

2021-22 FELLOWSHIP ANNOUNCEMENT

Slavery and the Universities

The Warren Center, Harvard's research center for United States history, invites applications for a workshop on Slavery and the Universities. Since 2003, U.S. universities have grappled with historical ties to slavery, starting with a report commissioned that year at Brown to study such connections and suggest engagements with this history. The report made a splash, yet others were slow to take up the issue. In 2007, Harvard's Sven Beckert led an undergraduate seminar uncovering a rich set of historical connections between Harvard and slavery. Later, in 2016, this research was taken up by a Harvard committee (including Beckert and Evelyn Hammonds), resulting in a large conference and a plaque commemorating enslaved workers owned by Harvard Presidents. Others took up similar projects including Georgetown, Princeton and Columbia. An organization was formed, Universities Studying Slavery. Leslie Harris has published an edited collection on the subject.

This research, commemoration and (faint) efforts at reparations has made many universities look at their past in a new light, has engaged communities of students and has been the subject of debate beyond university walls. It has led to a reconsideration of slavery's history by showing through prominent examples the national reach of slavery and the importance of enslaved workers' toil to cherished institutions. It showed the material importance of slavery profits to universities, and exposed how universities in both North and South played an important role in the political and ideological defense of slavery and racism.

This workshop will bring together scholars to systematically reflect on how such research can be elevated by considering how it contributes to a rethinking of the nation's history as a whole. Selected scholars will share work in progress and take stock of the moment in which it emerged. We will consider the uses of these histories including the engagement of broader publics and addressing contemporary inequalities. The workshop will encourage further research on the relationship between universities and slavery, still in early stages. Scholars working on higher education and slavery in other parts of the world may apply.

Fellows will present their work in a seminar led by Sven Beckert (History) and Evelyn Hammonds (History of Science). Applicants may not be degree candidates and should have a Ph.D. or equivalent. Fellows have library privileges and an office which they must use for at least the 9-month academic year. The Center encourages applications consistent with the Workshop theme and from qualified applicants who can contribute, through their research and service, to the diversity and excellence of the community. Stipends: individually determined according to fellow needs and Center resources, up to a maximum of \$66,000. Note that recent average stipends have been in the range of \$50,000. Apply: <http://academicpositions.harvard.edu/postings/9778> no later than January 4, 2021 with recommendation letters due January 14, 2021. For more information, see <http://warrencenter.fas.harvard.edu/>.