

History 16A
Deep River: Exploration of the African American Experience
From the Pre-Columbian Period to the Reconstruction Era
Course Syllabus

El Camino College
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Labor Day	College Closed	September 7, 2009
Veterans Day	College Closed	November 13, 2009
Thanksgiving	College Closed	November 26-29, 2009

The Last day to drop from class with a “W” grade is Friday, November 20, 2009. It is the student’s responsibility to process an official withdrawal from class. Failure to do so may result in a letter grade of A through F. A student may drop a class or classes within the refund period and add another class or classes using the fees already paid. If a student drops after the refund deadline, payment of fees for the classes is forfeited. Any added class will require additional fees. A student may drop a class before the refund deadline and add a class with no additional fees. If a student drops a class after the refund deadline in order to add the same class at a different time, date instructor, the student must request a lateral transfer or level transfer from both instructors. All transfers are processed through the Admissions Office. (See page 5 of the ECC Schedule of Classes, Fall, 2009)

The semester ends Friday, December 18, 2009

Note: Please be advised that students are expected to follow the campus policy on student conduct which can be found in the ECC Campus Catalog. In this course students are expected to comply with the following:

1. Absolutely no Cell Phones or Pagers.
2. Gentlemen - no hats, caps, or scarfs.
3. No gum!

All students must come to class prepared to listen, participate, and take notes (tape recorders are allowed).

Course Objectives:

- ★ Explain and assess major theoretical models and historical methods used in traditional American in the study of African Americans.
- ★ Describe the diversity of the population of English North America during the sixteenth and seventh centuries with particular emphasis on class, race and gender.
- ★ Compare and contrast the institutions of the Spanish, French, and English colonies with emphasis on the contribution of Africans in each of these settlement patterns.
- ★ Analyze the influence of Puritanism on the English colonists and African immigrants.

- ★ Evaluate the causes of the American independence movement and the role of the American in the American Revolution.
- ★ Identify and analyze the major constitutional and political debates over the status of American slaves, Indians and women.
- ★ Identify and discuss the early national period of United States history with emphasis on the rise of political parties, economic developments, westward expansion, sectionalism and slavery.
- ★ Analyze Manifest Destiny and how it shaped United States policies toward Mexico, England, the American Indian and slavery.
- ★ Discuss and assess the failure of sectional politics, the debate over slavery and the role of African Americans in the national debates over these issues during 1850..
- ★ Identify and evaluate the position of African Americans in the major political and social movements of the Civil War and Reconstruction periods

Student Learning Outcome statement:

Upon the successful completion of this course students will be able to evaluate the validity of African American history from the Colonial period to the Era of Reconstruction and its relevance for contemporary society. Through assigned readings (primary and secondary), web sites, films and lecture materials, students will be able to identify major thoughts, ideas, and values that have been institutionalized in America customs, traditions, laws and rituals. Comprehension of this material will enable the student to persuasively develop, support, and articulate a cohesive and comprehensive historical thesis, with a sense of and an appreciation for American heritage and culture. .

The African American Experience, 1619-1877

Course Description: This course surveys the history of the United States to 1877 with particular emphasis on the role of the African American in shaping the American society. The contributions of African Americans to the economic, political, social and cultural development of the nation will be examined.

Required Texts:

Butler, **KINDRED** : Dan a modern black woman, is celebrating her twenty-sixth birthday with her new husband when she is snatched abruptly from her home in California and transported to the antebellum South.

Douglass, **NARRATIVE OF THE LIFE OF FREDERICK DOUGLASS, An American Slave**. This little book is the story about the meaning of slavery and freedom in antebellum America

Franklin, **FROM SLAVERY TO FREEDOM, A History of African Americans, Eight Edition, Vol. 1**: This volume effectively weaves social, cultural, economic, and political history to a vivid and coherent chronological narrative of the African American experience from the Trans Atlantic Slave Trade to the Era of Reconstruction.

Johnson, **LINCOLN, SLAVERY AND THE CIVIL WAR**, The story about the meaning of Abraham Lincoln, slavery and freedom in Civil War America.

Course Requirements and Grades:

A. There will be three (3) written examinations based on reading, film, web site and lecture materials. (Examinations and sample of Student grade report are included in this syllabus. Be sure to remember due dates.)

B. In this course articles, film and web sites when appropriate and possible will be used as historical sources. Students are required to complete a critique on each film or documentary assigned. Some of the films will be shown in class. Each critique is to be no less than two (2) typed written pages and is to be submitted examination day. Be sure to follow film critique guidelines. Completion of critiques and/or reviews on all assigned articles, films and web sites will constitute an examination grade.

C. Extra Credit: Credit can be earned by completing eight (8) to ten (10) extracurricular activities during the course of the semester. Such activities include: attending lectures, viewing of documentaries and feature films, Web sites, museum/library exhibits (please include brochure for library or museum) and articles pertaining to the subject matter of this course. All activities must be critiqued according to the guidelines specified in the critique forms provided in this student syllabus / handbook. Film critiques for extra credit are restricted to the History 16A film list. (That list you will find in this in this syllabus.). A minimum of eight and a maximum of ten critiques may be submitted in order to receive extra credit. (8 submissions= extra credit 'B'; ten submissions = extra credit 'A') All extra credit must be submitted December 8.

Course Schedule:

Weeks One - Five

Focus: Introduction to course.
American History and the Historical Method

The Validity of African American History

Reading: KINDRED (read all by next Tuesday)
FROM SLAVERY TO FREEDOM: Ch. 1
INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE. . . (THE TEXT)

Introduction to African American History
<http://journeytohistory.com/History16A/Readings.html>

Web Site:

Module 1: From the Land of their Ancestors, c. 1050 - 1619

Introduction to Module: (General summary of module)

Focus: Africa before European contact
The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade
Myths about Africa and the African
Caribbean Slave ports

Reading: FROM SLAVERY TO FREEDOM: Ch 2

Film: Africans in America, Part 1: The Terrible Transformation
Wonders of the African World: The Slave Kingdom

Web Sites: <http://www.pbs.org/wonders/frame3.htm>
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part1/title.html>

Time line
<http://journeytohistory.com/History16A/Timeline1.html>

Module 2: Slavery and Eighteenth Century American Culture, 1619 - 1776

Introduction to Module: (General summary of module)

Focus: The plantation system
Slavery in Colonial North America
Race, slavery and Revolution

Reading: FROM SLAVERY TO FREEDOM: chapters 3-4
Middle Passage (Included in syllabus)

Film: Thomas Jefferson, View From the Mountain
Sally Hemings: Defining History
Middle Passage

Web sites: <http://www.pbs.org/jefferson/>
<http://journeytohistory.com/History16A/Timeline1.html>

EXAMINATION 1: Examination file (including critiques) is due on **October 8, 2009**. Whatever section of the examination chosen is to be addressed in no less than ten (10) type written pages, double – spaced in either a size 10 or 12 font. Be sure that your name is on your papers. **USE HEADERS FOR EACH ONE OF YOUR PAGES.** You are allowed to use outside sources, but if you do, all quotations or ideas that are not your own must be cited. Do not use parenthetical footnotes. Use endnotes and include a bibliography. Be sure to attach all assigned film and web critiques to insure proper credit. (Make sure that your attachments are Microsoft Word documents. Process 2 hard copies of all your work for your records and save files in a History 16A directory on your hard drive.) No late papers!

Weeks Six – Ten

Module 3: Slavery and the American Revolution, 1776 - 1800

Focus: **Slavery and the American Revolutionary Philosophy**
African Americans fight for American Independence
The Birth of a New Nation
African Americans and the Constitution

Reading: FROM SLAVERY TO FREEDOM: chapter 5
Slavery and Social Death (Included in syllabus)
DOUGLASS

Film: Africans in America, Part 2: Revolution

Web sites: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part2/title.html>
<http://journeytohistory.com/History16A/Timeline1.html>

Module 4: Race and Slavery in the New Republic, 1800 - 1820

Introduction to Module: (General summary of module)

Focus: The Industrial Revolution
The Peculiar Institution and the Industrial Revolution

Reading: FROM SLAVERY TO FREEDOM: chapters 6 and 7
FREDERICK DOUGLASS
"Slavery and Social Death"

Film: Africans in America, Part 3: Brotherly Love

Web sites: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part3/title.html>
<http://journeytohistory.com/History16A/Timeline1.html>

EXAMINATION 2: Examination file (including critiques) is due on **November 12, 2009**. Whatever section of the examination chosen is to be addressed in no less than 10 (ten) type written pages, double – spaced in either a size 10 or 12 font. Be sure that your name is on your papers, **USE HEADERS FOR EACH ONE OF YOUR PAGES**. You are allowed to use outside sources, but if you do, remember, all quotations or ideas that are not your own must be cited. Do not use parenthetical footnotes. Use endnotes are acceptable and include a bibliography. Be sure to attach all assigned web critiques to insure proper credit. (Make sure that your attachments are **Microsoft Word documents**. Process hard copies of all your work for your record and save copies in a History 16A directory on your hard drive.) No late papers.

Week Eleven - Week Sixteen

Module 5: The Age of Reform

Focus: Free African American Community
The African-American vanguard
National Reform

Reading: FROM SLAVERY TO FREEDOM: chapters 8 and 9
The Negro Convention Movement (Essay included in syllabus)
FREDERICK DOUGLASS

Film: Frederick Douglass: When the Lion Wrote History
The Roots of Resistance, the Story of the Underground Railroad

Web sites: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/brown/>
<http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/slavery/>
<http://journeytohistory.com/History16A/Timeline1.html>

Module 6: A Nation Divided

- Focus:** The Debate over slavery
The coming of the Civil War
- Reading:** FROM SLAVERY TO FREEDOM: chapters 10 - 12
LINCOLN
“Slavery and the Origins of the Civil War” (Essay included in syllabus)
- Films:** The Civil War: The Causes
The American Experience: The 54th Regiment
Lincoln*
Africans in American, Part 4, Judgment Day
- Web sites:** <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/title.html>
<http://www.iupui.edu/~douglass/>
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/lincolns>

<http://journeytohistory.com/History16A/Timeline1.html>

EXAMINATION 3: Examination file (including critiques) **December 18, 2009.** Whatever section of the examination chosen is to be addressed in no less than ten (10) type written pages, double – spaced in either a size 10 or 12 font. Be sure that your name is on your papers. USE HEADERS FOR EACH ONE OF YOUR PAGES. You are allowed to use outside sources, but if you do, all quotations or ideas that are not your own must be cited. Do not use parenthetical footnotes. Use endnotes and include a bibliography. Be sure to attach all assigned film and web critiques to insure proper credit. (Make sure that your attachments are Microsoft Word documents. Process 2 hard copies of all your work for your records and save files in a History 16A directory on your hard drive.) No late papers!

Study Tips

(Succeeding in a History Courses)

Succeeding in an a traditional classroom setting

You still must:

Focus your attention

Be organized

Use your time wisely

Take responsibility for your learning

Be self-directed

Be willing to work and participate

Communicate effectively

Today's courses are making a shift from the passive learner model - where the student sits quietly in the classroom to the active learner model - where students interact and collaborate with one another.

What does this mean for you? - Participation is essential for everyone involved.

Tips on Time Management

Here are some tips for getting comfortable:

Do **take time to review your texts** and other documentation made available to you.

Do manage your time. You'll find that your time management skills will be critical in any class. It's very easy to spend either far too little time or far too much time on the class.

Set designated blocks of time to work on the class. This will help you stay up with the assignments and with the interaction required in most on-line classes.

Frequently check the calendar and/or course outline for assignments, quizzes, etc.

Ask for help right away if something isn't going right.

Getting Started With A New Course

Spending some in the first week familiarizing yourself with the course and course components can save you time later on. Here are some tips to assist you with this:

Read any documentation or hand outs (introductory letters, notes on logons and passwords, user manuals etc) before doing anything.

Read the course outline during the first week. Pay particular attention to assignment due dates. Mark these on your calendar.

Find out how to get in touch with your instructor. What is his/her e-mail address? Remember, if you have questions about the course or course content contact your instructor.

Look for the course schedule in the course. It could be posted in the calendar or in the course outline.

Quickly scan your text, manual or any reading materials. Are there questions or study activities that

will help you prepare for a test or exam?

Find out the structure of the course. Do you have self-tests to complete? Are you expected to participate in class discussions? How much participation is expected? Is participation graded and what is the criteria?

Communication and Communities

As always, effective communication is critical to success. In the classroom setting you'll be responsible for initiating contact, asking for help when needed, and sharing information with others. This communication is essential to forming a learning community where students learn best.

What you still have however, is the practice of courtesy and respect that apply in all classrooms. Here are some guidelines:

Participate. We need to hear your voice and to feel your presence. Your comments add to the information, the shared learning experience, and the sense of community in each class.

Be persistent. If you run into any difficulties, don't hesitate! Send a note or call your instructor immediately. Most problems are easily solved but we must hear from you before we can help.

Share tips, help, and questions. For many of us, taking courses is a new frontier. There are no dumb questions! Even if you think your solution is obvious, please share it, someone will appreciate it.

Don't be afraid to ask questions or make comments on the subject at hand.

Good Luck With Your Studies!

JOURNEY TO AMERICA

EXAMINATION 1: Examination file (including critiques) is due on **October 8, 2009**. **Whatever** section of the examination chosen is to be addressed in no less than seven (7) and no more than ten (10) type written pages, double – spaced in either a size 10 or 12 font. Be sure that your name is on your papers. **USE HEADERS FOR EACH ONE OF YOUR PAGES.** You are allowed to use outside sources, but if you do, all quotations or ideas that are not your own must be cited. **Do not** use parenthetical footnotes. Use endnotes and include a bibliography. Be sure to attach all assigned film, articles and web critiques for Modules **1** and **2** to insure proper credit. (Make sure that your attachments are **Microsoft Word documents**. Process hard copies of all your work for your record and save copies in a History 16A directory on your hard drive.) No late papers.

Drawing from your lecture, film, reading and web materials, essay on the following:

Section 1:

During the past few weeks we have had considerable discussion the roots of American slavery. In those discussion, we have learned that 16th and 17th Europeans were convinced, after contact with Africa, that the continent lacked the essential elements necessary for the development of civilization, thereby creating the myth, i.e., the notion of the "Dark Continent." On what premise is this myth based? What other myths were created? What impact did those myths have on the development of the views of the European and American society of the reluctant immigrant and his descendants to the North American Continent? How does the web site, "Africans in America: the Terrible Transformation," and the explanation of John Hope Franklin demonstrate that the European view of African and the African was incorrect? In what ways do those arguments and KINDRED support the validity of African American history.

Section 2:

The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade is considered one of the most significant phenomena in the history of the modern world. For a period of approximately 400 years Africans were brought out their homelands and made subject to the atrocities of the peculiar institution to fill the labor needs of the colonies in the New World. After careful consideration of the above statement, trace the development of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade.

Why has the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade been regarded as one of the most significant phenomena in the history of the modern world? What was the purpose of the trade? What did the European traders think of their African partners? As the trade begins to reach its peak during the 17th century, what impact did it have on European diplomatic relations? What were the consequences of the trade for Africa and for the Americas? What were the defining characteristics of slavery as it evolved in the British American colonies? How did those differ from the characteristics of slavery prior to the 15th century? How does slavery transform the New World, in particular, the emerging new American nation?

All Would Be Free

EXAMINATION 2: Examination file (including critiques) is due on **November 12, 2009**. Whatever section of the examination chosen is to be addressed in ten (10) type written pages, double – spaced in either a size 10 or 12 font. Be sure that your name is on your papers. **USE HEADERS FOR EACH ONE OF YOUR PAGES**. You are allowed to use outside sources, but if you do, all quotations or ideas that are not your own must be cited. **Do not** use parenthetical footnotes. Use endnotes and include a bibliography. Be sure to attach all assigned film, articles and web critiques for Modules 3 and 4 to insure proper credit. (Make sure that your attachments are Microsoft Word documents. Process hard copies of all your work for your record and save copies in a History 16A directory on your hard drive.) No late papers.

Drawing from your lecture, film, reading and web materials, essay on the following

Section One:

As "freedom fever" sweeps the British American colonies, enslaved Africans apply the rhetoric of liberty to their own continuing struggles. Blacks challenge white America to live up to the "natural rights" doctrine espoused in Revolutionary documents. Finding slaves and free black men among his newly mustered troops, George Washington initially bars blacks from further enlistment, but as his forces dwindle -- and thousands of slaves are lured into the British army by promises of freedom -- Washington establishes a black regiment. African Americans, enslaved and free, then face a difficult dilemma: which side of the conflict holds the greatest promise of freedom for black men and women?

What was "freedom fever"? How did it affect Europeans and Africans in the colonies? Why were some not inspired by "freedom fever"? What opportunities for freedom did the Revolutionary War offer? Who could take advantage of those opportunities? Who couldn't? Why? Why was it so difficult for Washington to maintain a colonial army? In what ways were the lives of Venture Smith and George Washington connected? What do their lives teach us about our shared history? After the Revolutionary War, was everyone in the former British colonies considered an American? Is this one of the greatest paradoxes of the American experience? What implications does it have for future generations of Americas?

Section Two:

"We the people... in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and posterity. . ."

Essay on the above statement as you trace the assess the issue of slavery during the Constitutional Convention of 1787. Who attended the convention? What did they have at stake? Consequently, what was their goal? What sacrifices if any were made to accomplish that goal? How did the framers of the Constitution address the issue of slavery? How was the issue resolved? Was their action or non action the prelude to the Civil War Conflict in the 1860s?

THE MARCH TO FREEDOM

EXAMINATION 1: Examination file (including critiques) is due on **December 17, 2009**. Whatever section of examination chosen is to be addressed in ten (10) type written pages, double – spaced in either a size 10 or 12 font. Be sure that your name is on your papers. **USE HEADERS FOR EACH ONE OF YOUR PAGES.** You are allowed to use outside sources, but if you do, all quotations or ideas that are not your own must be cited. Do not use parenthetical footnotes. Use endnotes and include a bibliography. Be sure to attach all assigned film, articles and web critiques for Modules 5 and 6 to insure proper credit. (Make sure that your attachments are Microsoft Word documents. Process hard copies of all your work for your record and save copies in a History 16A directory on your hard drive.) No late papers.

Complete the following:

Section One:

During the first half of the 19th century, Americans attempted to create what they considered to a perfect society. As they set about this task, there evolved several reform movements. These movements were of equal importance. However, the most famous or infamous, of these was the Abolitionist Crusade of the 1830s.

Who were the abolitionists of the 1830s? What was the nature of their approach to the debate over slavery and how did it differ from earlier anti-slavery movements? What made the Abolitionist Crusade controversial? How did the pro-slavery respond to the abolitionists? How did their approach to the controversy differ? In accessing the debate over slavery, which approach was, perhaps, the most **realistic**? What role did African American play in the controversy? How did the goals of African Americans differ from their white counter parts? What were the basic themes of the National Negro Convention Movement and how did they correspond to the goals of the African American abolitionists? How specifically did the lives of **Frederick Douglass** and **Sojourner Truth** demonstrate that African Americans had a natural claim to the opportunities the American society had to offer? How did their lives, in effect, represent the essence **AMERICANISM**? Did Douglass and Truth have a **messianic** vision of African Americans? Was this the **legacy** they left behind for future generations of African American and the American society as a whole?

Section Two:

In the 1850's, slavery presented the American society with such enormous political and social problems that the dispute between the sections of the country could only have been solved through extreme care. But the nation, it seems from the colonial period forward, in search of its identity was inhibited by its fears and so wrapped in change that there was no other recourse but Civil War.

How would you evaluate the coming of the Civil War? As you consider the development of the American society (economic development, social differences, sectionalism, slavery and racial issues, legal traditions, ways of thinking, ways of viewing the world) and in particular the ten year period (and their roots) preceding the war (1850-60), could the war have been avoided? What did the coming war mean to Abraham Lincoln and the North, the South and Frederick Douglass and the African American? What consequences, if any, did the war have for future generations of the American society? Who won the war?

Student Grade Assessment Report

Name: _____

Course: History 16A

Term: Fall, 2009

Examination no.: _____

Critiques no.: _____

Grade ____

Structure (logic of argument, organization of thoughts, ideas and points)

Satisfactory ____

Needs improvement ____

Unsatisfactory ____

Organization (sentence structure, paragraphing, grammar, etc.)

Satisfactory ____

Needs improvement ____

Unsatisfactory ____

Use of facts/evidence to support argument

Satisfactory ____

Needs improvement ____

Unsatisfactory ____

General Comments:

GUIDELINES FOR ESSAY EXAMINATIONS WORKSHEET

What is important in taking essay exams, especially in History and English classes, is integrating the material presented in lecture and the textbook(s) into a cohesive argument. Specifically, your essay should have a point or view; it should sway the reader into believing your assertions.

How do you do this effectively?

- 1) On the text itself, you will be presented with a series of questions/points about the given era, i.e. "The Gilded Age." It isn't critical that each point be examined in excruciating detail. Rather, devise a central argument or thesis, that the different points lead towards, i.e. "The Gilded Age ultimately had a negative affect on society." (NOTE: Put thesis at beginning or end of your first paragraph.)
- 2) Take a few minutes to think about your thesis statement and break it up into various sections, or topic sentences, i.e. "How did the Gilded Age affect the individual? How did the Gilded Age affect industry?", etc. Each of these supporting topics paragraphs should consist of a well-developed thought that can be substantiated by a few details/facts (Dates are fine, but don't waste time memorizing countless dates because they won't turn a "B" paper into an "A"). The details/facts should come from the lecture, readings, films, discussion, or all. But, **AVOID GIVING YOUR OWN OPINION FOR ANY GREAT LENGTH OF TIME**, unless specifically solicited.
- 3) Time constraints are an obvious and acknowledged consideration. Consequently, I can't expect essays that are poetic and perfectly created. Instead, try to develop a cohesive introduction and body with sound logical analysis. If it doesn't make sense to you when you write it, it won't make sense to me when I read it. Try to write legibly, and if you have a genetic predisposition towards sloppiness, skip a line...please!
- 4) Understand the difference between there ("over there"), their ("Their car); and it's ("it is a hard test") and its ("the dog lost its collar"). Granted, the distinction is obvious. But, if last year is any indication, people ignore the obvious (in large quantities!)
- 5) The conclusion shouldn't merely restate the thesis word for word. Rather, it should touch on the thesis in light of the supporting evidence that you have (hopefully) presented.

Article Review Form

Name: _____ Date _____

Title and number of article: _____

Briefly state the main ideas of the article: _____

List three important facts that the author uses to support the main idea:

What information or ideas discussed in this article are also discussed in your textbook or other reading you have done? List the text chapters and page numbers: _____

List any examples of bias or faulty reason that you found in the article:

List any new terms/concepts that were discussed in the article and write a short definition:

Film Critique worksheet*

Title of film:

(Before viewing the film, consider the title, and what you think you will see in this film?)

VIEWING:

Film Classification (choose all that apply):

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fiction | <input type="checkbox"/> Documentary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newsreel | <input type="checkbox"/> Propaganda |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Theatrical short subject | <input type="checkbox"/> Training film |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Combat film | <input type="checkbox"/> Animated cartoon |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

Physical qualities of the film (choose all that apply):

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Narration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special effects | <input type="checkbox"/> Color |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Live Action | <input type="checkbox"/> Background noise |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Animation | <input type="checkbox"/> Dramatization |

What is the mood or tone of the film? (Consider how camera angles, lighting, music, narration, and/or editing contribute to creating an atmosphere in this film)

Does the film effectively convey its message? As a tool of communication, what are its strengths and weaknesses?

How do you think the film maker wanted the audience to respond?

Does this film appeal more to the viewer's reason or emotion? How does it make you feel?

What does this film tell you about life in the United States at the time it was made?

What questions do you have that were left unanswered by the film?

What information have you gained about the event or subject matter under discussion that would not be conveyed by a written source?

What is the central message of this film?

Would you recommend this film as an effective study tool?.

Critique is to be 2 typewritten (doubled spaced) pages in length and 10 or 12 font only.

WEB SITE CRITIQUE WORKSHEET

Name of web site: _____

URL (address): _____

Critique should include:

1. Brief description of this location.

2. An evaluation of the specific focus of this assignment.

Ask yourself:

(a.) how accurate is this information?

(b.) how objective is this information?

(c.) how recent is this information?

(d.) how much coverage (scope)?

3. Would you recommend this site? Why or why not?

4. Did you find other links worth visiting? (If, yes, list the link(s).)

Critique is to be 2 typewritten (doubled spaced) pages in length and 10 or 12 font only..

LECTURE CRITIQUE WORKSHEET

Lecture Title: _____

Name of Lecturer: _____

Date and Place of Lecture: _____

IN YOUR CRITIQUE FOCUS ON ...

1. Theme (s) i.e. thesis of the lecture.
2. What are the main points of the lecture?
3. EFFECTIVENESS of lecture /lecturer as to:
 - A. organization (does argument follow progression?)
 - B. persuasiveness (delivery)
 - C. use of evidence
 - Primary Sources: (letters, diary accounts, photographs, film footage from the actual event)
 - Secondary Sources: (second hand information)
 - D. use of multi-media materials.
4. Does the lecturer prove the validity of the thesis?
5. What significant questions were raised by presentation?
6. What contributions did the presentation make to the study of history?

Critique is to be 2 typewritten (doubled spaced) pages in length and 10 or 12 font only.

HISTORICAL BOOK REVIEW WORKSHEET

This is a book review, not a book report. The purpose of this assignment is to introduce the reader to critiquing a historical thesis. Thus the following should be considered:.

1. The thesis, original premise, or hypothesis of the book.
2. The sources used by the author to advance his thesis.
3. The scope of the book. (Areas or topics covered in the book.)
4. Major points of the book. (Consider how the author develops his points.)
5. Minor points worth mentioning.
6. Does the author do what he intends?
7. Are there any points that were not covered that should have been?
8. How would you compare this work with others you have read on the subject?
9. Have you learned anything from this work?
10. Would you recommend this work to others? If so, why? If not, why not?

(It might be a good idea to go to the library and read some historical book reviews.)

Review is to be 3 typewritten (doubled spaced) pages in length and 10 or 12 font only.

MUSEUM CRITIQUE WORKSHEET

Name of Museum/Library

Location:

Purpose of Museum/Library:

CRITICISM: Your criticism should focus on

- (1) the theme of the current exhibition.
- (2) the effectiveness of the display.
- (3) the why and how of the exhibition.
- (4) the broader social and political context of the exhibition.
- (5) whether you would recommend this exhibition (why or why not)?
- (6) what improvements, if any, would you make in the exhibition?

Critique is to be 2 typewritten (doubled spaced) pages in length and 10 or 12 font only..

Middle Passage
Robert Hayden

I

Jesús, Estrella, Esperanza, Mercy:

Sails flashing to the wind like weapons,
sharks following the moans the fever and the dying;
horror the compass and compass rose.

Middle Passage:
voyage through death
to life upon these shores.

"10 April 1800--
Blacks rebellious. Crew uneasy. Our linguist says
their moaning is a prayer for death,
our and their own. Some try to starve themselves.
Lost three this morning leaped with crazy laughter
to the waiting sharks, sang as they went under."

Desire, Adventure, Tartar, Ann:

Standing to America, bringing home
black gold, black ivory, black seed.

Deep in the festering hold thy father lies, of his bones
New England pews are made, those are altar lights that were his eyes.

Jesus Saviour Pilot Me
Over Life's Tempestuous Sea

We pray that Thou wilt grant, O Lord,
safe passage to our vessels bringing
heathen souls unto Thy chastening.

Jesus Saviour

"8 bells. I cannot sleep, for I am sick
with fear, but writing eases fear a little
since still my eyes can see these words take shape
upon the page & so I write, as one
would turn to exorcism. 4 days scudding,
but now the sea is calm again. Misfortune
follows in our wake like sharks (our grinning
tutelary gods). Which one of us
has killed an albatross? A plague among
our blacks--Ophthalmia: blindness--& we
have jettisoned the blind to no avail.
It spreads, the terrifying sickness spreads.
Its claws have scratched sight from the Capt.'s eyes
& there is blindness in the fo'c'sle
& we must sail 3 weeks before we come
to port."

What port awaits us, Davy Jones' or home? I've
heard of slavers drifting, drifting, playthings of wind and storm and
chance, their crews gone blind, the jungle hatred crawling
up on deck.

Thou Who Walked On Galilee

"Deponent further sayeth The Bella J
left the Guinea Coast
with cargo of five hundred blacks and odd
for the barracoons of Florida:

"That there was hardly room 'tween-decks for half
the sweltering cattle stowed spoon-fashion there;
that some went mad of thirst and tore their flesh
and sucked the blood:

"That Crew and Captain lusted with the comeliest
of the savage girls kept naked in the cabins;
that there was one they called The Guinea Rose
and they cast lots and fought to lie with her:

"That when the Bo's'n piped all hands, the flames
spreading from starboard already were beyond
control, the negroes howling and their chains
entangled with the flames:

"That the burning blacks could not be reached,
that the Crew abandoned ship,
leaving their shrieking negresses behind,
that the Captain perished drunken with the wenches:

"Further Deponent sayeth not."

Pilot Oh Pilot Me

II

Aye, lad, and I have seen those factories,
Gambia, Rio Pongo, Calabar;
have watched the artful mongos baiting traps
of war wherein the victor and the vanquished

Were caught as prizes for our barracoons.
Have seen the nigger kings whose vanity
and greed turned wild black hides of Fellatah,
Mandingo, Ibo, Kru to gold for us.

And there was one--King Anthracite we named him--
fetish face beneath French parasols
of brass and orange velvet, impudent mouth
whose cups were carven skulls of enemies:

He'd honor us with drum and feast and conjo
and palm-oil-glistening wenches deft in love,

and for tin crowns that shone with paste,
red calico and German-silver trinkets

Would have the drums talk war and send
his warriors to burn the sleeping villages
and kill the sick and old and lead the young
in coffles to our factories.

Twenty years a trader, twenty years,
for there was wealth aplenty to be harvested
from those black fields, and I'd be trading still
but for the fevers melting down my bones.

III

Shuttles in the rocking loom of history,
the dark ships move, the dark ships move,
their bright ironical names
like jests of kindness on a murderer's mouth;
plough through thrashing glister toward
fata morgana's lucent melting shore,
weave toward New World littorals that are
mirage and myth and actual shore.

Voyage through death,
voyage whose chartings are unlove.

A charnel stench, effluvium of living death
spreads outward from the hold,
where the living and the dead, the horribly dying,
lie interlocked, lie foul with blood and excrement.

Deep in the festering hold thy father lies, the corpse of mercy
rots with him, rats eat love's rotten gelid eyes. But, oh, the
living look at you with human eyes whose suffering accuses you, whose
hatred reaches through the swirl of dark to strike you like a leper's
claw. You cannot stare that hatred down or chain the fear that stalks
the watches and breathes on you its fetid scorching breath; cannot
kill the deep immortal human wish, the timeless will.

"But for the storm that flung up barriers
of wind and wave, The Amistad, señores,
would have reached the port of Príncipe in two,
three days at most; but for the storm we should
have been prepared for what befell.
Swift as a puma's leap it came. There was
that interval of moonless calm filled only
with the water's and the rigging's usual sounds,
then sudden movement, blows and snarling cries
and they had fallen on us with machete
and marlinspike. It was as though the very
air, the night itself were striking us.
Exhausted by the rigors of the storm,
we were no match for them. Our men went down
before the murderous Africans. Our loyal

Celestino ran from below with gun
and lantern and I saw, before the cane-
knife's wounding flash, Cinquez,
that surly brute who calls himself a prince,
directing, urging on the ghastly work.
He hacked the poor mulatto down, and then
he turned on me. The decks were slippery
when daylight finally came. It sickens me
to think of what I saw, of how these apes
threw overboard the butchered bodies of
our men, true Christians all, like so much jetsam.
Enough, enough. The rest is quickly told:
Cinquez was forced to spare the two of us
you see to steer the ship to Africa,
and we like phantoms doomed to rove the sea
voyaged east by day and west by night,
deceiving them, hoping for rescue,
prisoners on our own vessel, till
at length we drifted to the shores of this
your land, America, where we were freed
from our unspeakable misery. Now we
demand, good sirs, the extradition of
Cinquez and his accomplices to La
Havana. And it distresses us to know
there are so many here who seem inclined
to justify the mutiny of these blacks.
We find it paradoxical indeed
that you whose wealth, whose tree of liberty
are rooted in the labor of your slaves
should suffer the August John Quincey Adams
to speak with so much passion of the right
of chattel slaves to kill their lawful masters
and with his Roman rhetoric weave a hero's
garland for Cinquez. I tell you that
we are determined to return to Cuba
with our slaves and there see justice done.
Cinquez--
or let us say 'the Prince'--Cinquez shall die."

The deep immortal human wish,
the timeless will:

Cinquez its deathless primaveral image,
life that transfigures many lives.

Voyage through death
to life upon these shores.

Slavery and Social Death

By

Orlando Patterson

The practice of slavery has endured throughout human history, existing in variety of societies into the twentieth century. In the most comprehensive current analysis of different slave systems, Orlando Patterson, professor of sociology at Harvard University, discusses the common characteristics of slavery over the ages. His twelve-year long project involved the comparison of sixty-six slaveholding societies.

Slavery is an extreme form of domination of one person by another that is, Patterson argues, a form of social parasitism. It originated as a substitute for certain death, such as sparing condemned prisoners of war, and was maintained through brutality. "Slavery," he writes, "is the permanent, violent domination of naturally alienated and generally dishonored persons." By natal alienation, Patterson means that the slave lost a birthright to his or her own cultural existence beyond what the master permitted, thus experiencing a kind of social death. Slaves still formed strong personal ties, but masters did not recognize these relations as legitimate. Slaves in the United States, for example, had consensual marriage, but the institution did not carry the weight of law. The lack of power and the inability to create an independent social existence made the slave a dishonored figure without public worth in the master's society.

All human relationships are structured and defined by the relative power of the interacting persons. Power, in Max Weber's terms, is "that opportunity existing within a social relationship which permits one to carry out one's will even against resistance and regardless of the basis on which this opportunity rests." Relations of inequality or domination, which exist whenever one person has more power than another, range on a continuum from those of marginal asymmetry to those in which one person is capable of exercising, with impunity, total power over another. Power relationships differ from one another not only in degree, but in kind. Qualitative differences result from the fact that power is a complex human faculty, although perhaps not as "sociologically amorphous" as Weber thought.

Slavery is one of the most extreme forms of the relation of domination, approaching the limits of total power from the viewpoint of the master, and of total powerlessness for the viewpoint of the slave. Yet it differs from other forms of extreme domination in very special ways. If we are to understand how slavery is distinctive, we must first clarify the concept of power.

The power relation has three facets. The first is social and involves the use or threat of violence in the control of one person by another. The second is the psychological facet of influence, the capacity to persuade another person to change the way he perceives his interests and his circumstances. And third is the cultural facet of authority, "the means of transforming force into right and obedience into

duty" which, according to Jean Jacques Rousseau, the powerful find necessary "to ensure their continual mastership." Rousseau felt that source of "legitimate powers" lay in those "conventions" which today we would call culture. But he did not specify the area of this vast human domain in which the source of authority was to be found. Nor for that matter, did Weber, the leading modern student of the subject... Authority rests on the control of those private and public symbols and ritual processes that induce (and seduce) people to obey because they feel satisfied and dutiful when they do so.

With this brief anatomy of power in mind we may now ask how slavery is distinctive as a relation of domination. The relation has three sets of constituent features corresponding to the three facets of power. It is unusual, first, both in the extremity of power involved, and all that immediately implies, and in the qualities of coercion that brought the relation into being and sustained it. As Georg Hegel realized, total personal power taken to its extreme contradicts itself by its very existence, for total domination can become a form of extreme dependence on the object of one's power, and total powerlessness can become the secret path to control of the subject that attempts to exercise such power. Even though such sublation is usually only a potential, the possibility of its realization influences the normal course of the relation in profound ways...

The coercion underlying the relation of slavery is also distinctive in its etiology and its composition. In one of the liveliest passages of

the *Grundrisse*, Karl Marx, while discussing the attitudes of former masters and slave in post emancipation Jamaica, not only shows clearly that he understood slavery to be first and foremost “a relation of domination” (his term and a point worth emphasizing in view of what has been written by some recent “Marxists” on the subject) but identifies the peculiar role of violence in creating and maintaining that domination. Commenting on the fact that the Jamaican ex-slaves refused to work beyond what was necessary for their own subsistence, he notes: “They have ceased to be slave, ... not in order to become wage laborers, but, instead, self-sustaining peasants working for their own consumption. As far as they are concerned, capital does not exist as capital, because autonomous wealth as such can exist only either on the basis of *direct* forced labour, slavery, or *indirect* forced labour, *wage labour*. Wealth confronts direct forced labour not as capital, but rather as *relation of domination*” (emphasis in original). It is important to stress that Marx was not saying that the master interprets the relationship this way, that the master is in any way necessarily precapitalist. Indeed, the comment was provoked by a November 1857 letter to the *Times* of London from a West Indian planter who, in what Marx calls “an utterly delightful cry of outrage,” was advocating the reimposition of slavery in Jamaica as the only means of getting the Jamaicans to generate surplus in a capitalistic manner once again.

Elizabeth Welskopf, the late East German scholar who was one of the leading Marxist students of slavery, discussed at great length the critical role of direct violence in creating and maintaining slavery. Force, she argued, is essential for all class societies. Naked might-violence, in George Sorrel’s terminology – is essential for the creation of all such systems. However, organized force and authority- what Welskopf calls “spiritual force”- usually obviated the need to use violence in most developed class societies where nonslaves made up the dominated class. The problem in a slaveholding society, however, was that it was usually necessary to introduce new persons to the status of slaves because the former slaves either died out or were manumitted. The workers who is fired remains a worker, to be hired elsewhere. The slave who was freed was no longer a slave. Thus it was necessary continually to repeat the original, violent act of transforming free man into slave. This act of violence constitutes the prehistory of all stratified societies, Welskopf argued, bit is

determines both “ the prehistory and (concurrent) history of slavery.” To be sure, there is the exceptional case of the Old South in the United States, where the low incidence of manumission and the high rate of reproduction obviated the need continually to repeat the violent “ original accumulation” of slaves. While Welskopf does not consider this case (her concern is primarily with the ancient worked), her analysis is nonetheless relevant, for she goes on to note that the continuous use of violence in the slave order was also make necessary but the low motivation of the slave to work-by the need to reinforce reward with the treat and actuality of punishment, Thus George P. Rawick has written of the antebellum South: “Whipping was not only a method of punishment. It was a conscious device to impress upon the slave that wee slaves; it was a crucial form of social control particularly if we remember that it was very difficult for slave to runaway successfully.”

But Marx and the Marxists were not the first to recognize fully the necessity or the threat of naked force as the basis of the master slave relationship. It was a North Carolina judge, Thomas Ruffin, who in his 1829 decision that the intentional wounding of a hired slave by his hirer did not constitute a crime, articulated better than any other commentator before or after, the view that the master slave relationship originated in and was maintained by brute force. He wrote:

With slavery... the end is the profit of t the master, his security and the public safety; the subject, one doomed in his own person, and his posterity, to live without knowledge, and without the capacity to make anything his own, and to toil that another may reap his fruits. What moral considerations such as a father might give to a son shall be addressed to such a being, to convince him what it is impossible but that the most stupid must feel and know can never be true-that he is thus to labour upon a principle of natural duty, or for the sake of his own personal happiness. Such services can only be expected from one who has no will of his own; who surrenders his will in implicit obedience in the consequence only of uncontrolled authority over the body. There is nothing else which can operate to produce the effect. The power of the master must be absolute, to render the submission of the slave perfect.

Justice Ruffin may have gone a little too far in what Robert M. Cover describes as “his eagerness to conform the reality of unpleasant iron fist beneath the law’s polite, neutral language.” He certainly underestimated the role of “moral considerations,” to use his term, in the relationship. But his opinion did penetrate to the heart of what was most fundamental in the relation of slavery... There is no known slaveholding society where the whip was not considered an indispensable instrument.

Another feature of the coercive aspect of slavery is its individualized condition; the slave was usually powerless in relations to another individual. We may conveniently neglect those cases where the slave formally belonged to a corporation such as a temple, since there was always an agent in the form of a specific individual who effectively exercised the power of a master. In his powerless the slave became an extension of his master’s power. He was a human surrogate, recreated by his master with god-like power in his behalf. Nothing in Hegel or Friedrich Nietzsche more frighteningly captures the audacity of power and ego expansion than the view of the Ahaggar Tuaregs of the Sahara that “without the master the slave does not exist, and he is socializable only through the master.” And they came as close to blasphemy as their Islamic creed allowed in popular saying of the Kel Gress Group: “All persons are created by God, the slave is created by the Tuareg.”

These Tuareg sayings are not only extraordinarily reminiscent of Ruffin’s opinion but of what Henri Wallon, in his classic study, wrote of the meaning of slavery in ancient Greece.

The slave was dominated thing, an animated instrument, a body with natural movements, but without its own reason, an existence entirely absorbed in another. The proprietor of this thing, the mover of his instruments, the soul and the reason of this body, the source of this life, was the master. The master was everything for him: his father and his god, which is to say, his authority and his duty... Thus, god, fatherland, family, existence, are all, for the slave, identified with the same being; there was nothing which made for the social person, nothing which made for the moral person, that was not the same as his personality and his individuality.

Perhaps the most distinctive attribute of the slave’s powerlessness was that it always

originated (or was conceived of as having originated) as a substitute for death, usually violent death. Ali Abd Elwahed, in an unjustly neglected comparative work, found that “all the situations which created slavery were those which commonly would have resulted, either from natural or social laws, in the death of the individual.” Arche typically, slavery was a substitute for death in ear. But almost as frequently, the death commuted was punishment for some capital offense, or death from exposure or starvation.

The condition of slavery did not absolve or erase the prospect of death. Slavery was not a pardon; it was, peculiarly, a conditional commutation. The execution was suspended only as long as the slave acquiesced in his powerlessness. The master was essentially a ransomer. What he bought or acquired was the slave’s life, and restraints on the master’s capacity wantonly to destroy his slave did undermine his claim on that life. Because the slave had no socially recognized existence outside of his master, he became a social nonperson.

This brings us to the second constituent element of the slave relation: the slave’s natal alienation. Here we move to the cultural aspect of the relation, to that aspect of it which rests on authority, on the control of symbolic instruments. This is achieved in a unique way in the relation of slavery: the definition of the slave, however recruited, as a socially dead person. Alienated from all “rights or claims of birth, he ceased to belong in his own right to any legitimate social order. All slaves experienced, in at the very least, a secular excommunication.

Not only was the slave denied all claims on, and obligations to, his parents and living blood relations but, by extension, all such claims and obligations on his more remote ancestors and on his descendants. He was truly a genealogical isolate. Formally isolated in his social relations with those who lived, he also was culturally isolated from the social heritage of his ancestors. He had a past, to be sure. But a past is not a heritage. Everything has a history, including sticks and stones. Slaves differed from other human beings in that they were not allowed freely to integrate the experience of those ancestors into their lives, to inform their understanding of social reality with inherited meanings of their natural forebears, or anchor the living present in any conscious community of memory. That they reached back for the past, as they reached out for the related living, there can be doubt. Unlike

other persons, doing so meant struggling with and penetrating the iron curtain of the master, his community, his laws, his policemen or patrollers, and his heritage.

In the struggle to reclaim the past the odds were stacked even more heavily in favor of the master than in the attempt to maintain links with living relatives. One of the most significant findings of Michael Craton's study of the oral history of the descendants of the Worthy Park plantation slaves of Jamaica was the extraordinary shallowness of their genealogical and historical memory. The same is attested by the recorded interviews with American ex-slaves.

When we say that the slave was natally alienated and ceased to belong independently to any formally recognized community, this does not mean that he or she did not experience or share informal social relations. A large number of works have demonstrated that slaves in both ancient and modern times had strong social ties among themselves. The important point, however, is that these relationships were never recognized as legitimate or binding. Thus American slaves, like their ancient Greco-roman counterparts, had regular sexual unions, but such unions were never recognized as marriages; both groups were attached to their local communities, but such attachments had no binding force; both sets of parents were deeply attached to their children, but the parental bond had no social support.

Even if such forcible separations occurred only infrequently, the fact that they were possible and that from time to time they did take place was enough to strike terror in the hearts of all slaves and transform significantly the way they behaved and conceived of themselves. Nothing comes across more dramatically from the hundreds of interviews with American ex-slaves than the fear of separation. Peter Clifton, an eighty-nine-year-old ex-slave from South Carolina, was typical when he said: "Master Biggers believe in whippin' and workin' his slaves long and hard; then a man was scared all de time of being sold away from his wife and chillun. His bark was worse than his bite tho', for I never knowed him to do a wicked this lak dat."

Isaiah Butler, another South Carolina ex-slave, observed: "Dey didn't have a jail in dem times. Dey'd whip em, and dey'd sell 'em. Every slave know what 'I'll put you in my pocket, Sir' mean."

The independent constituent role of natal alienation in the emergence of slavery is vividly illustrated by the early history of slavery in America. Winthrop D. Jordan has shown that in

the early decades of the seventeenth century there were few marked differences in the conception of black and white servitude, the terms "slave" and "servant" being used synonymously. The power of the master over both black and white servants was near total: both could be whipped and sold.

Gradually there emerged, however, something new in the conception of the black servant: the view that he did not belong to the same community of Christian, civilized Europeans. The focus of this "we-they" distinction was at first religious, later racial. "Enslavement was captivity, the loser's lot in a contest of power. Slaves were infidels or heathens." But as Jordan argues, although the focus may have changed, there was really a fusion of race, religion, and nationality in a generalized conception of "us"- "white, English, free - and "them" - black, heathen, slave. "From the first, the vis-à-vis the Negro the concept embedded in the term Christian seems to have conveyed much of the idea and feeling of *we* as against *they*: to be Christian was to be civilized rather than barbarous, English rather than African, white rather than black." The strangeness and seeming savagery of the Africans, reinforced by traditional attitude and the context of early contact, "were major components in that sense of *difference* which provided the mental margin absolutely requisite for placing the European on the deck of the slave ship and the Negro in the hold..."

I prefer the term 'natal alienation,' because it goes directly to the heart of what is critical in the slave's forced alienation, the loss of ties of birth in both ascending and descending generations. It also has the important nuance of a loss of native status, of deracination. It was this alienation of the slave from all formal, legally enforceable ties of "blood," and from any attachment to groups or localities other than those chosen for him by the master, that gave the relation of slavery its peculiar value to the master. The slave was the ultimate human tool, as imprintable and as disposable as the master wished...

The peculiar character of violence and the natal alienation of the slave generated the third constituent element of slavery: the fact that slaves were always persons who had been dishonored in a generalized way. Here we move to the sociopsychological aspect of this unusual power relationship. The slave could have no honor because of the origin of his status, the indignity and all-pervasiveness of his indebtedness, his absence of any independent

social existence, but most of all because he was without power except through another.

Honor and power are intimately linked. No one understood this more than Thomas Hobbes. In the chapter of *Leviathan* in which he sets out to define his central concept—power—and related conditions, Hobbes devotes more than two-thirds of his efforts to a detailed disquisition on the nature of honor. Fully recognizing that honor is a social-psychological issue, Hobbes wrote: “The manifestation of the Value we set on one another, is that which is commonly called *Honouring*, and *Dishonouring*. To Value a man at a high rate, is to *Honour* him; at a low rate, is to *Dishonour* him. But high, and low, in this case, is to be understood by comparison to the rate that direct: “To obey, is to Honour; because no man obeys them, whom they think have no power to help, or hurt them. And consequently to disobey, is to Dishonour.” Somewhat cynically, Hobbes observes that it really does not matter “whether an action ... be just or unjust: for Honour consisteth onely in the opinion of Power.”...

The slave, as we have already indicated, could have no honor because he had no power and no independent social existence, hence no public worth. He had no name of his own to defend. He could only defend his master’s worth and master’s name. That the dishonor was a generalized condition must be emphasized, since the free and honorable person, ever alive to slights and insults, occasionally experiences specific acts of dishonor to which, of course, he or she responds by taking appropriate action. The slave, as we shall see, usually stood outside the game of honor...

The counterpart of the master’s sense of honor is the slave’s experience of its loss. The so-called servile personality is merely the outward expression of this loss of honor...

It was in the interaction between master and slave that such feelings were expressed and played out. Clearly, no authentic human relationship was possible where violence was the ultimate sanction. There could have been no trust, no genuine sympathy; and while a kind of love may sometimes have triumphed over this most perverse form of interaction, intimacy was usually calculating and sadomasochistic.

Occasionally we get a glimpse of the relationship in action from incidents recalled by American ex-slaves. This is how Grace Gibson from South Carolina described the moment when she was given as a present to her young mistress:

I was called up on one of her [Miss Ada’s] birthdays, and Marster Bob sorta looked out de corner of his eyes, first at me and then at Miss Ada, and then he make a little speech. He took my hand, put it in Miss Ada’s hand, and say: “Dis your birthday present, darlin’.” I make a curtsy and Miss Ada’s eyes twinkle like a star and she take me in her room and took on powerful over me.

Frederick Douglass, undoubtedly the most articulate former slave who ever lived, repeatedly emphasized as the central feature of slavery the loss of honor and its relation to the loss of power. After physically resisting a brutal white who had been hired by his exasperated master to break him, Douglass, whose spirit had nearly broken and who had run the risk of being executed for his resistance, recalls that he felt “a sense of my own manhood.... I was nothing before, I was a man now.” And he adds in a passage for which this chapter may be read as an extended exegesis: “A man without force is without the essential dignity of humanity. Human nature is so constituted that it cannot honor a helpless man, although it can pity him and even that it cannot do long, if the signs of power so no arise.”

At this point we may offer a preliminary definition of slavery on the level of personal relations: *slavery is the permanent, violent domination of naturally alienated and generally dishonored persons.*

Slavery in American Society, Lawrence B. Goodheart, Richard D. Brown, and Stephen G. Rabe (3d ed., 1993) Chapter One what is slavery: Orlando Patterson, "Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study," pages 3-12 copyright 1982 Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press Copyright 1982 by the President and Fellows of Harvard College

The Negro Convention Movement

William H. Pease and Jane H. Pease

*Jane Pease and William Pease are both members of the history department at the university of Maine in Orono. Together, they have written extensively on the antislavery movement and black history. They are coauthors of *Black Utopia: Negro Communal Experiments in America* (State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1963) and coeditors of the *Antislavery Argument* (Bobbs-Merill, 1965). In the following essay, Mr. and Mrs. Pease describe the evolution of the Negro convention movement in the North during the thirty years before Emancipation, portraying the convention meetings as a vehicle of black self-expression and a means of moving toward group identity as well as a device for social and political reform.*

On September 20, 1830, between two and three dozen blacks representing five free states and two slave states gathered in Bethel Church, Philadelphia, for a five-day meeting. There they proposed to study the problems, needs, and interests of free Negroes throughout the United States and to explore ways of improving their condition.

That they met when they did was not surprising. Convention in support of such causes as temperance, peace, and religion were, like political conventions, a newly popular means of group action. More important, the second great wave of American antislavery activity was just beginning. Benjamin Lundy had been publishing his antislavery newspaper, the *Genius of Universal Emancipation*, for nine years; William Lloyd Garrison was about to launch his *Liberator*. Old local and state manumission societies, long actively attempting to mitigate the evils of slavery, would soon be reinforced by abolitionist societies whose goal was total emancipation. Likewise, free Negroes would increasingly seek to express their Hamilton, advised, "it is highly necessary [that] the free people of color should combine, and closely attend to their own particular interest."¹

own feelings and to improve their position in American society.

In 1827 Samuel E. Cornish, editor of *Freedom's Journal*, the country's first black newspaper, proposed holding race conventions to better the condition of Northern freemen. Cornish's suggestion was taken up by other leaders, especially Bishop Richard Allen of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, and it bore fruit in the 1830's in a series of conventions called and attended by free people of color. These conventions provided both a distinctive outlet for black self-expression and a means of establishing black identity in a hostile white environment. White abolitionists participated extensively in these early conventions, just as blacks participated in the predominately white antislavery societies of the same period. Increasingly, however, it seemed apparent that biracial efforts could not meet the special needs of free Negroes. "Under present circumstances," the president of the 1834 convention, William

The Scope of the Movement

Over the years, free blacks in the United States formed many groups devoted to community well-being. In New York City in the 1830's for example, the Phoenix Society established a library, sponsored public lectures, and encouraged both academic and vocational education. At the same time, the New York Committee of Vigilance, established in 1835, provided needed assistance to fugitive slaves and to free blacks already residing in the city. And in 1850 the newly formed American League

¹ *Liberator*, 14 June 1834

of Colored Laborers encouraged black craftsmen to establish their own businesses.

The convention movement, however, was different from these associations. Conventions were not permanent organizations. They were rather gatherings of delegates who assembled at specific times and places to transact particular business and then adjourned. Whatever continuity the convention process had was provided by committees formed at one meeting for arranging for the next. Frequently, however, even that continuity was lacking and the links between conventions were either local meetings or organizations quite independent of them. The function of the convention, as their structure implied, was not to grapple with the details of day-to-day issues, but rather to provide members of the black community with a sense of direction, to establish their priorities, and to coordinate their efforts. After the first convention in Philadelphia in 1830, meetings were held for at least seven consecutive years. These first conventions, held initially by the Free Persons of Colour and then by the American Moral Reform Society, an offshoot of the broader group, provided for regular and frequent assemblies of community representatives throughout the 1830's.

The early meetings were modest affairs, ranging in size from fifteen delegates in 1831 to seventy in 1837. In addition, the particular delegates to the conventions varied from year to year. Nonetheless a steady corps of leaders developed, for nearly a third of the total delegates attended at least three of the six gatherings between 1830 and 1835. Although an overwhelming majority of the delegates to the meetings were black, white also joined in debates and other proceedings as conventions considered measures to counteract racial discrimination, to aid free Negroes in the North, and ultimately, to promote their assimilation of white middle-class values and life styles.

By the end of the decade, however, white abolitionists had become so absorbed in disputes over the best means to end slavery that they had less and less for the needs of the free blacks. In response, the convention movement developed a more cohesive and distinctively black program, which was political in orientation and

increasingly militant in spirit. From the 1840 convention in Hartford, Connecticut, which established the American Board of Disfranchised Commissioners, to the 1847 and 1848 conventions in Troy, New York, and Cleveland, Ohio, virtually every meeting demanded full political equality. And at the Buffalo convention of 1843, as well as at the Troy convention four years later, a sizable minority of the delegates advocated slave uprisings. Thus, the meetings of the 1840's were characterized by greater vigor than had been their relatively quiet predecessors.

The convention movement reached its peak in Rochester in 1853 and in Cleveland the following year. Delegates to the Rochester meeting, eager to provide a more permanent vehicle to achieve their goals, established a National Council which was to meet every six months and to call conventions when they were needed. Although the council survived for only two years, it represented a full commitment to continuous and distinctive communal action, a policy which was in direct contrast to the goal of individual assimilation of the 1830's. Finally, at the Cleveland convention in 1854, a third theme was sounded: that of complete separatism. Delegates to this meeting advocated massive emigration of blacks from America, feeling their chances for self-fulfillment would be greater elsewhere in the Western Hemisphere.

Thus, the national convention movement ran its course in the thirty years prior Emancipation,² To be sure, only a small number of blacks took part in the meeting. Yet the number of delegates to the conventions rose over the years. Whereas only fifteen attended the 1831 meeting in Philadelphia, sixty or seventy attended the Buffalo and Troy conventions in the middle 1840's. And by the time of the Rochester and Cleveland conventions in the 1850's, delegate strength and increased to nearly 150. Significantly, almost all the national conventions were held in New York, Pennsylvania, or Ohio Further, nearly

² During this period, convention of major significance were held as follows:

1830 Philadelphia, Pa	1848 Cleveland, OH
1840 Hartford, Conn,	1853 Rochester, NY
1843 Buffalo, NY	1854 Cleveland, OH
1847 Troy, NY	1855 Philadelphia, Pa

all the delegates came from these states, as did the most dynamic leaders: from New York, minister Henry Highland Garnet and editor Frederick Douglass; from Pennsylvania, physician Marin R. Delay; and from Ohio, John Mercer Langston, a lawyer. Nor was this distribution surprising, for it was in these states that most of the free Negro population lived. New England's disproportionately small representation at the convention reflected the fact that the black community there was closely linked with the Garrisonian abolitionists, who condemned exclusive race action.

Representation though the national meetings generally were, they could not meet all the demands made upon the convention movement. Although they provided a variety of alternatives, ranging from the early emphasis on general reform and individual assimilation to later enthusiasm for black communal action and finally to separation and Black Nationalism, still the national meetings were inappropriate vehicle for political action. The problem was simple. On the national level the vast majority of the black population was slave, and that fact left the free Northern population with little effective political leverage. Primarily to grapple with political consideration, then sporadic state conventions were called in those states where free blacks were most numerous. Delegates to these conventions emphasized the techniques requisite to achieving equal suffrage and using it effectively. Throughout the North, accordingly, blacks organized and used petitions, lectures, and public meetings to propagandize for basic civil rights and unqualified suffrage. Likewise, they employed whatever techniques of democratic politics were available to them oppose economic discrimination, school segregation, and bans against interracial marriage.

The first state conventions, which met in New York in 1837, sought the repeal of a special property qualification for black voters. Subsequently, in Connecticut and Pennsylvania, conventions protested state constitutional exclusion of blacks from suffrage; and in Ohio, they urged repeal of the discriminatory Black Code. Even more frequently, free Negroes of the North gathered in countless local conventions. Generally, these meetings served two purposes. First, they dealt ad

hoc with local issues: how to organize temperance societies, how to improve educational opportunities in the community, how to further one or another benevolent activity. Second, they served as forums in which to express grass-roots sentiment on major issues of all kinds. Here blacks first denounced the American Colonization Society's proposal for involuntary repatriation to Africa, and here they first condemned the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850. Here, also, they developed crucial ward-level support for their political demands and generated broad support for state and national conventions.

At the local level the convention movement was essentially parochial. Yet from the obscure ranks of the participants in these meetings emerged new leaders who later rose to state or national prominence. Indeed, in their local bases of support lay much of the strength of men like James McCune Smith and Ulysses Vidal of New York, Martin R. Delany and John Vashon of Pittsburgh, J.W.C. Pennington and Amos G. Beman of Hartford, Jermain W. Louguen of Syracuse, William Whipper of Columbia, Pennsylvania, and Uriah Boston of Poughkeepsie, New York. In addition, their day-to-day leadership experience on the local level gave these men useful contact with the white community. Though the drama of the movement played itself out at the state and national level, its practical action was largely at the local level. Broadly, it can be said that the convention movement, at national, state, and local level, served as the voice of Northern blacks from Maine to Michigan from early in the 1830's until the Civil War. Its meetings helped to unite the communities represented and to coordinate their efforts to attain equal rights.

The Early Reformist Conventions

The path of action, which the convention movement pursued in the 1830's, was most clearly indicated by the activity of the American Moral Reform Society. Meeting always in Philadelphia, the society's annual conventions defined the assimilationist ideals and goals characteristic of the decade. The minutes of the 1837 convention reported that its purposes were to promote peace, temperance, education, economy, and universal liberty. To achieve these goals, it proposed to establish local auxiliaries, to sponsor a newspaper, to appeal to various churches for assistance, and to petition Congress on relevant issues. Generally, the conventions of this period encouraged blacks to learn trades, to save their money, to buy their own homes, and to invest in land. From the 1830's into the 1850's national, state, and local meetings urged as many as could to leave the cities where exploration "tend[ed] to grind the faces of the poor," and to settle in the country, where, by cultivating their own land, they could achieve economic independence and full manhood.³ They were also urged to work for institutions, which would educate the children and elevate the adults – schools, libraries, debating societies.

Indeed, education was a central concern of the convention movement throughout the history. Better schooling would provide the key to successful competition with whites and would create both individual and community self-respect. Plans for establishing manual labor colleges, which would combine academic instruction, vocational training, and student self-help, were frequently endorsed. The 1831 national convention supported a plan for such a school in New Haven, Connecticut. When this project failed, a subsequent meeting encouraged the founding of an advanced manual labor school in Wilberforce, Upper Canada. Later, at the Troy and Rochester conventions of 1847 and 1853, other plans for manual labor schools were endorsed. *Although none of these projects succeeded,*

³ "Report of the Committee on the Social Condition of the Colored Race, at a meeting of colored clergymen, held in New York, March, 1851," *Liberator*, 4 April 1851, as copied from the *New York Evening Post*, n.d.

the support that they found at the various conventions attested to a major dissatisfaction with existing educational opportunities.

Equally, characteristic of the meetings of the 1830's was their firm opposition to the American Colonization Society's program of emigration to Liberia. Almost as soon as the society was organized in 1817, a meeting of Philadelphia blacks had protested it. Thereafter, with persistent regularity, national, state, and local meetings from Washington to Pittsburgh, from Boston to Baltimore, resolved against the society's thrust, which, as they saw it, strengthened slavery by exiling free black dissidents and intensified prejudice by arguing that free Negroes could not coexist with whites. Their goal, conversely, was not deportation to Africa, but equality in America.

Nor was convention protest limited to African colonization. To move anywhere outside the United States was to give up black Americans' "claim to this being the land of their nativity" and to surrender "every sense of manhood."⁴ Some convention delegates, to be sure, contended that migrates to Canada or to unsettled territory in the western United States would not mean exile and humiliation, but rather a chance for the venturesome to "improv[e] their condition" and escape from "the phough-share of prejudice."⁵ Most, however, rejected even that alternative. Theirs was the dream of assimilation. "On our conduct and exertions," wrote Samuel E. Cornish in 1837, "much, very much depends." Blacks, he added a little later, must be models of "honesty, punctuality, property of conduct, and modesty and dignity of deportment."⁶ These were the imperatives of acceptance.

⁴ *Liberator* 22 September 1832. Frederick Douglass' Paper, 1 April 1853

⁵ *Constitution of the Amercian Society of the Free Persons of Colour, For Improving their Settlement in Upper Canada, Also the Proceedings of the Convention, With their Address t the Free Persons of Colour in the United States* (Philadelphia: J. W. Allen, 1831), p.9. *Minutes and Proceedings of the Third Annual Convention for the Free People of Colour...* (New York: Published by Order of the Convention, 1833), p.28.

⁶ *Colored American*, 4 March 1837, 6 May 1837

The convention movement of the 1830's strove to fulfill that dream.

The Political Orientation of the 1840's

Thus, the conventions of the 1830's focused on social problems and attitudinal change. They did not grapple extensively with the problem of legal discrimination, for to have done so would have been to enter the political arena, where blacks lacked the power to enforce the changes they sought. But the very failure to act politically during these years impeded both social reform and individual progress, for the mental, moral, and physical improvement which the conventions endorsed was blocked by restrictive state and local laws. To this problem the 1840's, conventions addressed themselves.

Early in the decade, the black community underwent a change of leadership. Early leaders, who had set the convention movement into motion and had served as a focus for community identity, were no longer in a commanding position. Bishop Richard Allen had died in 1831; James Forten, Sr., was now too old to respond to the enthusiasm of a new generation; and Samuel E. Cornish had lost touch with youthful impatience. But as the 1840's began, young men like Frederick Douglass, Henry Highland Garnet, Samuel Ringgold Ward, Jermain W. Loguen, and James McCune Smith, though scarcely national leaders yet, emerged as guides to future action. It was they and others like them who provided the vitality and imagination which made the new decade more militant and demanding than the one which had preceded it.

These new leaders challenged the assumption that cooperation with whites was the best route to black achievement. The Moral Reform Society of the 1830's had been racially mixed, and in its statement of principles, the "Declaration of Sentiments," it had explicitly stated that black freedom and reform could not be separated from the liberation and moral improvement of the entire American public. The major spokesman for the Reform Society, William Whipper, continued to assert that separatist action would only be used to undermine integrationist goals and to justify racial discrimination. Exclusive

black action, the society contended in 1840, was "contrary to [its] principles ... and the genius of republicanism."⁷

The younger leaders, however, disagreed. Dissatisfied with the meager accomplishments of the convention movement during the 1830's, they argued for all-blacks conventions and organizations – but not, they cautioned, as a way to opt out of American society. On the contrary, they held that such associations would be better able to ensure a meaningful black presence within that society. Exclusive action, the *Colored American* suggested in an 1840 editorial, would demonstrate that blacks were both willing and able to achieve and to carry out all the duties of citizenship. Rather than increase racial prejudice, this tactic would lessen it; by raising the estimation of blacks within the white community, it would pave the way for universal suffrage. It was important, the editorial admonished, not to play "second fiddle" to whites. "Where our object is confined to our own purposes and for our own advantage," the editorial concluded, "there the clearest necessity demands exclusive action..."⁸

In response to the increasing separatist sentiment, the *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, official organ of Garrisonian antislavery, warned against exclusive action, charging that it would "tear down" the gains free Negroes had already made. Charles B. Ray, editor of the *Colored American*, counter-attacked with the charge that the *Standard* displayed a dictatorial and authoritarian attitude toward the matter. And David Ruggles, radical leader of the New York City Vigilance Committee, rejected the *Standard's* warning altogether. "We shall never arrive to that equality which you so ardently desire," he lectured in the fall of 1840, "until we know our condition and feel ourselves as a disfranchised and enslaved people,"⁹

This new determination to act independently was reinforced by several external events. The state of Maryland had recently enacted legislation favoring African emigration, and this posed the threat to

⁷ *Liberator*, 9 October 1840

⁸ *Colored American*, 27 June 1840.

⁹ *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, 18 June 1840. *Colored American*, 18 July 1840. *Standard*, 1 October 1840.

voteless free blacks of an eventual forced migration. Moreover, the antislavery movement, the vaunted defender of the free blacks, was in disarray, and the prejudice of some of its white member was already obvious. In May 1840, delegates were summoned to a national convention at Hartford to apply their combined “energies, intelligence and sympathies” to the problem of political impotence.¹⁰ When the convention assembled in September with David Ruggles at its head, it created the American Reform “Board of Disfranchised Commissioners, which was to act as an agent for the entire community in its fight for the ballot.

At the state level similar moves were afoot. As early as 1837, blacks in New Bedford, Massachusetts, pressed candidates for political office to take a stand on the question of slavery; in the same year. Cornish headed a New York franchise petition campaign, and Garnet, still a student, participated in the Young Men’s Convention on Suffrage in New York City. The next year in Pennsylvania a group of political activists published an “Appeal of Forty Thousand Citizens Threatened with Disfranchisement, to the People of Pennsylvania,” which unsuccessfully protested a new constitution depriving blacks in that state of voting privileges they had exercised since 1790.

Thus the direction that would be taken by state conventions throughout the 1840’s was clearly foreshadowed when delegates assembled in Albany in August 1840. This convention, led by Charles B. Ray, Charles Reason, Theodore Wright, and Garnet, launched a vigorous suffrage campaign in New York State, condemning particularly the \$250 property qualification which was required only of Negroes. Drawing as many as 140 participants to its sessions, the convention adopted an “Address to the Public” charging that New York blacks were barred from political power, were denied educational opportunity, and were held back from economic advancement as a result of racial discrimination. Despite these obstacles, the address continued, Negroes had endured and had even risen in the world. Having thus proved their competence, they viewed their demands for basic political and economic rights as more than reasonable:

“We do regard the right of our birthdom, [and] our service in behalf of the country...,” the delegates concluded, “as favorable considerations...to banish all thought of proscription and injustice...and [to bring about] a hearty and practical acknowledgement of the claims and rights of a disfranchised people.”¹¹

Similar conventions were held throughout the decade. In Harrisburg in 1848, angry Pennsylvania blacks mourned the tenth anniversary of their disfranchisement and once more sought to have the word “white” stricken from the state constitution’s list of voter qualifications. A month later, a similar group in Columbia, Ohio, protested that state’s oppressive Black Code, which denied them political rights granted new immigrants. In such diverse places as Salem, New Jersey; Warren, Ohio; and Poughkeepsie, New York – as well as in urban centers like New York City, Troy, and Hartford – conventions and meetings kept up the pressure into the 1850’s.

The political campaign was not without its difficulties, however. Throughout the 1840’s, conventions provided the setting for ideological and factional disputes. What kind of action should they take? Should they endorse anti-slavery third parties or, instead, seek a voice within the major parties? Which of their leaders presented the best program? Indeed, the emergence of new and dynamic leaders accentuated the increasing diversity of views about all the central issues of the convention movement: the abolition of slavery; political rights; and opportunities for mental, moral, and physical improvement. In turn, this diversity contributed to a struggle for preeminence among the leaders. Yet despite these difficulties, it was clear that the convention movement had acquired a new drive, a new direction, a new vitality. What remained to be seen was how far the new momentum would carry it amid the crises and turbulence of the 1850’s.

¹⁰ *Liberator*, 19 June 1840

¹¹ *Colored American*, 19 December 1840.

Militancy and Separatism

When the national convention met in Cleveland in 1848, harmony and good will prevailed. The delegates united to pass thirty-four resolutions on a wide variety of subjects and so reconciled the major positions of the principal factions. The unity which marked the occasion led Frederick Douglass to think the time was ripe to establish a National League of Colored People. Scarcely two years later, the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law in 1850 further intensified **black solidarity as local meetings** from Portland to Philadelphia, from Boston to Chicago, unequivocally condemned the new legislation.

The harmony and unity were, however, deceptive; for the convention, movement of the 1850's was no more marked by oneness of purpose than by tranquility. In frequency and number of meetings, the movement reached its peak early in the decade. Yet it was soon wracked by new divisions. At the same time that communal organization to achieve integration reached its height in the formation of a National Council, an equally aggressive separatist movement emerged. Now was the conflict confined to ideologies, for the personal and organizational rivalries of past decades were harvested in the years preceding the Civil War. On the one hand, the intense activity of the early 1850's generated hope; on the other, the divisions it created led to despair. But although confusion and differences marked the period, so too did a dynamic momentum which the matured militancy and the **deepening** crisis of the decade produced.

Militancy was by no means a new phenomenon. In 1842 Boston Negroes had, in referring to "the last will and testament of the patriots of '76," indicated their own willingness to use force if necessary to achieve black freedom.¹² Z year later the Buffalo convention made the point still more clearly. Its *president, Samuel H. Davis, set the aggressive tone in his opening address. Liberty, he said, was more important than patriotism or the friendship of fellow citizens. To attain it, blacks should "rise up" and "assert" their*

*rights.*¹³ *The real dynamite, however, came later in an "Address to the Slaves" which Garnet wrote and presented on behalf of the business committee. Simply and pointedly, it advised slaves to revolt against their masters. White Americans, it read, had fought against British tyranny for their freedom; slaves, in exactly the same position, had the same rights. To submit voluntarily to the tyranny of slavery was "SINFUL, IN THE EXTREME."*

*Neither GOD, NOR ANGELS, OR NOR ANGELS, OR JUST MEN COMMAND YOU TO SUFFER FOR A SINGLE MOMENT. THEREFORE IT IS YOUR SOLEMAN AND IMPERATIVE DUTY TO USE EVERY MEANS BOTH MORAL, INTELLECTUAL AND PHYSICAL, THAT PROMISES SUCCESS... You had far better all die – die immediately, than live slaves, and entail wretchedness upon your posterity....Brethren, arise, arise! Strike for your lives and liberties. Now is the day and the hour. Let every slave throughout the land do this, and the days of slavery are numbered. You cannot be more oppressed than you have been –you cannot suffer greater cruelties than you have already. Rather die freemen than live to be slaves. Remember that you are FOUR MILLIONS.*¹⁴

It was an exciting document, and in the first flush of enthusiasm, the convention accepted it. But second thoughts led to reconsideration as the delegates debated long and hard whether to endorse and print the address. For an hour and a half, Garnet defended its merit. Douglass led the opposition. After several heated sessions, and by a single vote the convention finally rejected making the

¹³ *Minutes of the National Convention of Colored Held at Buffalo. On the 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, and 19th of August, 1843. For the Purpose of Considering their Moral and Political condition as American Citizen (New York: Piercy & Reed, 1843), pp.5-7*

¹⁴ Henry Highland Garnet, "An Address to the Slaves of the United States of America," in *A Memorial Discourse... Delivered in the Hall of the House of Representatives. Washington City, D.C. on Sabbath, February 12, 1865. With an Introduction by James McCune Smith (Philadelphia: Joseph M. Wilson, 1865), pp44-51*

¹² *Liberator*, 23 December 1842.

address part of the convention record. But the issue did not die there. Four years later, at the Troy convention, Garnet delivered the same address as a speech. It "produced," read the minutes, "much sensation." Well it might "property of instructing their sons in the art of war."¹⁵

Then lest the point be lost, the Cleveland convention of the following year debated, though it did not adopt, a resolution to establish a black militia. The delegates at this 1848 meeting compared their cause to that of the European revolutionaries who were striving for their freedom that same year. Now was the time, the call for the convention had said, for "oppressed freemen of America" to cast off their yokes.¹⁶

Thus emerged a militancy born of slavery, prejudice, and discrimination, and the frustration, which their persistence produced in the freemen of the North. In New York in 1851, young blacks were urged "to organize military companies"; and in 1855 author and lecturer William Wells Brown exhorted free Negroes, "who ought to be united to a man, in opposition to the American union," to align themselves with the antislavery radicals in seeking to dissolve the Union.¹⁷ This new intensity, however, seemed only to make the divisions within the movement more acute. On the one hand, Douglass and his associates argued for more vigorous communal action to compel white America to give black America the same liberties and opportunities it enjoyed. On the other hand, Martin R. Delany advised his followers to turn their backs on America and seek their destiny in emigration.

The Rochester national convention of 1853 gave new definition to the integrationist position championed by Douglass. Delegates to this meeting

rejected an assimilation in which the black man would blend indistinguishably into the white mass, achieving theoretical equality but losing his identity. Rather, the convention envisioned a distinctive black community which would develop its own institutions to serve its own special needs but which would at the same time play an integral part in the society, politics, and economy of America. In this position, the convention clearly anticipated what immigrant minorities later called cultural pluralism.

The vision of community had its roots in the all-black conventions of the 1840's, yet the members of these earlier conventions had been slow to embrace the idea of other distinctively black institutions. At the 1847 Troy convention, for example, delegates expressly called for the abolition, "as soon as possible," of "all exclusive colored institutions." In 1851 James McCune Smith, a successful New York City physician, argued that integration was inevitable in America because the country was like "a large and energetic stomach" whose "powers of assimilation [were] tremendous." Though Douglass might have rejected the metaphor, he agreed with its message. "All this talk about preserving races..." he commented, "looks ridiculous."¹⁸ In the end, however, the Troy convention backed the establishment of a Negro college, and both Smith and Douglass supported plans for a black manual labor school.

When the delegates assembled in Rochester in July 1853, therefore, they acted to clarify the course of integration by communal action. Representatives of nearly every faction deliberated its proposals for education, race organization, and a black press. In each case, they explicitly favored distinctive race action and institutions. To coordinate them, they voted to create a central agency, the National Council. Fulfilling Douglass' dream of a permanent national organization, the council would undertake educational programs, sponsor economic cooperatives, establish a press, and strive to enlarge employment opportunities. Though the projects themselves were not new, the spirit behind them was. In place of diverse plans for individual assimilation was a coherent

¹⁵ *North Star*, 3 December 1847. *Proceedings of the National Convention of Colored People, and their Friends, held in Troy, N.Y., on the 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th, October, 1847*(Troy: J. C. Kneeland, 1847), pp. 16-17.

¹⁶ *North Star*, 11 August 1848.

¹⁷ *Liberator*, 4 April 1851, as copied from the *New York Evening Post*, n.d.*Liberator*, 18 May 1855.

¹⁸ *North Star*, 3 December 1847, 10 April 1851. *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, 5 February 1852.

model for unified action, designed to treat the community as a whole. The Rochester plan spelled out a new hope for equalizing status and promoting respect between blacks and whites. For the first time, James McCune Smith thought, free Negroes had banded together in an effective and progressive organization to work for their liberty and to improve their condition. "Personal independence, and class advancement" were to go hand in hand.¹⁹

For a time, considerable efforts were made to put the Rochester plan into effect. Auxiliary state councils were formed and held meetings in Massachusetts, New York, and Illinois, and the National Council itself met on three occasions. Within two years, however, the initial zest for organization began to fade, and the councils disappeared. In 1855, when a national convention assembled in Philadelphia, it was a tired affair. The address it adopted was dull and unimaginative, repeating the worn platitudes of the antislavery crusade, and its resolutions were a lifeless replica of the resolves of twenty years earlier.

Perhaps no race organization could have been strong enough to withstand the tensions of the 1850's. Neither President nor Congress could control the crises. The old parties disintegrated in the face of them. Conflict and ineptitude marked the struggle in Kansas; confrontation and decline, the abolitionist battle against the Fugitive Slave Law. Not surprisingly, the convention movement flagged too. Though some of its supporters remained optimistic and continued to hold state and local conventions, there were no national meetings from 1855 until the wartime National Equal Suffrage conventions. Indicative of the sprint of the time was the Cleveland convention in 1854. The last important national meeting before the war, it advocated voluntary emigration as the sole solution for the American Negro. Dr. Martin R. Delany led in evolving this plan for mass migration – first to Canada or the Caribbean, later to Africa.

Not everyone of course, followed Delany; nor did the Cleveland convention escape criticism. Douglass, faithful to the spirit of the Rochester convention, called the Cleveland departure "narrow and illiberal." A group in Ohio claimed the three

quarters of all the blacks in that state were and always had been opposed to any form of emigration. In Massachusetts the State Council of Colored Persons "regret[ed] the prominence ...given to a general emigration scheme."²⁰

Nevertheless, enthusiasm for emigration had gained ground. Spurred on by the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, many blacks searched for a viable life outside the United States. Within a year an estimated 3,000 to 5,000 had fled north into Canada. Lewis Putnam had, in 1851, won the public support of New York's Governor Hunt for his United African Republican Emigration Society. Even before 1850, Garnet had concluded that emigration was a "legitimate means to wealth and power" for American blacks and had chosen Africa as the place most suited to their achieving economic development and commercial property. "Liberia," he had predicted on one occasion, "will become the Empire State of Africa."²¹

The Cleveland convention, therefore, was not a sudden departure. Yet Delaney, who organized the meeting, made sure he would dominate the proceedings. Over 60 percent of the delegates were friends and supporters from the Pittsburgh area, whom he had brought with him to Cleveland. No avowed anti-emigrationists were even admitted to the sessions. But packed or not, the convention focused attention on the new departure wherein ends and means coincided in a policy of complete race separatism. The official convention address asserted that only emigration would develop the cohesive and viable nationalism basic to black salvation and provide an "interested motive and a union of settlement." "The truth is," the address continued, "we are not identical with the Anglo-Saxon or any other race of the Caucasian or pure white type of the human family, and the sooner we know and acknowledge this truth, the better for

¹⁹ Frederick Douglass' Paper, 22 July 1853

²⁰ Frederick Douglass' Paper, 26 August 1853, 28 October 1853, Liberator, 24 February 1854.

²¹ Howard Bell, "The Negro Emigration Movement, 1849-1854: A Phase of Negro Nationalism," Phylon 20 (Summer 1959): 133-34, Henry Highland Garnet to Samuel R. Ward, 10 February 1849, in North Star, 2 March 1849.

ourselves and posterity."²² Then, like the Rochester convention, the Cleveland group acted to establish a permanent organization, a National Board of Commissioners, charged with maintaining correspondence with foreign countries, reporting on conditions at home and abroad, and sending out a foreign mission to investigate potential areas for settlement.

In direct challenge to the conventions that had preceded it, the Cleveland convention boasted that it had "transacted business equal to the duration of a season, and of vastly more importance than any other similar body of colored people ever before assembled in the United States."²³ If the claim was exaggerated, it did not overestimate the timeliness of the convention's position in contrast with the Rochester platform. While the Rochester-initiated National Council faltered and failed, the emigrationists gathered strength. In 1858, four years after the Cleveland convention, they founded the African Civilization Society, and shortly thereafter they funded an exploratory expedition to the Niger Valley.

As the African Civilization Society took form, it split into two factions. One wing, based in Canada, was all black; dominated by Delany, it supported mass emigration. The other wing, American-based, was led by Garnet and differed from the Canadian group in supporting only selective emigration and in admitting whites to its ranks. From his northern outpost, Delany first sent missions to the Caribbean and South America and then in 1859 led a Niger River exploration group which negotiated for land in the Yuruba country on Africa's west coast. At the same time, in the states, Garnet sought prospective emigrants and financial backers.

²² *Proceedings of the National Emigration Convention of Colored People Held at Cleveland, Ohio on ...24th, 25th, and 26th of August, 1854* (Pittsburgh: A.A.Anderson, 1854), pp. 22,40.

²³ *Ibid*, p.15.

Despite the efforts of the emigrationists, their impact in the states was minimal. Northerners generally preferred staying in the United States or emigrating to Canada to going so far from home, and Southerners had little choice in the matter. Neither Delany's pessimism about the American future nor Garnet's enthusiasm for African economic opportunity inspired the support needed to establish a separate nation "of which the colored Americans could be proud."²⁴ Yet in projecting the dream, Garnet and Delany offered a harassed people the hope and safety valve which whites found in the image, if not the reality of the western frontier. The African Civilization movement meant opportunity; not escape; fulfillment, not despair; national identity, not surrender; aggressiveness, not submission; freedom, not slavery. Thus it continued the spirit which had motivated the Negro convention movement.

Accomplishment and Failures

The outbreak of the Civil War in 1861 did not end the convention movement. Meetings in support of suffrage, equal rights, and labor organization were held both during and after the war. Facing new problems of emancipation, these later assemblies brought to them thirty years of experience. The convention movement provided them a framework for action, basic training in organization, and a process for developing leadership.

More than that, despite their tendency to divisiveness and feuding, the conventions had agreed upon and forwarded positive goals; individual mental, moral and physical improvement; equal political, social, and economic rights; united community action; group and individual identity; and a sense of militant urgency and separatism which veered in the 1850's toward black nationalism. The Rochester and Cleveland conventions in 1853 and

²⁴ Henry Highland Garnet, quoted in the *New York Daily Tribune*, 11 August 1858.

1854 both highlighted these aims and illuminated the three strands which ran through the entire movement: individual assimilation, communal integrative action, and separatism. The first reached its peak in the American Moral Reform Society conventions of the 1830's; the second in the self-consciously distinctive conventions in the 1840's and the National Council of the 1850's; the third in the emigrationist enthusiasm of the 1850's and the African Civilization Society.

Through the strands overlap and are not entirely contradictory, they do demonstrate the conventions' major weakness – their failure to achieve mass support for any one program of technique. The movement suffered from divided leadership; it was fragmented by conflicting programs; it was weakened by perennial confusion over means and ends. In addition, it suffered constant defeat. Political, social, and economic equality – the heart of its program – remained virtually as remote in 1860 as they had been in 1830.

If the conventions failed to accomplish their goals, they did evolve techniques which helped the black community to achieve an organized and self-conscious identity, to produce a variety of able leaders, and to develop the three major strands of reform and protest thought which have continued to the present. Successful in some things, the thirty-year struggle for equal rights was also an experience in futility and defeat. The Negro convention movement was a blending of hope and despair.

Key Issues in the Afro-American Experience, Volume to 1877. Nathan I. Huggins, Martin Kilson, Daniel M. Fox. 1971 by Hartcourt Brace Jovanovich Inc. Chapter Four Ante-bellum Black Activism: William H. Pease and Jane H. Pease "The Negro Convention Movement," pages 191-205.

Slavery and the Origins of the Civil War

Eric Foner

Arguably the finest body of literature produced by American historians since 1960 has been the work reappraising the South's "peculiar institution." But before new views could take hold, the traditional interpretation that had dominated the field until the mid-1950s had to be swept away. Shaped by the assumption that slavery was a civilizing institution made necessary by the racial inferiority of Afro-Americans, previous histories sketched a congenial portrait of plantation life: decent living conditions for all, only the lightest of punishments, and a general system of give-and-take between master and slave. In this view, slavery -- usually unprofitable -- was maintained for racial and cultural reasons, rather than economic self-interest, and might well have died out peacefully had the Civil War not intervened.

Not until the era of the modern civil rights movement, which profoundly affected the ways historians viewed race relations in the past, did a full-scale refutation of the traditional interpretation appear. This was provided by Kenneth M. Stampp, who perceived that once one abandoned the notion that slaves were an inferior race in need of civilizing influences, the entire edifice of the traditional viewpoint must fall to the ground. Stampp depicted the plantation as an arena of persistent conflict between masters concerned mainly with maximizing their income and slaves in a constant state of semirebellion.

If Stampp cleared away old delusions about slavery, it was Stanley Elkins who drew attention to his generation's major concern--the nature of the slave experience itself. Impressed by studies arguing that other societies that had known slavery, such as Brazil, were marked by significantly less racial prejudice than the United States (an argument subsequently challenged by other scholars), Elkins asserted that bondage in this country had taken a particularly oppressive form, for which the best analogy was the Nazi concentration camp. A more devastating critique of American slavery could hardly be imagined, but Elkins was less concerned with the physical conditions of slave life than with the psychological impact of "total institutions" upon their victims, whether white or black. He concluded that the culture and self-respect of the slave had been stripped away, leaving an "infantilized" personality incapable of rebellion and psychologically dependent upon the master.

More than any other scholar, Elkins redefined the *problématique* (to borrow a term from the French philosopher Louis Althusser) of historians of slavery: that is, the underlying preoccupations that shape the questions scholars ask. His comparative approach inspired subsequent historians to place the South's peculiar institution within the broad context of the hemisphere as a whole, thus counteracting the insular "American exceptionalism" that underpins so many accounts of this nation's history. At the same time, comparative analysis has underscored the unique qualities of the old South's slave society in which, unlike that of the Caribbean, the white population considerably outnumbered the black. But most strikingly, even though few subsequent writers agreed entirely with his conclusions, Elkins pushed to the forefront the issue of "slave culture," which has dominated scholarship ever since. A generation of historians set out to demonstrate that rather than being transformed into "Sambos" entirely dependent upon their masters, slaves had created a viable, semiautonomous culture among themselves. Scholars delved into sources hitherto largely ignored -- slave songs, spirituals, folklore, narratives written by fugitives, the reminiscences of former slaves interviewed during the 1930s by the Works Projects Administration (WPA), marriage registers dating from just after emancipation -- to demonstrate that slaves possessed their own values, aspirations, and sense of identity. Their work formed a major

component of the broader effort in the 1960s and 1970s to rewrite American history "from the bottom up." The study of slave culture continued to dominate writing on slavery in the 1980s, although Peter Kolchin, in a work comparing American slavery with Russian serfdom, argues that scholars must not lose sight of the authority that planters exercised over every aspect of the slaves' lives, and the obstacles to the creation of real independence within the slave community.

Two institutions of slave life have attracted the most intense scrutiny -- the church and the family. The vitality, outlook, and distinctive patterns of worship of slave religion underscore the resiliency of the African inheritance and the degree to which blacks managed to resist the dehumanizing implications of the South's peculiar institution. Blacks rejected the interpretation of Christianity promoted by their masters, which emphasized obedience, humility, and release from suffering in an afterlife rather than in this world. Instead, they came to see themselves as a chosen people akin to the Children of Israel, their bondage and eventual freedom parts of a preordained divine plan. From the Bible they drew favorite images of those who had overcome adversity: Daniel escaping the lion's den, David slaying Goliath, and especially Moses leading his people to a promised land of freedom. In religion blacks found a vehicle for surviving their experience of enslavement with their dignity intact, and in the church an arena for developing a leadership independent of white control. Preachers were key organizers of the nineteenth century's major slave conspiracies, those of Gabriel Prosser (1800), Denmark Vesey (1822), and the religious exhorter Nat Turner (1831). Simultaneously, studies of folktales emphasized the slaves' imaginative reversal of everyday power relations. In the Brer Rabbit stories, for example, weaker creatures get the better of the strong by relying upon their wits. In black religion and folkways, scholars have found solid evidence that slaves understood their own exploitation and believed in the inevitability of their release from bondage.

Similarly, studies of the slave family have shown that an institution once thought to have been destroyed by enslavement not only survived but did so with a set of distinctive values, demonstrating again the partial autonomy of the slave community. Herbert G. Gutman, who has produced the most comprehensive investigation of this subject, acknowledges that black family life faced the constant threat of disruption because of the frequent sale of slaves. Yet he also presents convincing evidence that most slaves lived in "traditional" two-parent families, that many slave marriages were of long duration, and that naming patterns revealed an awareness of family ties going back one or two generations. Subsequent scholars have brought the insights of women's history to bear upon the slave family. Investigating the "internal economy" of slave life -- how slaves managed their own time when not at work for their masters -- they have discovered a sexual division of labor in which women were generally assigned the tasks of child rearing, cooking, and cleaning, while men hunted, fished, and did outdoor chores. Rather than being the "matriarchy" described in much traditional literature, the slave family was as much influenced by tendencies toward male primacy as the white families around it.

Most recently, historians have moved beyond broad generalizations about the South as a whole to explore the regional variations that gave rise to distinctive forms of antebellum slavery. It has long been recognized that slavery in the cities, where many bondsmen worked as skilled artisans and enjoyed considerable independence from white supervision, differed substantially from the institution in the countryside. But only lately have scholars investigated in detail how rural slavery outside the Cotton Kingdom produced distinct ways of organizing labor, affecting the lives of white and black alike. In the sugar and rice regions, where agriculture required enormous capital investment to support elaborate irrigation systems and grinding and threshing machinery, there arose planter elites whose wealth placed them at the apex of antebellum society. And in both, slaves enjoyed a modicum of day-to-day autonomy: those in the rice fields set their own work pace under a system of individual tasks rather than gang labor; on the sugar plantations, as in the West Indies, black families were allotted individual garden plots. In both cases, slaves used their free

time to grow and market crops of their own and were able to accumulate personal property, thus developing a far greater familiarity with the marketplace than those in the cotton region could acquire. In the upper South, moreover, a shift from tobacco to wheat production lessened the need for a resident year-round labor force, leading to the manumission of increasing numbers of slaves. In Maryland, for example, half the black population was already free by 1860.

Attention to regional diversity has also enriched our understanding of the South's free black population. Those in the upper South, employed primarily as agricultural workers or unskilled urban laborers and often linked by family ties to persons in bondage, found their lives closely intertwined with the slave community. Far different was the situation in the port cities of the deep South, particularly Charleston and New Orleans, where there arose a prosperous group of light-skinned free persons of color. Occupying a middle ground between slave and free, black and white, they created a flourishing network of schools, churches, and other institutions and had little in common with the slaves around them. But this free elite would come to play a major role in the turbulent politics of the Civil War and Reconstruction.

Initially, the new focus on the social and cultural aspects of plantation life was accompanied by a neglect of nonslaveholding whites, the majority of the region's population. To a considerable extent, geographical divisions within the old South paralleled those of class and race, and in the predominantly white upcountry a society developed that was distinct in many respects from that of the Black Belt, where most planters and slaves resided. Only recently have historians begun to illuminate this world. The work of Steven Hahn depicts a largely self-sufficient white yeomanry owning few or no slaves, living on the periphery of the market economy, and seeking to preserve the autonomy of their small, local communities. Among other things, Hahn's book adds a new dimension to the continuing discussion of the degree of difference and similarity between northern and southern societies. The world of these yeomen differed profoundly from that of the market-oriented farmers of the Middle West, suggesting that commercial values had penetrated antebellum southern society far less fully than the contemporary North.

The view that slavery was the foundation of an economic and social order differing in fundamental aspects from that of the antebellum North can be found in most sophisticated form in the writings of Eugene D. Genovese, his generation's most influential interpreter of the old South. Genovese argued that slavery, although embedded within a capitalist world economy, spawned a unique form of social relations. More than simply an economic investment, it served as the foundation of a distinct way of life, which grew increasingly separate from that of the North as time went on. Slavery gave rise to a hierarchical society based on paternalism, an ideology linking dominant and subordinate classes in a complex pattern of mutual responsibilities and obligations. The slaveholders' outlook differed profoundly from the competitive individualism and acquisitiveness so powerful in the contemporary North. Slaveholders saw themselves as responsible for the well being of an extended "family" of dependents, including not only slaves, but white women and children on the plantations. The work of Elizabeth Fox-Genovese shows that planters' wives accepted and reinforced these paternalist, familial values.

The portrait of the old South as a social and economic backwater reminiscent of the semifeudal European periphery did not, however, win universal assent. An entirely different point of view was adopted by historians who believed that the antebellum South adhered to, rather than diverged from, the main trends of nineteenth-century development. This interpretation was most closely associated with the work of "cliometricians" Robert Fogel and Stanley Engerman, whose writings embodied two major departures in historical methodology: the computerized analysis of quantitative evidence, and the application of modern neoclassical economic theory to historical problems. The first greatly expanded the possibilities for finding definitive answers to statistical questions (Fogel and Engerman

demonstrated, for example, that slavery was a profitable institution, which was not likely to disappear for economic reasons). The second reduced the distinctiveness of the old South to a non problem by assuming that slave society functioned according to the same market assumptions as those that prevailed in the North.

Inferring the values and motives of blacks and whites alike from the aggregate economic data, Fogel and Engerman concluded that planters and slaves behaved toward one another in terms of rational calculation: the former concerned primarily with maximizing production, efficiency, and profit; the latter, equally imbued with the capitalist ethic, aspiring to social mobility within the slave system (for example, the ability to rise from field hand to driver). Other historians argued that antebellum North and South shared not only a common value structure but also the common experiences of territorial expansion and (for whites) political democratization. This emphasis on shared values made the Civil War itself rather difficult to explain, but the actual degree of southern distinctiveness remains a point of continuing debate.

No scholar has yet succeeded in synthesizing the new insights into a coherent account of American slavery's historical evolution from the colonial period through the era of "King Cotton." Nonetheless, the cumulative impact of the recent literature has been enormous. For one thing, it leaves little doubt about the centrality of slavery to the course of nineteenth-century American history. Scholars of slavery were among the first to challenge the consensus interpretation of the American experience that dominated writing in the 1950s but which, as its leading practitioner Richard Hofstadter later acknowledged, could hardly encompass the stark reality of the Civil War. It is no longer possible to view the peculiar institution as some kind of aberration, existing outside the mainstream of American development. Rather, slavery was intimately bound up with the settlement of the Western Hemisphere, the economic development of the antebellum nation, and the structure of national politics. And as Lincoln observed in his second inaugural address, everyone who lived through that era understood that slavery was "somehow" the cause of the war.

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History 116 Film List

Wonders of the African World: The Slave Kingdom
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Africans in America (Part 2): Revolution
Africans in America (Part 3): Brotherly Love
Africans in America (Part 4): Judgement Day
Middle Passage
The Slave Trade
Liberty Part 1-6
Ken Burn's Thomas Jefferson
Thomas Jefferson: A View From the Mountain
Ken Burn's Lewis and Clark, The Corp of Discovery
Jefferson In Paris
Sally Hemings: Defining History
Sally Hemings: An American Scandal
Jefferson's Blood
The Journey of August King
Gone with the Wind (Parts 1 and 2)
Amistad
The American Experience: The Roots of Resistance
Frederick Douglass: When the Lion Wrote History
Unchanged Memories
The American Experience: John Brown's Holy War
Gone With the Wind
Ken Burns': The Civil War
The Civil War: The Causes
A Woman Called Moses
Glory
The American Experience: The 54th Regiment
Lincoln*
The American Experience: Abraham and Mary Todd Lincoln, A House Divided (Parts 1 and 2)
The American Experience: Abraham and Mary Todd Lincoln, A House Divided (Parts 3 and 4)
The American Experience: Abraham and Mary Todd Lincoln, A House Divided (Parts 5 and 6)
The American Experience: The Jubilee Singers
The American Experience: Ulysses S. Grant (Parts 1 and 2)

Extra Credit films are limited to this list.

*Assigned Films