

Writing Assignment

Saturday, December 6, 2003

Monticello and the Paradoxes of the American Enlightenment
Core Theme: The Constitution and American Democratic Institutions

Please answer the following three questions separately, typewritten, double-spaced, with standard margin and font, no more than two pages.

- ▶ How does Monticello illustrate Enlightenment principles? What are the intellectual foundations of Monticello?
- ▶ What can we learn about the practice of slavery, the slave community, and Jefferson's views on slavery from the Monticello plantation, its archaeological evidence, and Jefferson's writings?
- ▶ Choose one item from the Monticello collections (the Appendix will be quite helpful here) and describe three ways that you might use the object to illustrate or explain Monticello to your students.

Other things to think about (no need to answer these in writing):

- ▶ What can historians learn from the study of archaeology?
- ▶ What were the European influences on Monticello? What did Jefferson see as the positives and negatives of European culture, politics, and society?
- ▶ Was there anything "American" about the American Enlightenment?
- ▶ What Enlightenment principles are evident in Jefferson's letters? What qualities did Jefferson feel were necessary for an enlightened woman? What were his views on education? Religion?