

Ford/Knight Proposal 2014-2015

1. Directors:

Tom Hamm, Professor of History and Director of Special Collections
Betsy Schlabach, Assistant Professor of History

2. Title: "The Antislavery Movement in Indiana, 1800-1850"

3. Overview:

In 1851, an abolitionist minister touring Indiana wrote that the state was "a hard place for antislavery." In the spring semester of 2014-15 Tom Hamm and Betsy Schlabach propose working with a group of 4-6 students to study the antislavery movement in Indiana and explain why it was probably weaker here than in any other northern state before the Civil War. Although dozens of publications on antislavery, especially the Underground Railroad, appear every year, Indiana has received relatively little attention, perhaps because of the perception of a reform movement that did not thrive. We will make use of materials at Earlham, since Quakers dominated the antislavery movement in Indiana before 1850, but will need to do research in other repositories as well. This project will take special care to meter African Americans' participation in the anti-slavery effort and debate in antebellum Indiana.

We anticipate that we will divide the research by topics—for example, by religious denominations (Quaker, Presbyterian, Methodist, African Methodist Episcopal), or perhaps by resources (one person focusing on particular periodicals, another on antislavery society records, another on Underground railroad materials) or perhaps by subfields in history (African Americans, women, politics). We will make our decisions after gauging the strengths and interests of the students.

Our projected outcome is research that can be published as an article-length study and that might even form the foundation for a book. (The only book-length work on the subject is a 1938 dissertation.) Tom will bring to the study previous work on abolition and Quaker history. Betsy will contribute her expertise in African American history.

The antislavery movement was the first great movement for racial justice in U.S. history. Quakers, including a number connected with the founding of Earlham, were among its leaders in Indiana. The connection with the mission of the college is obvious.

4. Nature of the Work

The work will be collaborative in that students and faculty will be working together to do research in a variety of primary sources and evaluate what we can learn from them. We will begin by reading together some secondary works on antislavery, so that we will have a common understanding of the questions that

scholars have addressed. Then we will begin our research. Students will read minutes of local antislavery societies, antislavery newspapers, and abolitionist and fugitive slave memoirs, among other sources, and draw conclusions based on a critical reading of them.

Assessment will be by the norms of historical scholarship—in other words, are the student participants producing research, and written summaries of that research, that would meet the criteria for publication in a scholarly journal?

Participants will be held to the following:

1. regular attendance at weekly gatherings;
2. participation in discussion and sharing of research;
3. 15-20 page paper on their research topic
4. annotated bibliography;

Students will in turn evaluate the faculty director with standard Earlham Course and Teacher Evaluations.

5. Academic Preparation. Students should have coursework in U.S. history. Background in African American and/or Quaker history will be desirable.

6. Student Numbers. We expect to invite 4-6 students to participate.

7. Schedule. The project work will be in the spring 2015 semester. This will be ample time to make use of the materials on campus and travel to repositories in Indiana and Ohio. As noted above, Tom would like to undertake some research in the summer of 2014.

8. Release Time. Tom will be replaced in the Archives and Friends Collection. Because of Anne Thomason's departure, the status of archives staffing is at present uncertain. Either Tom's replacement money can go toward Anne's position/replacement, as was done in the past, or it might be used for a part-time clerical position. History is exploring how to replace Betsy in one course.

9. Budget

Hamm and Schlabach Replacement	\$16,000.00
Library materials—we anticipate purchasing some newspaper microfilm and a few books	\$ 500.00

We anticipate day trips for research in Indianapolis, where the Indiana Historical Society and the Indiana State Library hold relevant materials; and to Columbus, Ohio, where the Wilbur H. Siebert Collection has extensive material on the

Underground Railroad in Indiana. Assume 2 round trips to Indianapolis (300 miles) and 1 to Columbus (200 miles), 500 miles at 56.5 cents per mile comes to

Copying	\$ 50.00
Meals (4 people on 3 trips at \$10 per person)	\$120.00

Tom would like to do research at Haverford and Swarthmore in Philadelphia. These are the best Quaker repositories in North America (other than Earlham), and contain relevant materials. For example, the only known diary account of the convention that formed the Indiana State Anti-Slavery Society in 1838 is at Swarthmore. And Indiana Quakers regularly wrote to Friends in the east, whose papers are archived in the two Philadelphia libraries.

Philadelphia Costs:	Mileage (1,300)	\$650
	Hotel (8 nights at \$90 per night)	\$720
	Meals (\$30 a day)	\$240
	Copying	<u>\$100</u>
		\$1710

Budget Total: **\$18,662.50**

10. Impact on Teaching. In Tom’s case, this probably will not affect how I teach introductory U.S. history or my advanced course in Historiography. But it will allow me to return to a subject which has interested me for almost 40 years, and which I have touched on in several other published works. For Betsy, this will be an opportunity to incorporate more local Indiana history into both her introductory US History and African American History surveys as well as the Department’s America at Midpassage Course (History 362). Specifically, I can assign the documents as weekly reading material, incorporate documents into paper assignments, or organize field trips for students to visit the various sites mentioned above. I also see this topic blossoming into an upper division course on the Midwest and the history of race and racism. Finally, this will afford me the chance to revisit my research on antebellum women’s slave narratives and the Underground Railroad, which could also lead to courses in History and AAAS on the history of African American women.

11. Sharing Results: We plan to follow the History Department tradition of a presentation at one of the History Department lunches. We also think that the Levi Coffin House in Fountain City, which presents itself as the “Grand Central Station of the Underground Railroad,” is a likely venue.