

## **CFP: 'Slavery and Emotions in the Atlantic World'**

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### **Call for Papers: 'Slavery and Emotions in the Atlantic World'**

Department of History, University of Reading, November 17-18, 2022

This workshop will bring together historians researching the roles that emotions played in the creation, maintenance, and experience of slavery in the Atlantic World. Fundamental to how enslavers wielded power, the enslaved also used emotion as a method of resistance, and it was clearly central to their everyday lived experiences. It is almost impossible to read testimony left by the enslaved, or sources produced by enslavers, without encountering mentions of acute feelings, yet studies are only recently beginning to emerge that explore slavery through the lens of emotion.

The value of pursuing this avenue of research has been exemplified by recent historiographical turns focused on the 'history of emotions' and the analysis of archival silences. Historians of emotion have fruitfully demonstrated that to understand societies, we must explore how emotional conventions functioned and how ordinary people created their own emotional worlds. This workshop will bring together scholars to share different methodological approaches to the study of slavery and emotions and to discuss what new insights we can gain about the institution and enslaved people, from pursuing this exciting avenue of inquiry.

We invite researchers to participate in a workshop based upon pre-circulated draft papers of c.6,000-8,000 words, and discussion will begin with short summaries of these papers. Thereafter, participants will be invited to submit revised versions for a journal special edition (we have received an expression of interest from *Slavery and Abolition*).

The workshop will culminate in the University of Reading's annual Stenton Lecture, delivered by Professor Brenda Stevenson, Hilary Rodham Clinton Chair of Women's History at University of Oxford.

Questions and themes to be explored at the workshop may include:

- How can analysing slavery through the lens of emotion enrich our understanding of the lives of enslaved people, enslavers and others involved in the institution?
- How did enslaved people emotionally experience the regime? Is such a study possible?

- How was emotion used as a mechanism of power, and resistance, under slavery?
- How did gender shape emotional experiences and practices under slavery?
- How can methodologies from the history of emotions be applied to the study of slavery?
- How might historians of emotions and slavery work with archival silences?
- Does the communication of research about enslaved people's emotions require different forms of writing and/or dissemination?

Please send a proposal of no more than 300 words to [b.wilson2@reading.ac.uk](mailto:b.wilson2@reading.ac.uk) by Friday 25th March 2022. The workshop will be held at the University of Reading, and small travel bursaries may be available for UK-based postgraduate students and those in precarious academic employment.