The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom
Time: TR 2:00-4:40pm.
Room: Rush Rhees 456
Office Hours: Wednesday 11:00--1:00pm.
Office: Rush Rhees 460
Tel: 275-4557
E-mail: Larry.hudson@rochester.edu

Almost four hundred years of slavery and racial discrimination have taken a huge toll on the black family. Despite this, the family adapted to the awful demands placed upon it and today, the number of black millionaires grows rapidly. The poverty rates in the black community expands, however, as does many other challenges facing the increasingly fragile black family. The course will examine factors such as inter-racial and same-sex marriages, teenage pregnancy, declining healthcare, mass incarceration, and a debilitating education system, and evaluate the claim of leading scholars that “the very future of the black family in America is at risk.”

Academic Honesty
Authors of the words and ideas contained in your written essays must be fully cited. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism and will be severely punished.

A Word on Note Taking and Research:
As the material from the Assigned Texts (supplemented where necessary by the Additional Readings) will inform our discussions throughout the course, as well as constitute a major source on which you will draw for your written assignments.

For your Information:
The faculty of the Department of History considers class attendance essential to the mastering of the
content of its courses and the production of quality history papers. Students who miss class should inform the instructor of the reason for their absence, in advance whenever possible. Students should come to class prepared to comment on the assigned readings. If you have a physical or mental disability that requires an accommodation or academic adjustment, please arrange a meeting with me at your earliest convenience.

Reference Librarian
Please take time to introduce yourself to the library specialist in United States History and Culture: Alan Unsworth aunsworth@library.rochester.edu or check at the Reference Desk.

Course Grading will be as follows: Three Book Reports 3-8 sides (30%); Class Participation, (20%) and a Final Paper (50%) Regular class attendance is expected, and students should come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings and their work-in-progress. (Book Reports: Due Dates: Blassingame Feb. 2; White Feb. 9; Stack Feb. 23; Research Paper April 26).

If you have a physical or mental disability that requires an accommodation or academic adjustment, please arrange a meeting with the instructor at your earliest convenience.

Set Texts:

John Blassingame, The Slave Community: Plantation Life in the Antebellum South
Deborah Gray White, Ar'n't I a Woman?: Female Slaves in the Plantation South
Carol Stack, All Our Kin: Strategies for Survival in a Black Community

Course Outline:

Week One Tuesday January 19
Introductions

Reading: Daniel P. Moynihan, The Negro Family: The Case for National Action (abridged version on Blackboard)

Reading for Week Two:

John Blassingame, The Slave Community: Plantation Life in the Antebellum South

Week Two 26 January “Slavery Destroyed the Black Family”

Reading for Week Three:

Blassingame, The Slave Community


Week Three 2 February Historians versus Moynihan

(First Book Report due Feb. 9)

Reading for Week Four:

Deborah Gray White, Ar'n't I a Woman?: Female Slaves in the Plantation South

Week Four 9 February Women, Wives, and Husbands

Reading for Week Five:

Joy DeGruy Leary, A Dissertation on African American Male Youth Violence: “Trying to Kill the Part of You that isn’t Loved,” Portland State University 2001, (Copies available on Reserve)


Week Five 16 February Moynihan and his Supporters?

(Second Book Report due Feb. 23)

Reading for Week Six:
Carol Stack, *All Our Kin: Strategies for Survival in a Black Community*

**Week Six** 23 February The Structure of Poverty and Wealth

Stack, *All Our Kin*

**Week Seven** 1 March


**Week Eight** 8 March Third Book Report due March 15)

Spring Break

**Week Nine** 15 March

Jewell, *Survival of the African American Family*

**Discussion and Research Topics**

**Week Ten** 22 March The Media and the Black Family: From the Cosby Show to The Wire

Topic: Mass Incarceration

**Week Eleven** 29 March

Selecting a Research Project (2):


**Week Twelve** 5 April March

Research Project


**Week Thirteen** 12 April

Research Project (2)

**Week Fourteen** 19 April
Presentations (1)

**Week Fifteen** 26 April

Presentations (2)

Final Project Due (in class)