

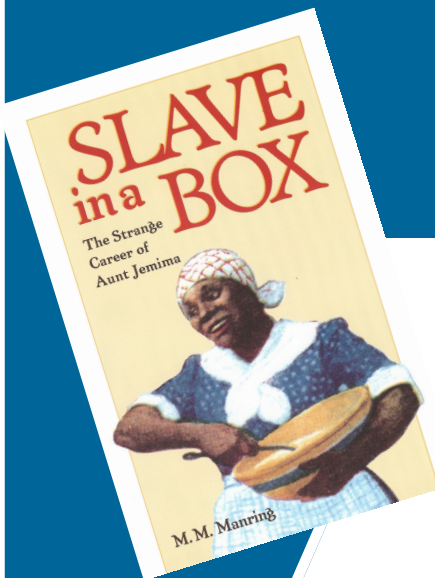
Spring 2009

HST 397A

# Slavery by Another Name

Professor Stephen Jones

Wednesday / 6:30-9:20 p.m.



This course will examine the array of political, economic, social and legal processes by which white Americans sought to keep black Americans in a state as near to slavery as possible for a full century after the end of the Civil War. We will consider, for example, how a system of leasing black prison inmates to railroads, plantation owners and others produced working conditions more severe than those in slavery for the inmates and how that system corrupted the legal process by encouraging the arrest and imprisonment of blacks on flimsy charges for the economic benefit of those who leased their labor. We will also examine how the sharecropping system of agriculture developed into a form of debt slavery that prevented poor farmers (white as well as black) from improving their lot or leaving their farms. And we will explore how a pattern of racial violence—both lynchings and race riots—targeted African Americans and inhibited the accumulation of wealth and status by blacks. Finally, we will consider how mass media caricatures—such as Aunt Jemima—were exploited to reinforce the social superiority of whites. Our overall objective will be to see how these phenomena combined with other elements to create a comprehensive system of racial oppression whose residue still troubles American society in the early 21st century.