Reading the Past, Reimagining the Future

February 4, March 4, April 1, & May 6 @ 5:30pm-6:30pm via Zoom

Moderator: Julie J. Miller, Fox Center Postdoctoral Fellow

The past is a perplexing place. Historians study the lives of the dead, their ideas, and the events that transpired in their lives. That work is interesting but hard. Our understanding of the past shapes our understanding of the present and our goals for the future, so there is much at stake. The prophetic orator and abolitionist Frederick Douglass, who escaped slavery at the age of twenty in 1838, once wrote that “the point from which a thing is viewed is of some importance.” There is perhaps no better guide for historical study than that, and our seminar begins there. Our seminar will read the great Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, published for the first time in 1845, and during our weeks together, we will think about the ongoing course of slavery and freedom in the United States. We will also puzzle over how history is told and whose stories it tells.

This seminar will be moderated by United States historian Julie J. Miller, a Fox Center Postdoctoral Fellow, and will meet via Zoom from 5:30pm-6:30pm on the following Thursday evenings during the 2021 spring semester: February 4, March 4, April 1, and May 6. Participation is limited, and reservations are required. The Zoom meeting link will be sent via email the day before each session date. Everyone from the Atlanta community is welcome and invited to join us for this free seminar. For further information and to reserve a spot on a “first-come basis,” email the Fox Center at foxcenter@emory.edu.

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