HIST 96.19 Seminar: Labor, Migration, and the Making of the American South

Instructor: Rashauna Johnson.

Were the enslaved Africans imported into the U.S. South “immigrants”? Were the “coolie” laborers who migrated to Louisiana in the 1860s “slaves”? Were Bengali merchants in the Jim Crow South “black”? And how does a consideration of these groups in relation to one another add complexity to our understanding of what is means to be a southerner and, by extension, an American?

This seminar examines the ways that landowners’ demand for agricultural laborers in the long nineteenth century led to the migrations of workers of diverse national, linguistic, and religious backgrounds into the cities and fields of the U.S. South. It focuses specifically on the concurrent and successive migration of African, Chinese, Southeast Asian, and Latino laborers into the southern states in the era of slavery and after emancipation. In so doing, it deepens our understandings of the southern history of U.S. immigration and the social and cultural history of diverse yet deeply unequal communities beyond a timeless black-white binary.

Students interested in the seminar are encourage to successfully complete at least one lecture course on 19th-century U.S. history or immigration history. Such courses include Hist 12, Hist 15, Hist 16, Hist 25.1, Hist 27, and Hist 30.2.

Distributive and/or World Culture
Dist: SOC; WCult: W

Offered
17X: 10A

Department-Specific Course Categories
Major Dist: US & CAN.