THE SLAVE TRADE & ITS LEGACY IN THE US

Week 3:
The Emergence of Chattel Slavery
SCHEDULE

• First time: PIRATES! (The 1722 Battle of Cape Lopez)
• Last Time: What was slavery in America like at the time of the battle and how did that happen?
• Today: The battle resulted in British supremacy in the trade → The emergence of chattel slavery.
• Feb 2: The spread of chattel slavery to British American territories & beyond
• Feb 9: Slavery in the US compared to other places in the Americas
• Feb 16: Legacies
Last Time: Roman Slave Law

• Roman society had racism, but their slavery was NOT race-based
• No moral justification of enslavement
• Slavery was a state of being, not an identity
• Enslaved people were granted human rights and legal protections
• Enslaved people often held prestigious careers (education, medicine, politics, accounting)
• The Enslaved had opportunities of social mobility
• Enslaved could attain Roman citizenship after manumission
Last Time: Roman-style slavery in 5 colonial territories

Spanish Florida: 1513-1763, 1783-1821

British North America (13 Colonies): 1607-1776

Dutch New Amsterdam: 1624-1664

Swedish New Sweden: 1638 – 1655

French Louisiana (New France): 1682-1769, 1801-1803
WHAT CHANGES AFTER THE 1722 BATTLE OF CAPE LOPEZ?

Chattel Slavery: slavery is no longer an economic status, but an entrenched, race-based social caste. Enslaved PEOPLE were considered "slaves" who had the same status as objects or livestock. Their children were also deemed property, creating a hereditary system in which the enslaving society denied all human rights of the enslaved.
WILLIAM SNELGRAVE’S TIMELINE

- English Slave Trader (England -> West Africa -> Virginia)
- Captured in West Africa by Black Bart’s crew back in 1719
- 1722 Battle of Cape Lopez- pirate threat to the trade diminished
- Returned to the slave trade
- 1727 arrives at Whydah/Ouidah and meets King Agaja of Dahomey, who has come down to the coast to oversee the trade
- 1734 publishes his account, dedicates it to other slave traders
THE PORT CITY OF WHYDAH/OUIDAH
KING AGAJA AND THE DAHOMEY CONQUEST OF WHYDAH/OUIDAH 1727

King Agaja (1673-1740), ruled Dahomey 1718-1740
“One-Drop Rule” – Colloquial term for a number of laws passed in various states of the US, in which anyone of African ancestry was legally considered “Black,” and therefore not eligible for the human rights that white Americans had. The law is one consequence of chattel slavery.

“All children borne in this country shall be held bond or free only according to the condition of the mother.” - Virginia House of Burgesses
"Durin' slavery there were stockmen. They was weighed and tested. A man would rent the stockman and put him in a room with some young women he wanted to raise children from."

–Maggie Stenhouse, formerly enslaved in Arkansas

Work Projects Administration, *Slave Narratives: A Folk History of Slavery in the United States from Interviews with Former Slaves, Arkansas Narratives, Part 6*,

THE “DEVIL’S HALF-ACRE” IN RICHMOND (1830S – CIVIL WAR)