 1864 from the Provost Marshall-General of the Department of Nashville. Mandy says she would be afraid to go back without some proof that you were disposed to treat us justly and kindly; and we have concluded to test your sincerity by asking you to send us our wages for the time we served you. This will make us forget and forgive old scores, and rely on your justice and friendship in the future. I served you faithfully for 32 years, and Mandy 20 years. At 25 dollars a month for me, and 2 dollars a week for Mandy, our earnings would amount to \$11,608. Add to this the interest for the time our wages have been kept back, and deduct what you paid for our clothing, and three doctor's visits to me, and pulling a tooth for Mandy, and the balance will show what we are in justice entitled to.

Please send the money by Adam's Express, in care of V. Winters Esq., Dayton, Ohio. If you fail to pay us for faithful labors in the past, we can have little faith in your promises in the future. We trust the Good Maker has opened your eyes to the wrongs which you and your fathers have done to me and my fathers, in making us toil for you for generations without recompense. Surely, there will be a day of reckoning for those who defraud the laborer of his hire.

In answering this letter, please state if there would be any safety for my Milly and Jane, who are now grown up, and both good looking girls. You know how it was with poor Matilda and Catherine. I would rather stay here and starve and die, if it comes to that, than have my girls brought to shame by the violence and wickedness of their young masters. You will also please state if there has been any schools opened for the colored children in your neighborhood. The great desire of my life now is to give my children an education, and have them form virtuous habits. Say howdy to George Carter, and thank him for taking the pistol from you when you were shooting at me.

From you old servant, Jourdan Anderson