Resistance within Enslavement as a Case Study for Personhood in American History

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SLAVERY is a central issue in American history, and yet few issues provoke as much discomfort and debate in history education. At the heart of this contention are debates about how the course of American history should be rightly understood and what forms of evidence garner approval in the scholarly literature. The problem is compounded by the ways this story seems to force teachers and students alike to wrestle with how their contemporary positionality is reflected in classroom subject matter that cannot, and should not, be avoided.

Yet for all this debate, the history at hand is often ill-remembered and ill-understood. The result is too often a series of stereotypes that furnishes a distorted mirror for students' self-images, while failing to expose them to the complexity of history as a discipline. In his work on Black Founders, LaGarrett King has drawn our attention to the ways that persons of African descent were, in his phrase, "more than slaves" in American history.[1] This essay echoes his call for increased focus on pedagogical representations of the full personhood of black individuals and communities, and offers an expansion on his insight that "teaching slavery should…include

how Black Americans fought the system through various strategies."[2] King indicates this is a difficult proposition given that our primary curricular accounts are "aligned with a passive victimized narrative" that "focus largely on oppression without understanding varied aspects of agency."[3] In other words, the way we have presented enslaved people[4] is a problem in itself; enslaved people, too, were "more than" the condition that unjustly bound their lives.

In this spirit, I offer here an overview of the historiography of resistance within American slavery. This work is framed by revisionist ontology and situated in scholarship on ways history education has often diminished black personhood in its standard narratives. My intention is to offer content as a resource to K-12 history teachers who, as I once did, sense that there is something wrong with presenting enslaved people merely as passive victims, and yet do not know where to find a better history. The historiography presented here is thus intended as a pedagogical tool. To this end, I will trace the scholarship across three sites of resistance: labor, family, and culture. Throughout, I will emphasize that integrating these themes into the history classroom requires striking a delicate balance between oppression and agency in order to avoid the danger of utilizing this history as a means of denial rather than truth-telling. I will conclude by briefly offering implications for classroom practice.

Personhood as a Conceptual Lens

This paper utilizes Charles W. Mills' work on revisionist ontology, with particular attention to his focus on personhood, as a conceptual lens.[5] Revisionist ontology helps us to understand how excluding resistance from mainstream narratives represents a distortion of history, while personhood helps us to understand why minimizing the agency of enslaved people represents a distortion of humanity. When paired with the literature on how K-12 students' contemporary identities influence their engagement with history, both concepts help make a moral call for why the way we remember this history in our classrooms matters.

First, it is helpful to understand Mills' work in context. Concerned with the way that Western philosophy has remained "persistently monochromatic" as a profession,[6] Mills demonstrates that the field is also normatively white on a *conceptual* level. Although philosophers

routinely utilize colorblind case studies to make claims to "universal" principles, Mills shows that these common figures, while ostensibly raceless, are in fact tacitly white.[7] By putting non-white individuals outside the scope of inquiry, the field of philosophy has accomplished their conceptual exclusion; Mills writes that "the black experience is not subsumed under these philosophical abstractions, despite their putative generality."[8] Thus, Mills argues, the ideal represented by an Enlightenment ontology that claims to take all people as equal is false in its supposed abstraction, as it does not acknowledge the "dark ontology" that exists by its side.[9]

Mills is particularly concerned with the concept of personhood and utilizes Kantian philosophy as the ideal site for his own act of scholarly resistance. At first glance, out of all the philosophers in the Western canon, Kant would seem to offer a conception of personhood with the deepest potential respect for non-white individuals. Yet Mills situates Kant's ideas in the context of his other writings on race to make it clear that subpersonhood is a central concept that goes unnamed in his theory.[10] As Mills critiques Kant in this way, he argues that while there is nothing particularly controversial about a realization that racial prejudice affected the worldviews of famous thinkers, the discipline of philosophy has not yet come to grips with the profound implications of this recognition: "Anglo-American theory needs to catch up with what the racially subordinated in the West have always perceived: that the local intra-European ontology was never the general one."[11] Therefore, Mills calls for a revised ontology. In order to draw attention to personhood, he places the notion of "subpersonhood" at the center of his conception of a radically transformed discipline.

Subpersonhood, a term Mills adapts from the German *Untermensch*,[12] is a form of subordination that explicitly or implicitly denies the humanity of individuals or peoples. It is perpetrated across multiple levels and may be revealed through closer examination of any particular facet of social experience: for instance, to look at the body shows the relationship between the positive valuation of the white phenotype and the negative valuation of the black phenotype.[13] By putting personhood and subpersonhood in a reciprocal relationship, Mills illustrates the ways that subpersonhood is never a "natural" state of affairs, but something that must be constantly enforced.[14] The burden of his argument rests not on

defining personhood, but making visible the way that subpersonhood functions in thought and action.

Importantly, Mills indicates that subpersonhood is always resisted by those targeted by it.[15] Further, he indicates this resistance will be comprehensive: "[b]ecause the stigmatization of nonwhites is multidimensional, resistance to it has to be correspondingly broad: moral, epistemic, somatic."[16] Applied to the context of American history, Mills summarizes:

> To be an African American was to be, in Aristotle's conceptualization, a living tool, property with a soul, whose moral status was tugged in different directions by the dehumanizing requirements of slavery on the one hand and the (grudging and sporadic) white recognition of the objective properties blacks possessed on the other, generating an insidious array of cognitive and moral splits in both black and white consciousness.[17]

The revisionist ontology Mills proposes is aimed at mending this "insidious array of cognitive and moral splits." It is not about changing the past, but, rather, taking seriously the need to dismantle the racism inherent in places where subpersonhood informs the way we conceive of a historical moment or phenomenon, whether explicitly or implicitly. In other words, while the illusory nature of universal personhood, once revealed, shows the unsatisfactory nature of these narratives, revisionist ontology makes the further claim that they are inaccurate as well.

Mills' work is useful for history education because these "cognitive and moral splits" can also be generated in the consciousness of teachers and students alike. Too often, textbooks and other resources fall into the trap of ascribing subpersonhood to non-white groups, and to African Americans in particular; as King notes, the official history curriculum often "struggles to find Black American humanity."[18] The case of slavery is a particularly acute one in this regard.[19] Yet Mills' work provides ground for positing that resistance is ontologically pervasive in the past, even though it is misremembered today as an exception to the rule.

This essay seeks to contribute to the project of revisionist ontology by showing that the subpersonhood status of African Americans, so prevalent in curricular narratives of passive victimhood, is in fact unsupported by the historical scholarship on American slavery. Instead, a focus on resistance within enslavement allows for the topic

to be re-inscribed with personhood, thereby providing a more accurate understanding of the past. This example serves as a case study for the potential value of personhood as a key concept in history education. It is hard for students to perceive history rightly when the lens they are offered is fractured; revisionist ontology offers a hope for restoring our educational vision of the past to something closer to whole.

The Presence (and Absence) of Resistance
to Enslavement in History Education

Although Anthony Brown and Keffrelyn Brown note optimistically in their study of representations of violence against African Americans in history textbooks that "slave resistance—although sometimes narrowly rendered—eventually became part of traditional school knowledge,"[20] this rendering can be quite narrow indeed. For example, Peter Kolchin evaluated eight college-level textbooks, some of which are adopted for use in Advanced Placement classes at the high school level. Concerned with the ways the texts represented scholarly debates for students, he finds that "the focus is on an area that has *not* elicited much scholarly debate: whether slavery was harsh or lenient."[21] In most texts, resistance was narrowly defined as armed rebellion, and while the scholarship of historians such as John Blassingame, Eugene Genovese, and Herbert Gutman were present in discussions of cultural creation and community, the texts failed to incorporate more recent research on families, women, and children. Overall, Kolchin concludes that "the texts' discussions of slave resistance are somewhat disappointing because they fail to come to grips adequately with its meaning, significance, and context."[22]

At the elementary and middle school levels, teachers are increasingly utilizing fiction as a vehicle for introducing historical content. While the usefulness of this strategy for teaching historical inquiry has been debated, KaaVonia Hinton and colleagues find that literature is particularly well suited as a foothold for fostering historical empathy when students use historical details to contextualize plotlines.[23] Further, the fiction author is under an imperative to render compelling human characters, a facet that could hold some promise for helping students recognize the personhood of individuals held in bondage. However, as John Bickford and Cynthia Rich demonstrate, children's and young adult literature portray

slavery in misleading ways, and the broader messages students may abstract from these stories is likely to promote historically inaccurate views.[24] Bickford and Rich note that this literature's frequent emphasis on exceptionalism—for example, portraying a rare story like that of Harriet Tubman as a typical one—may encourage students to "generate unrealistic impressions."[25] This concern resonates with Dan Fleming's study of enslavement in textbooks, in which he finds that resistance was represented by "heroizing, yet decontextualized lessons about Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, and Harriet Tubman, rather than by presenting comprehensive, accurate portrayals of African Americans' collective struggle against the holocaustal atrocities committed by slavery's perpetrators."[26] While the stories of these individuals are important, the risk is that their exclusive use may inadvertently minimize the personhood of the many anonymous individuals whose stories (and sometimes names) were not recorded. Rather than remaining content with exceptional cases, a pedagogical commitment to personhood demands that we look for the bigger picture.

Yet the bigger picture can often be hard to find. Prentice Chandler and Douglas McKnight draw attention to the ways that historical narratives are often rendered in "colorblind" ways in educational spaces.[27] This approach, while ostensibly neutral, holds a deep bias. Personhood is lost as communities of color are portrayed as stereotypes rather than as people.[28] One component of stereotypes is a limited range of options offered to those they target. In an analysis of nine states' curriculum standards, Wayne Journell finds that African Americans are represented almost exclusively in terms of oppression or liberation.[29] He concludes that "states are recommended to include more references to African American culture and societal contributions in order to provide students with an understanding of African American history that goes beyond oppression and liberation."[30] Seen through a lens of personhood, it is apparent that this recommendation to celebrate contributions, while a good first step, does not go far enough: accomplishments are not required to prove the value of a human person. In this spirit, this essay is designed to bring greater notice to a significant and yet underrepresented aspect of historical scholarship, as well as to provide teachers with some of the raw materials needed to bring forth the personhood of enslaved persons in their classrooms.

The Historiography of Resistance within Enslavement: Methodology

Fortunately, scholarly accounts of resistance within slavery form a robust literature that provides ample evidence for history educators to utilize if they so choose. Here, I will offer a historiographical essay as a type of qualitative content analysis of the scholarly record. What follows is centered on the 1960s-1990s, with more recent works cited to confirm the continued direction of scholarship. Lest the impression be given that this theme is culled from obscure articles, the works cited are books, nearly all of which are major works cited frequently in the literature. My focus here is on slavery in the Antebellum South, the time period and geographical region most often treated by textbooks.

Three overarching themes will be discussed here: tactics to mitigate the exploitation of labor, the family as a site of resistance, and the creation of a distinct culture. It should be noted that this study focuses on resistance *within* slavery, which should not be construed as the only form of resistance to the institution. Indeed, there is ample evidence regarding rebellions aimed at effecting widespread cultural change,[31] self-liberation, whether obtained via escape or securing manumission for oneself or family members,[32] black service in the Revolutionary and Civil Wars,[33] and black leadership of the abolitionist movement.[34] These are important historical stories for students to know. However, by focusing on the everyday agency of those who never experienced freedom, we put the pervasiveness of resistance into sharp relief, denying any tendency to slip into old notions of passive slaves who accepted their fates. Further, given that most estimates indicate that only one-tenth of 1% of all enslaved people successfully escaped to freedom,[35] this focus promises to shed light on the ways students could be taught about the agency of the remaining 99.9%.

The Difficulty of Approaching "Resistance"

Early scholarship tended to harmonize with Southern apologetics, emphasizing a narrative of cheerful acquiescence and benevolent paternalism.[36] As research confirmed the brutality inherent in the "peculiar institution," some scholars found it difficult to break free from a narrative of passive victimhood. Kenneth Stampp called for more attention to this issue in 1956, writing that "[t]he record of

slave resistance forms a chapter in the story of the endless struggle to give dignity to human life."[37] However, recognizing this resistance proved a challenge for some. Stanley Elkins, who theorized that a subservient "personality" characterized enslaved people, could only conceive of armed revolt as resistance: "The William Johnsons and Denmark Veseys have been accorded, though belatedly, their due honor. They are, indeed, all too easily identified, thanks to the system that enabled them as individuals to be so conspicuous and so exceptional and, as members of a group, so few."[38] Such framing minimizes the personhood of enslaved people by suggesting that the vast majority of individuals were worthy of dismissal. Likewise, Genovese's attempt to redeem paternalism leads to contortions of logic as he claims this ideology was actually one of resistance:

> The slaves' insistence on defining paternalism in their own way represented a rejection of the moral pretensions of slaveholders, for it refused that psychological surrender of will which constituted the ideological foundation of such pretensions. By developing a sense of moral worth and by asserting rights, the slaves transformed their acquiescence in paternalism into a rejection of slavery itself.[39]

This central thesis—that enslaved people accepted and even internalized their enslavers' paternalism toward them—was challenged almost immediately by scholars such as Gutman, who notes, "[e]vidence in *Roll, Jordan, Roll* that the typical slave viewed himself or herself in as bound in an 'organic' relationship with an owner—the study's essential argument—is scant."[40]

Little by little, scholars felt out the way forward. Gutman sensitized historians to the determinative function of underlying assumptions when he wrote that "[t]o assume that slave behavior was primarily a function of slave 'treatment' promises different explanations than the assumption that slave belief had its origins within a cumulative slave experience."[41] Thomas Webber built on Gutman's insight in announcing his intention to "go beyond those historiographical models which stress the ability of whites to mold and control slave values and behavior to reveal the success of slaves in actively creating, controlling, and perpetuating their own education."[42] An early point of agreement coalesced around the principle that attention needed to be paid to the agency of enslaved people themselves.

A natural corollary to this commitment was the importance of recognizing the agency inherent in choosing modes of resistance.

Nathan Huggins suggested that enslaved people sought concrete victories, displaying "a conservatism that would not risk everything for symbolic acts of defiance."[43] By 1989, Robert William Fogel's summary of the scholarship reported a consensus that reform, not revolt, was the primary mode of resistance.[44] Edward Baptist emphasized that knowledge-based reasoning underlay such choices: "Through careful calculation of the forces at war over the plantation frontier, the enslaved determined that the time was still not ripe for direct action against slavery."[45] Although many scholars were initially disappointed that armed revolts were not more common, later scholars noted that this absence itself suggested agency.

To be sure, efforts at recognizing the personhood of enslaved people by emphasizing resistance have been criticized as both counterproductive and counterfactual. In an essay using contemporary research in psychology to engage in a "fully loaded cost accounting," Nell Irvin Painter suggests that when attention to resistance functions as a way for scholars to deny the pain and damage caused by enslavement, the humanity of enslaved people is denied as well.[46] She finds that, in some scholars' works, "the institution of 'the black family' appeared preternaturally immune to the brutality inherent in slavery"[47] and questions ways in which "slaves emerged from historians' pages in the pose of lofty transcendence over racist adversity."[48] This is an important critique. However, Stephanie Camp also suggests that resistance can be a way for scholars to pay closer attention to oppression:

> While studies of resistance are easily and often accused of naïveté, of romanticizing bondpeople and of underestimating the extent and subtlety of their owners' power, it seems that the opposite is also often true: these very studies offer a keen appreciation of the forms of abuse and exploitation against which the enslaved struggled and to which they often submitted.[49]

In short, the study of resistance within slavery is one that can easily go awry. It forces the historian to balance competing tensions: downplaying resistance can effectively deny the personhood of enslaved people, but portraying resistance as too successful can mute the oppressiveness of the institution. Careful attention to ways scholars have negotiated the tensions between these two poles provides history teachers with a particularly clear case study of the careful work of historical scholarship.

Labor as a Site of Resistance

Early scholarship on resistance focused on tactics to mitigate the exploitation of labor. Stampp's *The Peculiar Institution* represented a break from the scholarly emphasis on paternalism. Naming his chapter on resistance "A Troublesome Property," Stampp focuses on challenges to a system of forced labor. He includes slowing down the pace of work, limiting the quantity of services (such as by hiding rocks in cotton bags to trick the quota system), doing purposefully careless work and damaging property, feigning illness or disability, frustrating drivers, running away, appropriating resources (sometimes termed "theft"), arson, and self-sabotage (such as harming oneself to make oneself unfit for work).[50] Focusing on women's experiences, Deborah Gray White adds to this list by emphasizing ways women could subvert their particular roles: the expectation to bear children translates to feigned or lengthy pregnancies, and food preparation translates to an opportunity to use poison.[51] In the context of a system that viewed people as individual units of labor, Jacqueline Jones suggests that women's actions as caretakers "challenged the master's authority in direct ways," for example, by providing food for runaways.[52] As the system of slavery targeted mind as well as body, Webber emphasizes the ability of enslaved people to carve out psychological space for themselves by having whites interact with a persona rather than the true self, as well as developing an ability to use a keen understanding of the dynamics of white culture to manipulate whites against each other.[53] Likewise, Ira Berlin notes that feigning ignorance and simplicity was a way to mitigate demands placed on one's labor.[54]

The illusion woven by such forms of what Kolchin terms "silent sabotage"[55] has proven convincing to slaveholders and scholars alike. Philip Morgan indicates that planters often saw enslaved people as "shiftless, irresponsible, unfaithful, ungrateful, dishonest; they got drunk whenever possible; they did not work hard enough or regularly enough."[56] Some scholars agreed. Elkins accepted these illusions at face value, misreading acts like breaking tools or pretending to misunderstand instructions as indicative of what he called a "Sambo" psychology (e.g., simple-minded and docile). Likewise, while Genovese acknowledged tactics such as feigning illness and slowing down work,[57] his commitment to paternalism leads to seeing only a dilemma for planters who tried to instill "factory-like discipline

into a working population engaged in a rural system that…remained bound to the rhythms of nature and to traditional ideas of work, time, and leisure."[58] Statements such as these suggest the scholarship on "day-to-day resistance" that gained steam in the 1960s effectively upended a conversation that focused on the slaveowners' words as a way to understand the experiences of the enslaved. Focusing on the perspectives of the enslaved themselves was a way to keep their personhood in sight.

Limiting attention to these forms of resistance, however, continues to envision enslaved people along the instrumental terms defined by their enslavers, implicitly acquiescing to the equation of slaves as tools for labor rather than as people. Scholars therefore expanded the focus to consider relationships within the enslaved community itself.

Family as a Site of Resistance

It may come as a surprise that the family is a central focus of many scholars' attention to resistance in slavery. While many Americans have archetypal images of enslaved families torn apart at auction seared into their collective imagination, scholarship analyzing written records such as bills of sale, birth registers, and plantation inventories has suggested that the ubiquity of these images is not commensurate with the frequency of this experience in the historical record. Rather, it is a testament to the success of abolitionist literature, which often sought to arouse the sympathies of Northern white women through an appeal to their belief in the "cult of true womanhood." In other words, helping students become aware of historical memory presents yet another opportunity to teach students about resistance. The challenge is to represent history as unearthed by scholars, without denying the atrocity of the terrible possibility that loomed over enslaved families, much less the many documented instances of its practice.[59]

As they moved from historical memory to historical research, scholars chipped away at received knowledge about enslaved families. Writing against the myth of transitory relationships, Blassingame terms the family "one of the most important survival mechanisms for the slave"[60] and emphasizes the ways parents taught their children to survive in bondage. Following the publication of the infamous Moynihan Report, Gutman published a landmark study utilizing birth registers and plantation inventories to demonstrate the persistence of

black family ties in slavery. While emphasizing the need to refrain from romanticizing the family or indicating it enjoyed a particular stability despite enslavement, Gutman showed the length of marriages as well as the lengths couples and communities would go to in dedication to each other, noting that "slave marriages derived their strength from norms within the slave culture itself."[61] Building on this work, Jones notes that the "two-parent, nuclear family was the typical form of slave cohabitation" and even unions separated by sales lasted for many years.[62] Frederick Douglass' claim that it was common practice to remove infants from mothers is now recognized as part of the abolitionist literature;[63] Kolchin indicates that "historians now know that in the South as a whole, separation of young children from their mothers was relatively unusual."[64] A point made frequently in both oral histories and the written record is that connections to others were key to survival; Webber notes that the testimony in slave narratives and songs "overwhelmingly" points to the importance of family ties: "[s]carcely a narrator speaks of his slave experience without dwelling on the ways in which a specific family member or the family as a unit 'kept him up' during hard times."[65] As Brenda Stevenson summarizes, most scholars contend that the "slave family structure and life were surprisingly stable given the many undermining forces the institution of slavery imposed."[66] In short, scholars repurposed documents originally intended to target a people for oppression—records such as bills of sale and plantation inventories—to now target a more accurate portrayal of the circumstances under which enslaved individuals sustained each other through family ties.[67]

While denying the ability of enslaved people to feel human emotions such as love represents a slip into subpersonhood, so, too, would insisting that all enslaved people felt the same way represent a failure to acknowledge personhood. Thus, scholars also sought to give voice to varied ways enslaved people related to the institution of the family as a mode of resistance. Noting that both Blassingame and Gutman had emphasized the role of fathers, scholars such as White and Stevenson sought to draw attention to the role of women and mothers. White focuses on cooperation between women in areas of medical care, terming efforts at birth control and abortion as "covert cooperative resistance."[68] The existence of what White terms "deliberate miscarriages"[69] points to resistance in some women's refusal to bring children into lives of enslavement or to add to the financial gains of

an owner through 'natural increase,' as well as their desire to avoid the danger of childbirth itself or the revelation of teenage pregnancy or marital infidelity.[70] This being said, it is important to note that scholarly consensus is strong that "crib deaths" do not indicate the practice of infanticide, but rather natural processes such as SIDS.[71]

This is not to indicate that controlling fertility was the only mode of resistance for women; indeed, their ability to bear the next generation was often translated into hope and action. Berlin indicates that in cases where families were able to negotiate the emancipation of family members through purchase, women were often liberated first so that their children would be born free.[72] In another study focusing on women, Stevenson uses her analysis of Loudoun communities to argue that the matrifocal (though not matriarchal) nature of enslaved families stemmed from African cultural roots[73] and shaped enslaved women's physical and psychological resistance to white authority.[74] Stevenson further cautions against idealized depictions of enslaved families, noting that spousal abuse and child neglect were not uncommon in slave quarters[75]—a point resonant with Painter's work on the psychological tolls of enslavement.[76] Such nuances point to the importance of a multifaceted approach to evaluating the family as a mode of resistance; to suggest that all enslaved people related to *any* social institution in the same way is to paint a monolithic picture when personhood is better revealed through individual choices and actions.

Finally, the concept of "family" itself could take many forms. Whereas Gutman emphasizes the nuclear family, Webber points to the importance of extended kinship, noting that, due to the sexual abuse of enslaved women, many enslaved children had white fathers. The ways in which enslaved communities nurtured all children, regardless of parentage, points to collective resistance.[77] Jones concurs, extending this idea to indicate that "under slavery, blacks' attempts to sustain their family life amounted to a political act of protest."[78] This point is resonant with Fogel's insight that the protection of the family and efforts to better the lives of children constituted a "political struggle with the system."[79] Highlighting one form this political struggle took, Stevenson emphasizes the ways essential lessons on resistance were passed on to children:

> Slave parents and kin…clandestinely challenged brutal lessons of owners about obedience, docility, submission, and hard work with words and acts of kindness and care that reassured slave youth of

their self-worth and humanity. They also taught slave youngsters through stories and example that it was possible to outmaneuver and manipulate whites.[80]

Considering the lessons passed down to the next generation—itself a form of education—suggests a third mode of resistance within slavery: the creation of a distinct culture.

Culture as a Site of Resistance

The forced migration into enslavement drew from multiple nations and cultural groups, treating diverse peoples as essentially the same. Once in the New World, the forging of a new group identity—on one's own terms even under the constraint of forced conditions—provided a powerful tool for survival and resistance. Baptist refers to the uniquely African American culture that emerged as the "collective body that survived forced migration even though many bodies did not survive it."[81] This "collective body" provides teachers with another way of representing the personhood of enslaved peoples in their classrooms.

Because early scholarship tended to view slave culture as merely a response to the institution itself or to the white culture's imposition of values on black culture,[82] it was not always recognized as a mode of resistance. However, consensus shifted in the 1960s and 1970s, as historians began to perceive that enslaved people were not passive recipients of a culture that was imposed on them, but rather co-creators of the culture that would surround them. For instance, Webber, who utilized research methods designed for understanding the sociology of resistance to acculturation on American Indian reservations, uses the metaphor of a "deep river" with a "great African well-spring" as its source, adapting to the American landscape even as it shaped its contours.[83] This image evokes a sense of place, a theme that has been important in research emphasizing the harsh conditions under which these creative acts took form. For example, Kolchin writes that slave quarters served as "an important measure of privacy to the slaves, affording them a real if insecure refuge from the outside world."[84] Likewise, even as he recognizes the ways enslaved people used this space to "develop a separate, but not totally self-contained, community life of their own," Peter Parish cautions against idealizing the quarters: "This life existed within limits and was vulnerable to intrusion, sometimes of the harshest and most inhuman kind. But it also provided a barrier behind which slave culture could grow

and flourish."[85] This conclusion correlates with Berlin's report of many whites calling for a return to barracks-style housing as they realized that enslaved people were using the quarters as a site to form community.[86]   Such interactions are resonant with Mills' insights that personhood represents the natural state of affairs, while subpersonhood has to be imposed and maintained. Helping students understand cultural agency as situated within this dynamic represents a key step in helping them value the personhood of enslaved people.

The tension between viewing plantation quarters as dual sites of oppression and creation serves to point to the importance of recognizing that this new culture did not develop in a vacuum, sealed off from outside influences. Herein lies an important reason for positioning culture as resistance: although whites paternalistically sought to "civilize" those whom they enslaved, viewing them as a people without a culture, enslaved Africans in fact represented many peoples and many cultures. The distinct culture that emerged drew from these many roots and cannot be characterized as a one-way acceptance of white values or merely a response to oppression. Understanding culture as resistance facilitates the scholarly project of unearthing ways in which black and white cultures developed in relation to each other.

For historians, finding ways to balance black/white cultural interactions as a mutual process marked by decidedly uneven power dynamics has been a subject worthy of much attention. For some, the solution has been to highlight African roots while emphasizing themes of exchange. Parish notes that "attention has increasingly focused on the contributions of diverse African cultures to the evolution of a distinctive African-American culture."[87] Blassingame provides an early example of emphasis on exchange as part of cultural formation, titling his second chapter, "The Americanization of the Slave and the Africanization of the South."[88] Similarly, Gutman sees the culture developed by enslaved African Americans as a blend of African and Anglo-American beliefs and social practices,[89] while Mechal Sobel represents this dialectic between white and black cultures as "the world they made together," finding important areas of mutual influence in attitudes toward time, work, space, the natural world, and understandings of causality and purpose.[90]

However, dual spheres of influence have not proven desirable to all. Sterling Stuckey offers a black nationalist reading of slave culture, suggesting that enslaved people united around an African

identity and maintained cultural practices intact from the beginnings of enslavement through emancipation.[91] Parish indicates Stuckey's reading provides "unusual power and richness," but also fails to "accommodate the full range of historical evidence."[92] Given the ways the institution of slavery held inherent attempts at cultural destruction through enforced acculturation, the instinct to reject white influence on enslaved culture is laudable and itself a form of scholarly resistance. It may also offer important ballast to students whose pride in their identity has been harmed by mainstream history curricula that offer limited place to their ancestors as part of a "progress" narrative. However, rather than rejecting mutual influence outright, it is worth considering that an expectation of a super-culture that is impervious to change may effectively diminish the personhood of the people it seeks to recognize. In this spirit, Lawrence Levine, whose work also demonstrates the strong presence of African roots in African American culture,[93] suggests that "[r]esistance to change may suggest weakness in a culture; ability to respond may suggest creativity and strength. The question is not one of survival, but of interaction and transformation."[94] The current consensus is that careful scholarship can track patterns of influence while demonstrating cultural resistance.

Tracing the contours of the scholarship on interactions between enslaved people and Christianity provides a valuable case study in this regard. This focus does not intend to obscure the presence of Islam in America; indeed, scholars such as Allan Austin and Sylviane Diouf have provided valuable resources for those interested in tracing the important history of Muslims holding fast to faith and upholding practice as much as possible under extraordinarily constraining circumstances.[95] Likewise, important archaeological work has been done on subfloor pits from the colonial era, showing ways the enslaved kept African religious traditions alive.[96] However, as a case study for the dialectic between black and white cultures, Christianity is of particular interest in that it was a religion that whites intended to impose in a certain way, and which African Americans transformed on their own terms.

Both the ethos of paternalism and religious belief in proselytism contributed to whites' belief that they were "civilizing" enslaved people by introducing them to Christianity. The sermons that plantation owners believed to be the most appropriate tended to focus on Paul's injunctions for slaves to obey their masters (found

in Ephesians 6:5, Colossians 3:22, and 1 Peter 2:18). Initially, scholarship on religion as cultural resistance still tended to side with slaveholders. For example, while Genovese refers to religion as the most important of the cultural "weapons of defense" forged by slaves,[97] he also characterizes "black religion" as "unfinished, often inconsistent, and in some respects even incoherent."[98] Such a critique is naïve in its implication that any religion is ever "complete," a view discounted by scholars in religious studies who trace the dynamic, living, and ever-changing nature of major world religions.

Later historians were more nuanced, developing a consensus that Christianity was not adopted wholesale, but, rather, adapted. Using slave narratives, missionary accounts, and folklore, Albert Raboteau traces the melding of influences from African religions.[99] Huggins states that the theology that developed focused on themes of deliverance:[100] the enslaved laid claim to the story of the Exodus and the promise of a coming Day of Jubilee, on which "liberty would be proclaimed throughout the land and all would return to their homes and their families" (to paraphrase Leviticus 25:10, NRSV). Webber indicates that God is portrayed not as a heavenly master, but as a "comforter in the present" and the "God of Freedom who was working out His purposes right here on earth."[101] As Parish summarizes, "the most constantly reiterated theme was deliverance and the coming of the promised land, in which the spiritual and the temporal were inextricably mixed. This was a religion of joy and solace, not of shame or guilt."[102] This faith was upheld with both mind and body; Kolchin reports instances of enslaved people walking out on church services when a pastor's sermon would turn to obedience to an earthly master.[103] Such examples show that, far from being passive recipients of a foreign culture, enslaved people literally voted with their feet as they transformed a religion and made it their own. Further, just as the personal was political in the realm of the family, such religious agency harmonizes with Berlin's note that "[t]he slaves' struggle to give meaning to their music, dance, and devotions were no less political than their struggle over work."[104] In a case of using one institution to resist another, the adoption of Christianity was transformed from acculturation to cultural resistance. By using religion as an example of creation and transformation, the faith of enslaved people offers teachers and students a chance to bear witness to personhood on a cultural level.

Implications for Classroom Practice

A focus on personhood helps us to perceive that while the black/ white dichotomy is perhaps the one most frequently employed while teaching about the history of slavery in America, it is equally important to emphasize the balance between oppression and resistance. In this essay, I have sketched some of the scholarly debates into the tension between these forces, showing the difficulty in approaching "resistance" as a concept, but yet demonstrating its presence across three main themes of labor, family, and culture. Just as King indicates that his work on Black Founders is intended to help reconfigure a common narrative that associates subpersonhood with peoples of African descent,[105] this paper, too, uses revisionist ontology as a lens for viewing the reasons history education might incorporate the scholarly literature on resistance to enslavement in order to better represent the personhood of these peoples. As this literature is often not well known, the historiographical review offered here is intended as a pedagogical tool.

While the goal of this essay is thus not to provide lesson plans, this work would be incomplete without providing practical suggestions for integration into the classroom. First, history teachers should utilize resistance to enslavement as a foothold for the broader theme of personhood in American history. This is a stance that, once developed, can permeate the full curriculum: the history of indigenous peoples, as well as of contemporary and past immigrants, are two likely sites for developing this theme. Personhood provides an advantage in that it recognizes the humanity of often underrepresented or misrepresented groups while transcending the frequent imperative to prove "contributions" or work from a frame of "celebration." Instead, American history can be viewed more properly as belonging to all Americans.

Secondly, specific stories of enslaved people may be used as windows into this history. Students could read documents and analyze them for themes of personhood and resistance using the categories of labor, family, and culture. Slave narratives provide an obvious series of primary sources for this work. They are readily available in print and online, and a robust secondary literature exists for understanding them.[106] However, historians utilize these documents in careful ways, and students should learn to do so as well.

To understand why, I suggest dividing these into two main categories—those composed by the narrator and those collected by another individual. The well-known Works Progress Administration (WPA) Slave Narratives, collected in the 1930s, are of this second type. The Library of Congress hosts them online, framed with an essay that helps explain why historians often view them as a fraught source.[107] Among the reasons given are the following:

> Certainly the interviews in the Slave Narrative Collection present problems beyond the general issue of the reliability and accuracy of recollections of the past. Not only had more than seventy years elapsed between Emancipation and the time of the interviews, but most informants had experienced slavery only as children or adolescents. Those interviewed were extremely old and most were living in conditions of abject poverty during the Depression years of the 1930s. These factors often combined to make them look upon the past through rose-colored glasses; they fondly described events and situations that had not been, in reality, so positive as they recalled them. Moreover, it is apparent that some informants, mistaking the interviewer for a government representative who might somehow assist them in their economic plight, replied to questions with flattery and calculated exaggeration in an effort to curry the interviewer's favor.[108]

These realities, combined with serious methodological ones that fail to live up to best practices in oral history,[109] have contributed to many historians' decisions to utilize the WPA narratives cautiously, if at all. Certainly, history teachers dedicated to emphasizing personhood in their classrooms will want to heed Blassingame's warning that their uncritical use will "lead almost inevitably to a simplistic and distorted view of the plantation as a paternalistic institution where the chief feature of life was mutual love and respect between masters and slaves."[110]

Those narratives which are written by their narrators might seem at first glance to sidestep this problem. Likely texts would include William Grimes' 1825 narrative, *Life of Williams Grimes, the Runaway Slave, Written by Himself*; Frederick Douglass' 1845 narrative, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave*; Solomon Northup's 1853 narrative, *Twelve Years a Slave*; and Harriet Jacobs' 1861 narrative, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*. These are important documents that students should study, and yet doing so requires an avoidance of the assumptions many readers

might bring to these texts: for example, that the author was intending to write an "objective" portrayal of his or her life, or that s/he was engaging in a form of journaling. Instead, students should learn that the formerly enslaved people who authored these narratives did so for very specific purposes. Seeing an opportunity to use the stories of their lives in dedication to the cause of abolition, they utilized specific rhetorical strategies while following the conventions of the genre.[111] This is not to say they were inaccurate in the ways they portrayed their own lives, but that, like any author, they exercised agency in choosing the weight they would give to certain episodes, and in keeping their audience in mind as they interpreted their lives. Rather than diminishing our view of their work, this recognition should help us value their authorship more, and avoid the trap of devaluing their literacy as unequal to that of their white abolitionist peers.

A third strategy for bringing the theme of resistance within enslavement into the American history classroom is to frame it as a historiographical problem. The above sections in this essay provide detailed citations that may be utilized for this project. Students can wrestle with the same questions scholars have faced: what is the proper balance to strike in recognizing the personhood of enslaved people without denying the brutality of enslavement? Here, quotations I have offered in the "Difficulties of Portraying Resistance" section above may be utilized as students evaluate the success of various solutions historians have proposed. Further, what kinds of material evidence can be used to understand people whose stories were never recorded under their names? Does the use of parallel cases, such as Webber's use of American Indian reservations, Kolchin's use of Russian serfdom, and Elkins' use of concentration camps, help or hinder this project? These historiographical approaches have their advantages: whereas utilizing slave narratives means students are almost forced to abstract individual accounts to form a whole picture, working with scholarship aimed at wider portrayals helps avoid the risk of reifying a belief in exceptionalism. Although it is counterintuitive, personhood may be better represented through group rather than individual accounts.

It is perhaps ironic that something as simple as insisting on the basic personhood of people in history does not lend itself to simple suggestions. However, this is a testament to the nature of the oppression enslaved people faced in an institution that systematically sought to deny their humanity. While for some, the word "revisionist" carries associations of political correctness, the revisionist ontology

that frames this essay, in fact, represents a step toward greater historical accuracy. Unless we are to posit an actual "subperson" status to enslaved people in the past—something which even the most skeptical teacher would likely be loath to do—then a focus on personhood helps us to present a more accurate picture of the past. In other words, subpersonhood represents a distortion of history as well as humanity.

Finally, emphasizing resistance *within* enslavement, as opposed to hewing to the narrower narrative of escape and uprising, is a pedagogical decision that carries similar risks to those of scholars dedicated to the same stance: that of attempting to mitigate the wrongs of enslavement. This danger must be avoided. History teachers should not give students the impression that slavery was anything but a crime against humanity. American slavery was without justification and stands without redemption. Yet it is also a crime of historical memory to not recognize the personhood of the people whose stories we study. An institution can be condemned as dehumanizing without acquiescing to its internal logic. With this case study integrated into the history classroom, a focus on personhood can be brought into other areas of the curriculum, bringing greater balance and accuracy to our professional knowledge and practice. Insisting on the full personhood of enslaved people may indeed be a pedagogical act of resistance with the potential to touch our classrooms and common historical memory.

Notes

1. LaGarrett J. King, "More Than Slaves: Black Founders, Benjamin Banneker, and Critical Intellectual Agency," *Social Studies Research and Practice* 9, no. 3 (Winter 2014): 88-105.
2. Ibid., 98.
3. Ibid., 99.

4.   Throughout this essay, I am intentional in my use of terms such as "enslaved person" to replace "slave." These terms, which emphasize personhood first and indicate that slavery is an imposed condition rather than a state of being, have gained favor in contemporary scholarship. I encourage teachers to adopt them as well.

5.   Charles W. Mills, *Blackness Visible: Essays on Philosophy and Race* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998).

6.   Ibid., 2. Here, Mills credits David Hoekema, former editor of the *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association*, for the phrase "persistently monochromatic."

7.   For this argument, see particularly Mills, Chapter One: "Non-Cartesian *Sums*: Philosophy and the African-American Experience," in *Blackness Visible: Essays on Philosophy and Race* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998), 1-20.

8.   Ibid., 3.

9.   Ibid., 70.

10.   Ibid., 72-74.

11.   Ibid., 118.

12.   *Untermensch* is a Third Reich word that English-speaking historians frequently associate incorrectly with Nietzsche's term *Übermensch*. It is not clear to what extent Mills had the Nazi context in mind in his usage of the term.

13.   Ibid., 78-79.

14.   Ibid., 110-111.

15.   Ibid., 112.

16.   Ibid.

17.   Ibid., 7.

18.   King, "More Than Slaves," 99.

19.   Ibid., 98.

20.   Anthony L. Brown and Keffrelyn D. Brown, "Strange Fruit Indeed: Interrogating Contemporary Textbook Representations of Racial Violence toward African Americans," *Teachers College Record* 112, no. 1 (2010): 31-67; 58.

21.   Peter Kolchin, "Slavery in United States Survey Textbooks," *Journal of American History* 84, no. 4 (March 1998): 1435-1437.

22.   Ibid., 1432.

23.   KaaVonia Hinton, Yonghee Suh, Lourdes Colón-Brown, and Maria O'Hearn, "Historical Fiction in English and Social Studies Classrooms: Is it a Natural Marriage?" *English Journal* 103, no. 3 (January 2014): 22-27.

24.   John H. Bickford III and Cynthia W. Rich, "Examining the Representation of Slavery within Children's Literature," *Social Studies Research and Practice* 9, no. 1 (Spring 2014): 66-94.

25.   Ibid., 68.

26.   Dan B. Fleming, "A Review of Slave Life in Fourteen United States History Textbooks," *The Journal of Negro Education* 56, no. 4 (Autumn 1987): 550-556.

27.   Prentice Chandler and Douglas McKnight, "The Failure of Social Education in the United States: A Critique of Teaching the National Story from 'White' Colourblind Eyes," *Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies* 7, no. 2 (November 2009): 218-248.

28.   Timothy Linter, "The Savage and the Slave: Critical Race Theory, Racial Stereotyping, and the Teaching of American History," *Journal of Social Studies Research* 28, no. 1 (Spring 2004): 27-32. See also Chandler and McKnight, "The Failure of Social Education in the United States," 228-229.

29.   Wayne Journell, "When Oppression and Liberation are the Only Choices: The Representation of African Americans within State Social Studies Standards," *Journal of Social Studies Research* 32, no. 1 (Spring 2008): 40-50.

30.   Ibid., 47.

31.   Joseph Cephas Carroll, *Slave Insurrections in the United States, 1800-1865* (Boston, MA: Chapman and Grimes, 1938). Herbert Aptheker, *American Negro Slave Revolts* (New York: International Publishers, 1943). Nicholas Halasz, *The Rattling Chains: Slave Unrest and Revolt in the Antebellum South* (New York: D. McKay, 1966). Eugene Genovese, *From Rebellion to Revolution: Afro-American Slave Revolts in the Making of the Modern World* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1979). Howard Jones, *Mutiny on the Amistad: The Saga of a Slave Revolt and Its Impact on American Abolition, Law, and Diplomacy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987). David Brion Davis, *Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World* (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2006).

32.   Larry Gara, *The Liberty Line: The Legend of the Underground Railroad* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 1961). Freddie L. Parker, *Running for Freedom: Slave Runaways in North Carolina, 1775-1840* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1993). John Hope Franklin and Loren Schweninger, *Runaway Slaves: Rebels on the Plantation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

33.   Benjamin Quarles, *The Negro in the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1961). Stephen V. Ash, *Firebrand of Liberty: The Story of Two Black Regiments that Changed the Course of the Civil War* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2008).

34.   Manisha Sinha, *The Slave's Cause: A History of Abolition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016). Benjamin Quarles, *Black Abolitionists* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969). C. Peter Ripley, Roy E. Finkenbine, Michael F. Hembree, and Donald Yacovone, eds., *The Black Abolitionist Papers, Vol. III: The United States, 1830-1846* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1991). Richard J. M. Blackett, *Building an Antislavery Wall: Black Abolitionists in the Atlantic Abolitionist Movement, 1830-1860* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1983). Shirley J. Yee, *Black Women Abolitionists: A Study in Activism, 1828-1860* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1992).

35.   Franklin and Schweninger, *Runaway Slaves*, 279. Edward E. Baptist, *The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism* (New York: Basic Books, 2014), 168.

36.   For a famous example of such a text, see Ulrich Bonnell Philips, *American Negro Slavery: A Survey of the Supply, Employment and Control of Negro Labor as Determined by the Plantation Regime* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1918/1969).

37.   Kenneth M. Stampp, *The Peculiar Institution: Slavery in the Ante-Bellum South* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1956), 91-92.

38.   Stanley M. Elkins, *Slavery: A Problem in American Institutional and Intellectual Life* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1959/1976), 139.

39.   Eugene D. Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York: Vintage, 1972), 658.

40.   Herbert George Gutman, *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom, 1750-1925* (New York: Vintage Books, 1976), 312.

41.   Ibid., 32-33.

42.   Thomas L. Webber, *Deep Like the Rivers: Education in the Slave Quarter Community, 1831-1865* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1978), xii.

43.   Nathan Irvin Huggins, *Black Odyssey: The Afro-American Ordeal in Slavery* (New York: Vintage Books, 1977), 207.

44.   Robert William Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract: The Rise and Fall of American Slavery* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1989), 198.

45.   Edward E. Baptist, *Creating an Old South: Middle Florida's Plantation Frontier before the Civil War* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 209.

46.   Nell Irvin Painter, "Soul Murder and Slavery: Toward a Fully Loaded Cost Accounting," in *U.S. History as Women's History: New Feminist Essays*, ed. Linda K. Kerber, Alice Kessler-Harris, and Kathryn Kish Sklar (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 125-146.

47.   Ibid., 131.

48.   Ibid.

49.   Stephanie M. H. Camp, *Closer to Freedom: Enslaved Women and Everyday Resistance in the Plantation South* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 2.

50.   Stampp, *The Peculiar Institution*, 97-128.

51.   Deborah Gray White, *Ar'n't I a Woman? Female Slaves in the Plantation South* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1985), 79-84.

52.   Jacqueline Jones, *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow: Black Women, Work, and the Family from Slavery to the Present* (New York: Basic Books, 1985), 31-32.

53.   Webber, *Deep Like the Rivers*, 108-109.

54.   Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 120.

55.   Peter Kolchin, *American Slavery, 1619-1877* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1993), 157.

56.   Philip D. Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint: Black Culture in the Eighteenth-Century Chesapeake and Lowcountry* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 319.

57.   Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll*, 620-621.

58.   Ibid., 286.

59.   Teachers should be extremely careful with this history, as this research is often misunderstood and/or misrepresented. For an example, see Colleen Flaherty, "Pop Quiz: A Dispute about a Sociology Test Question on Slave Families Ended in a Lecturer's Termination this Spring at the University of Tennessee," *Inside Higher Ed*, 14 June 2017.

60.   John W. Blassingame, *The Slave Community: Plantation Life in the Antebellum South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972/1979), 151.

61.   Gutman, *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom*, 273.

62.   Jones, *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow*, 32.

63.   Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave, Written by Himself* (Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1845/2003), 42.

64.   Kolchin, *American Slavery*, 138.

65.   Webber, *Deep Like the Rivers*, 111.

66.   Brenda E. Stevenson, *Life in Black and White: Family and Community in the Slave South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 160.

67.   Most of these documents come from large plantations. For an alternate evidentiary base and interpretation, see Wilma A. Dunaway, *The African-American Family in Slavery and Emancipation* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2003). Dunaway, a sociologist, argues that most historians' focus on large plantations offers a skewed impression of enslaved families. Instead, she offers a close look at small farms in the Appalachian South as a contrasting case study. However, her methodology has also been questioned; for one such critique, see Aaron Sheehan-Dean, Review of *The African-American Family in Slavery and Emancipation*, by Wilma A. Dunaway, *American Nineteenth Century History* 6, 1 (2005): 88-89. The perennial nature of the debate over the stability of enslaved families underlines the pedagogical importance of not oversimplifying nuanced historical claims, especially those which intersect with such painful history.

68.   White, *Ar'n't I a Woman?*, 125-126.

69.   Ibid., 86.

70.   Ibid., 84-87.

71.   Ibid., 87-89; Peter J. Parish, *Slavery: History and Historians* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2011), 65; Kolchin, *American Slavery*, 114.

72.   Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone*, 334.

73.   Stevenson, *Life in Black and White*, 223.

74.   Ibid., 235.

75.   Ibid., 255.

76.   Painter, "Soul Murder and Slavery."

77.   Webber, *Deep Like the Rivers*, 157.

78.   Jones, *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow*, 12.

79.   Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract*, 162.

80.   Stevenson, *Life in Black and White*, 252.

81.   Baptist, *The Half Has Never Been Told*, 417.

82.   Parish, *Slavery: History and Historians*, 75.

83.   Webber, *Deep Like the Rivers*, 60.

84.   Kolchin, *American Slavery*, 149.

85.   Parish, *Slavery: History and Historians*, 80.

86.   Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone*, 162.

87.   Parish, *Slavery: History and Historians*, 89.

88.   Blassingame, *The Slave Community*, ch. 2.

89.   Gutman, *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom*, 34.

90.   Mechal Sobel, *The World They Made Together: Black and White Values in Eighteenth-Century Virginia* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987).

91.   Sterling Stuckey, *Slave Culture: Nationalist Theory and the Foundations*

of Black America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987).

92.   Parish, *Slavery: History and Historians*, 77.

93.   Lawrence W. Levine, *Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978).

94.   Levine as quoted in Parish, *Slavery: History and Historians*, 90. See also Levine, *Black Culture and Black Consciousness*.

95.   Allan D. Austin, *African Muslims in Antebellum America: Transatlantic Stories and Spiritual Struggles* (New York: Routledge, 1997). Sylviane A. Diouf, *Servants of Allah: African Muslims Enslaved in the Americas* (New York: New York University Press, 1998).

96.   Patricia Samford, *Subfloor Pits and the Archaeology of Slavery in Colonial Virginia* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2007).

97.   Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll*, 6.

98.   Ibid., 559-660.

99.   Albert J. Raboteau, *Slave Religion: The "Invisible Institution" in the Antebellum South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978).

100.   Huggins, *Black Odyssey*, 216.

101.   Webber, *Deep Like the Rivers*, 144.

102.   Parish, *Slavery: History and Historians*, 82.

103.   Kolchin, *American Slavery*, 144.

104.   Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone*, 6.

105.   King, "More Than Slaves," 88-89.

106.   Online sites for primary sources include: The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's "North American Slave Narratives" at <http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/>; Bruce Fort's (University of Virginia) "American Slave Narratives: An Online Anthology," at <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/wpa/wpahome.html>; The University of Alabama's "True Tales of Bondage and Freedom: Nineteenth-Century Slave Narratives" at <https://bindings.lib.ua.edu/gallery/slave_narratives.html>; The Library of Congress' "Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936 to 1938," at <https://memory.loc.gov/ammem/snhtml/snhome.html>; The Library of Congress' "Voices from the Days of Slavery: Former Slaves Tell Their Stories," at <https://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/voices/>. Secondary sources that may provide assistance with interpretation include Audrey A. Fisch, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to the African American Slave Narrative* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2007); John Ernest, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of the African American Slave Narrative* (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2014).

107.   Norman R. Yetman, "An Introduction to the WPA Slave Narratives," Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/collections/slave-narratives-from-the-federal-writers-project-1936-to-1938/articles-and-essays/introduction-to-the-wpa-slave-narratives/>. See especially the sections "The Limitations of the Slave Narrative Collection: Problems of Memory," "The Limitations of the Slave Narrative Collection: Race and Representativeness," and "Should the Slave Narrative Collection Be Used?"

108.   Ibid.

109.   Ibid.

110.   John W. Blassingame, "Using the Testimony of Ex-Slaves: Approaches and Problems," *The Journal of Southern History* 41, no. 4 (November 1975): 490.

111.   David W. Blight, "The Slave Narratives: A Genre and a Source," *History Now: The Journal of the Gilder Lehrman Institute* 2 (Winter 2004).