

NICHOLAS P. WOOD
Spring Hill College • History Program
4000 Dauphin Street • Mobile, Alabama • 36608
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ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Spring Hill College	
Associate Professor of History	2024-present
Assistant Professor of History	2017-2024
Yale University	Fall 2015-Spring 2017
Cassius M. Clay Postdoctoral Associate in Early American History	
Library Company of Philadelphia	Fall 2014
National Endowment for the Humanities Postdoctoral Fellow	

EDUCATION

University of Virginia – Ph.D. in American History	December 2013
Rutgers University, Camden – M.A. in American History	May 2007
Rutgers University, New Brunswick – M.Ed. in Social Studies Education	May 2003
Rutgers University, New Brunswick – B.A. in History (minor in Religion)	May 2002

PUBLICATIONS

BOOK

Let the Oppressed Go Free: Abolitionism in Colonial and Revolutionary America
(Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2025)

IN PROGRESS

Antislavery Politics in the New Nation (under contract with the University of Pennsylvania Press.)

“The Somerset Principle, the Bible, and Abolition in Revolutionary Massachusetts,” in *Somerset v. Steuart and America*, edited by Matthew Mason and David Waldstreicher (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, expected 2026)

PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLES & BOOK CHAPTERS

“Abolitionists, Congress, and the Atlantic Slave Trade: Before and After Ratification,” in *From Independence to the U.S. Constitution: Reconsidering the Critical Period of American History*, eds. Douglass Bradburn and Christopher Pearl (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2022), 93-125

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(Updated November 2025)

“Doughface: The Origins and Legacy of an Antebellum Political Insult,” in *A Fire Bell in the Past: The Missouri Crisis at 200, Volume II: “The Missouri Question” and Its Answers*, eds. Jeffrey L. Pasley and John Craig Hammond (University of Missouri Press, 2021), 255-70

“The Missouri Crisis and the ‘Changed Object’ of the American Colonization Society,” in *New Directions in the Study of African American Recolonization*, eds. Beverly C. Tomek and Matthew J. Hetrick (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2017 [paperback 2022]), 146-65

“‘To Friends and All Whom It May Concerne’: William Southeby’s Rediscovered 1696 Antislavery Protest,” (with Jean R. Soderlund) *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 141 (April 2017): 177-98

“A ‘class of Citizens’: The Earliest Black Petitioners to Congress and Their Quaker Allies,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 74 (January 2017): 109-44

“Jefferson’s Legacy, Race Science, and Righteous Violence in Jabez Hammond’s Abolitionist Fiction,” *Early American Studies* 14 (Summer 2016): 568-609

“John Randolph of Roanoke and the Politics of Slavery in the Early Republic,” *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 120 (Summer 2012): 106-143

“‘A Sacrifice on the Altar of Slavery’: Doughface Politics and Black Disenfranchisement in Pennsylvania, 1837-1838,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 31 (Spring 2011): 75-105

BOOK REVIEWS

Abigail G. Mullen, *To Fix a National Character: The United States in the First Barbary War, 1800–1805*, in *Journal of the Early Republic* (forthcoming)

Gregory May, *A Madman’s Will: John Randolph, 400 Slaves, and the Mirage of Freedom*, in *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 132 (Summer 2024): 154-56

Samantha Seeley, *Race, Removal, and the Right to Remain: Migration and the Making of the United States*, in *Indiana Magazine of History* 119 (March 2023): 93-95

David Dzurec, *Our Suffering Brethren Foreign Captivity and Nationalism in the Early United States*, in *Journal of the Early Republic* 40 (Winter 2020): 760-63

Mary V. Thompson, “*The Only Unavoidable Subject of Regret*”: George Washington, Slavery, and the Enslaved Community at Mount Vernon, in *Journal of Southern History* 86 (Aug. 2020): 692-94

Paul Finkelman, *Supreme Injustice: Slavery in the Nation’s Highest Court*, in *American Journal of Legal History* 58 (December 2018): 567–569

Corey M. Brooks, *Liberty Power: Antislavery Third Parties and the Transformation of American Politics*, in *Journal of the Early Republic* 38 (Spring 2018): 181-84

Matthew W. Hall, *Dividing the Union: Jesse Burgess Thomas and the Making of the Missouri Compromise*, in *Register of the Kentucky Historical Society* 115 (Summer 2017): 428-30

Padraig Riley, *Slavery and the Democratic Conscience: Political Life in Jeffersonian America*, in Common-Place.org 16.4 (September 2016)

Christopher Cameron, *To Plead Our Own Cause: African Americans in Massachusetts and the Making of the Antislavery Movement*, in *History: Reviews of New Books* 44 (January 2016): 14-15

Brycchan Carey and Geoffrey Plank eds., *Quakers & Abolition*, in *Journal of Southern History* 81 (August 2015): 323-25

James J. Gigantino II, *The Ragged Road to Abolition: Slavery and Freedom in New Jersey, 1775-1865*, in *Journal of American Studies* 54, (Summer 2015): 39-40

William A. Pettigrew, *Freedom's Debt: The Royal African Company and the Politics of the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1662-1752*, in *Journal of Southern History* 81 (May 2015): 430-32

Bonnie Laughlin-Schultz, *The Tie That Bound Us: The Women of John Brown's Family and the Legacy of Radical Abolitionism*, in *Women's History Review* 23 (December 2014): 1028-30

John J. Zaborney, *Slaves for Hire: Renting Enslaved Labor in Antebellum Virginia*, in *Journal of the Early Republic* 33 (Fall 2013): 580-82

Beverly C. Tomek, *Colonization and Its Discontents: Emancipation, Emigration, and Antislavery in Antebellum Pennsylvania*, in *Pennsylvania History* (Spring 2012): 252-54

OTHER WRITINGS

“Figuring Out Who Was in the Room Where it Happened; Or, Doing African American History with Quaker Sources,” [Uncommon Sense](http://UncommonSense.org), the blog of the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture

“The First Black Petitioners to Congress and Their Quaker Allies,” [Haverford Library Blog](http://HaverfordLibraryBlog.org), January 25, 2017

“George Washington’s Contested Antislavery Legacy,” [Mount Vernon Magazine](http://MountVernonMagazine.org) (Winter 2016): 42-43

“Act Prohibiting Importation of Slaves,” *Dictionary of American History, Supplement: America in the World, 1776 to the Present*, eds. Edward J. Blum, Cara Burnidge, Emily Conroy-Krutz, David Kinkela, (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 2016), 4-6

“The American Revolution, Divine Providence, and Antislavery,” guest post, [National Museum of American Religion Facebook Page](#) (October 2015)

Contributor to “The Sectional Crisis,” in [The American Yawp](#) (a collaboratively-written free online textbook organized by Joseph Locke and Ben Wright, 2015)

CONTRIBUTIONS TO DOCUMENTARIES & OTHER MEDIA

Revolutionary (working title for documentary series about George Washington, filmed in collaboration with Mount Vernon and directed by Jordan Sloane), interviewed on-screen as content expert for episode on Washington and slavery (forthcoming on Netflix)

110: The Last Enslaved Africans Brought to America, (documentary film about the *Clotilda* and Africa Town, directed by Ryan Noble and Joe’l Lewis Billingsley), advisory board member and onscreen contributor (forthcoming)

Afrikan by Way of American: The Legacy and Future of Africatown in Alabama, (documentary film produced Theo M. Moore II, August 2021), on-screen contributor, [Hiztorical Vision Productions](#)

Cassie Owens, “Of Human Bondage: Pennsylvania officially abolished slavery in 1780, but that didn’t mean everyone was free,” *Philadelphia Enquirer*, February 27, 2019 (published [online](#), February 28, 2019) (quoted as content expert)

“The Pre-Garrisonian Abolitionist Movement,” interview with Thomas Thurston for the Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Abolition, and Resistance “Slavery and Its Legacies” [podcast](#), released September 18, 2017

Francis Scott Key: After the Song, ([documentary film](#)), first aired September 2017 on Maryland Public Television

“Early Abolitionists,” episode of “[Your Weekly Constitutional with Stewart Harris](#),” aired June 30, 2017 on WVTF: Radio IQ

Liberty & Slavery: The Paradox of America’s Founding Fathers ([documentary film](#)), onscreen contributor, (Inertia Films, 2016)

“Slavery and the Constitution,” contributor to [online course videos](#) by the Robert H. Smith Center for the Constitution at James Madison’s Montpelier (2015)

FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS, & HONORS

EXTERNAL AWARDS

Friends Historical Association, book subvention grant

2024

The Society of Colonial Wars & Florida Atlantic University Fellowship in Memory of Kenneth R. LaVoy Jr. (co-winner)	2021
Haverford College, Quaker & Special Collections Library Gest Research Fellowship	July 2015
Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington, Mount Vernon three-month fellowship	Spring 2015
Society of Historians of the Early American Republic (runner up) Dissertation Prize	2014
Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, California Robert L. Middlekauff Fellowship	June 2012
McNeil Center for Early American Studies, at the University of Pennsylvania Monticello-McNeil and Friends of MCEAS Dissertation Fellowship	2011-2012
Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History New York City area archive research fellowship	Fall 2011
Library Company of Philadelphia & Historical Society of Pennsylvania Andrew Mellon Foundation short-term fellowship	June 2011
Robert H. Smith International Center for Jeffersonian Studies, Charlottesville, VA, Research fellowship	October 2010
Daughters of the American Revolution, Haddonfield, NJ Chapter Best essay (by a third-grade student) on the Bill of Rights	1989

INTERNAL AWARDS

Spring Hill College, Faculty Innovation Grant	Spring 2023
SHC, Student Organization & Leadership: Commitment to Diversity Award	Spring 2022
SHC, Mitchell Faculty Scholarship Grant	Summer 2019
SHC Faculty Development Grant	Fall 2018
University of Virginia, Corcoran Department of History, Writing Fellowship	Fall 2013
UVA-Monticello Early American Seminar, Dissertation Fellow	2012-2013
University of Virginia, Huskey Travel Fund Awards	2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2013
University of Virginia, Department of History, summer research grant	2011
University of Virginia, J. Carl Sewell III Fellowship	Spring 2010
University of Virginia, Department of History, Graduate Fellowship	2007-2010
Rutgers University, Alumni Award for Academic Achievement	2007
Rutgers University, History Thesis Honors Program, High Honors	2002

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

PTH 100H: Frederick Douglass's *Narrative*, Spring Hill College
HIS 120: (American Historical Studies) Slavery & the Bible in American History, SHC
HIS 120: (American Historical Studies) Slavery in American History, SHC
HIS 120: (American Historical Studies) Black Lives in Early America, SHC
HIS 120: (American Historical Studies) Early American Lives, SHC
HIS 203: Historical Methods, SHC
HIS 213: American History Survey, SHC
HIS 324: American Women's History, SCH
HIS 341: Colonial America, SHC
HIS 342: The American Revolution, SHC
HIS 343: The Age of Jefferson & Jackson, SHC
HIS 344: The Civil War Era, SHC
HIS 496: Readings in [Gulf Coast] History
HIS 496: Readings in [Women's] History
HIS 497: (Special Topics) The Coming of the Civil War, SHC
HIS 497: (Special Topics) Jesuits & Slavery
HIS 497: (Special Topics) Readings in Black History
HIS 499: Research Seminar, SHC
Senior Thesis Advisor, Yale University
Seminar: The Antislavery Struggle in America, Yale
Seminar: Slavery and Abolition, University of Virginia

PRESENTATIONS

PUBLIC LECTURES & OUTREACH

"Let the Oppressed Go Free," book talk presented at the annual Portier Lecture, Spring Hill College, November 13, 2025 (forthcoming)

"The 'Appeal to Heaven' & Antislavery During the American Revolution," presented to the University of West Florida History Club, February 25, 2025

"The Bible & the Abolition of American Slavery," seminar at Spring Hill College's Summer Institute of Christian Spirituality," June 10-14, 2024

“‘Let the Oppressed Go Free’: The American Revolution’s Antislavery Legacy,” History Museum of Mobile, Learning Lunch lecture series, Mobile, AL, September 13, 2023 (and at the Sons of the American Revolution - General Galvez chapter, Spanish Fort, AL, April 11, 2024)

“The U.S. Atlantic Slave Trade & its Abolition,” NEH Landmarks Teacher Workshop: “From Clotilda to Community: The History of Mobile Alabama’s Africatown,” hosted by the Spring Hill College and the University of South Alabama, June 20 & 27, 2023

“James Monroe and the Era of Good (and Bad) Feelings,” part the *Building a New Nation: The Role of Four Virginia Presidents* lecture series, hosted online by the University of Virginia’s Lifetime Learning Program, April 18 & 19th, 2023

“Colonial Wars as the ‘Wrath of God’: The Origins of American Antislavery,” hosted by the Society of Colonial Wars in the State of Florida, at Florida Atlantic University, March 16, 2022 (and on March 29, 2022 for Alabama chapter of the Society of Colonial Dames, hosted via Zoom by the Conde-Charlotte Museum, Mobile, AL)

“17th- & 18th-Century Slavery,” NEH Landmarks Teacher Workshop: “From Clotilda to Community: The History of Mobile Alabama’s Africatown,” hosted (online) by the Spring Hill College and the University of South Alabama, June 22 & 24, 2021

“Slavery & the Constitution,” Teacher Workshop, Robert H. Smith Center for the Constitution at Madison’s Montpelier, April 7-9, 2017

“The Washington Image in the Abolitionist Mind,” at the Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington, Mount Vernon, April 28, 2015

“James Monroe and Slavery Crises in the Early Republic,” at Ash Lawn-Highland: Home of President James Monroe, February 11, 2015

“The Virginia Dynasty and the Problem of John Randolph,” at the “Thomas Jefferson Summer Symposium: Friends, Family, and Foes,” University of Virginia Lifetime Learning Educational Programs, June 20, 2014

“Questioning the Morality and Expediency of Slavery in Jeffersonian Virginia,” at the forum, “William Short’s Emancipation Proposal to Thomas Jefferson,” at the Robert H. Smith International Center for Jefferson Studies, May 17, 2011; televised on CSPAN-3

“James Monroe and Slavery,” at the “James Monroe Lecture Series,” University of Virginia School of Continuing Education, Fall 2008

WORKSHOPS & SEMINARS WITH PRECIRCULATED PAPERS

“*Somerset*, the Bible, & the End of Hereditary Slavery in Massachusetts,” at the *Somerset v. Steuart* @ 250 Workshop, sponsored by the American Philosophical Society, December 2, 2022

“Black Migration and Emigration on the Late-Eighteenth Century,” at the Race and Slavery Working Group, Yale University, March 8, 2017

“Quaker Antislavery and the Problem of the American Revolution,” at Yale Early American Historians, Yale University, November 10, 2016

“Antislavery in the New Century,” at the Upstate Early American Workshop, Binghamton University, May 6, 2016

“Before Garrison: Antislavery & Politics in the New Nation,” book manuscript review workshop, Yale University, March 10, 2016

“Beyond the PAS: The Philadelphia Meeting for Sufferings and African-American Activism,” at the “Human Trafficking in Early America” conference at the McNeil Center for Early American Studies, Philadelphia, April 24, 2015

“The Anglo-American ‘Race of Glory’ and the Failure of Cooperative Slave Trade Suppression,” at the DC-Area Early American Seminar, March 13, 2015

“Antislavery Activism before the Constitution,” at the “Leadership, Crisis, and Conflict in the United States 1783-1789” symposium, at the Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington, September 25-26, 2014

“A Mulatto’s Dinner at Monticello: The Jefferson Image, Race Science, and Antislavery Violence in Jabez D. Hammond’s Abolitionist Fiction,” at the CUNY-Graduate Center’s Early American Republic Seminar, December 6, 2013

“‘Scenes of the Brightest Heroism’: Slave Resistance and Virtue in Antislavery Thought During the Age of Revolution,” at the “The Age of Emancipation: Black Freedom in the Atlantic World” workshop, at Vanderbilt University’s Robert Penn Warren Center, April 26-27, 2013

“Barbary Slavery, American Freedom: Race, National Power, and Natural Rights in the New Nation,” at the McNeil Center for Early American Studies, March 23, 2012

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

“Biblicism, Providentialism, & War in Early Black Abolitionist Thought,” at the annual meeting of the Society of Historians of the Early American Republic, Philadelphia, July 14, 2023

“The Biblical Basis of Bondage & Abolition in the Bay State,” at the American Historical Association annual meeting, New Orleans, February 26, 2022 (online session)

“Doughface: The Origins and Legacy of an Antebellum Political Insult,” at “A Fire Bell in the Past: Re-assessing the Missouri Crisis at 200,” University of Missouri’s Kinder Center on Constitutional Democracy, February 16, 2019

“Antislavery Lobbying in ‘these (dis)united States’: The Quakers’ Confederation-wide Campaign of 1787-1789,” at the annual meeting of the Society of Historians of the Early American Republic, Philadelphia, July 20-23, 2017

“Black Colonization in the Quaker State and Sierra Leone: Two Expeditions in 1795,” at the annual conference of the Omohundro Institute for Early American History and Culture, Worcester, MA, June 26, 2016

“Pennsylvania Doughfaces and the Lessons of the Missouri Crisis,” at the annual meeting of the Pennsylvania Historical Association, November 7, 2014

“The Federalist Origins of the Doughface Epithet,” at the annual meeting of the Society of Historians of the Early American Republic, Philadelphia, July 2014

“The Interracial Abolitionist Collaborations of Cato Collins and John Parrish,” at the annual meeting of the Pennsylvania Historical Association, Gettysburg, October 19, 2013

“Natural Rights, the Golden Rule, and Divine Retribution in Early National Slave Trade Debates,” at the annual meeting of the Omohundro Institute for Early American History and Culture, Baltimore, June 13-15, 2013

“Barbary Captivity, National Power, and the Defense of Slavery and the Slave Trade,” at the annual meeting of the Southern Historical Association, Baltimore, October 2011.

“The Eclipse of Moderation: African Colonization and the Missouri Crisis,” at the annual meeting of the Society of Historians of the Early American Republic, Philadelphia, July 2011

“Transatlantic Abolitionism in the Late Eighteenth Century,” at the Virginia Forum, Lexington VA, March 25, 2011

“John Randolph and the Politics of Slavery in Jeffersonian America,” at the Robert H. Smith International Center for Jefferson Studies, Fellow’s Forum, October 26, 2010

“Slavery, Security, and Sovereignty in the Orleans Territory, 1803-1812,” at the annual meeting of the Omohundro Institute for Early American History and Culture, Oxford, Mississippi, June 13, 2010

“‘A Sacrifice on the Altar of Slavery:’ The 1838 Disfranchisement of Black Pennsylvanians,” at the annual meeting of the Society of Historians of the Early American Republic, Springfield, Illinois, July 19, 2009

“Non-Importation not Abolition: The Importance of Commercial Language in the United States’ Prohibition of the African Slave Trade,” at The Closing of the Slave Trades: Transatlantic Perspectives, cosponsored by the Gilder-Lehrman Center and Queens University, Belfast, Northern Ireland, May 29, 2008

“‘Sin Against Heaven’ or Commercial Violation? The Language of British and American Prohibition of the Slave Trade,” at The Abolition of the British Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade: Telling the Story, College of the Bahamas at Nassau, February 22, 2008

RELATED EXPERIENCE & SERVICE

Program Director, History Minor	April 2025-present
Spring Hill College Retention Committee	Fall 2024-present
SHC Ignatian Seminar	Fall 2023-present
SHC Educational Policy and Academic Affairs Committee	Fall 2023-Spring 2025
SHC Justice, Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion Council	Fall 2022-Present
SHC Library and Instructional Resources Committee	Spring 2022-Spring 2025
SHC History Program Assessment Liaison	Spring 2022-Spring 2025
SHC Black History Month Planning Committee	Spring 2021-Present
SHC Curriculum Committee	Fall 2019-Present
Chair of Phi Alpha Theta History Honors Society SHC Chapter	Fall 2019-Present
Article Manuscript Reviewer, <i>Journal of American History</i>	2025
Book Manuscript Reviewer, Temple University Press	2020
Article Manuscript Reviewer, <i>Journal of the Early Republic</i>	2020+
Fellowship Jury, Fred W. Smith Library at Mount Vernon	2019
Article Manuscript Reviewer, <i>William and Mary Quarterly</i>	2018+
Article Manuscript Reviewer, <i>The Historian</i>	2018
Judge, National History Day, New Haven, CT	2016, 2017
Article Manuscript Reviewer, <i>Early American Studies</i>	2015
Article Manuscript Reviewer, <i>Intellectual History Review</i>	2015
Article Manuscript Reviewer, <i>Ohio Valley History</i>	2015
Research Assistant for Prof. Brian Balogh, UVA	2014

Advance Scanning and Proofreading, Documents Compass/Founders Online	2013-2014
Coordinator of the UVA-Monticello Early American Seminar	2012-2013
Article Manuscript Reviewer, <i>Essays in History</i>	2010-2014
Research Assistant, Virginia Center for Digital History, UVA	Summer 2010
Instructor, Saturday Enrichment Program, University of Virginia	January 2010
Graduate Assistant, Summer Transition Program, University of Virginia	Summer 2009
Research Assistant, African-American History, Monticello	Summer 2008
History Hunters Guide, Wyck House and Johnson House, Germantown, PA	2007
Public History Intern, Johnson House, Germantown, Philadelphia	2006
Interpreter, National Constitution Center, Philadelphia	2004-2007
Co-chair, Model United Nations, Monroe Township High School	2003-2004