

Using Portraiture to Shift Paradigms: The New Negro Movement in the Classroom

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IN THE PERIOD from roughly 1915 to 1935, many African Americans undertook an ambitious campaign to remake their image in mainstream (white) American society.¹ This New Negro Movement (NNM)—a term that I use purposefully in contradistinction to “Harlem Renaissance”—can be studied in the classroom, allowing history teachers to introduce their students to interdisciplinary primary sources while reasserting the central role that history can play by providing analyses of the flurry of cultural production that emerged from African American communities. Sometimes we get so bogged down in trying to convey a wide breadth of information that we do not spend enough time prompting students to think about one of the central responsibilities of historians: the analysis and interpretation of a vast body of primary sources. So much of the production of identity that took place during this era occurred in formats that might seem alien to students who tend to think of primary sources as, first and foremost, written sources. Yet participants in the NNM often turned to other media as they strove to create their own image: photography, painting, sculpture, and music often allowed for a form of self-expression that resonated with some individuals in a way that the writing of an essay or an autobiography did not. The NNM therefore allows us to encourage our students to stretch their understandings of historians’ jobs and historians’ sources.



Figure 1: "Woman in White," attributed to John Johnson. This young woman appears "relaxed, confident, and almost saucy," which makes her an excellent representation of the New Negro spirit.²

Exposing students to visual primary sources also allowed me to provide additional pathways for learning. Visual *literacy* is increasingly important. As Timothy Gangwer has observed in *Visual Impact, Visual Teaching: Using Images to Strengthen Learning*, sixty-five percent of students learn best visually (compared to thirty percent who are auditory learners and five percent who are kinesthetic learners).³ *Showing* rather than simply telling them about the NNM made the information that I was communicating clearer because the words that they heard in lecture and read on the written page were reinforced by specific visual examples. Visual *literacy* is the key term, however. Our students belong increasingly to a visual world; they spend much of their time glued to computers and handheld electronic devices. Too often, the new forms of communication that accompany our increasingly visual culture do not require deep thought. For example, Twitter, the media service conveying brief text messages among users, allows a maximum of 140 characters per entry. (Apparently there is also something called a “SuperTweet” which allows 250 characters.)

Introducing photographs into my analysis of the NNM allowed me to present new material to students in the format which Gangwer indicates serves them best; the requirement that they write a paper placing the photographs in their historical context asked that they interact intelligently with what they saw rather than simply, passively, observing it. As Gangwer noted, “There is a significant difference between looking and seeing. ... *Looking* is a passive use of vision. Looking makes no demands on the brain. ... *Seeing*, on the other hand, requires both sensory input and mental scrutiny. It leaves indelible marks on one’s mind, and requires discovery. Discovery leads to interpretation and understanding. Understanding forms the building blocks of learning.”⁴ I want to give my students many opportunities to *see* in the classroom, and the portraits created during the NNM provide an excellent opportunity for thoughtful analysis.

Introducing Students to the “Old Negro” and the “New Negro”

Philosopher Alain Locke’s writings helped to shape our understanding of the NNM. He provided working definitions of the Old Negro and New Negro, and put into words the feelings of many regarding the need for a revised image of African Americans. The Old Negro “had long become more of a myth than a man.” He—or, as Locke failed to note, she—“has been a stock figure perpetuated as an historical fiction partly in innocent sentimentalism, partly in deliberate reactionism.”⁵ Introducing students to images representative of the “Old Negro” can be challenging, as the imagery is highly racist and deeply offensive. I explain to students that two stereotypical images, “Sambo” (the image of the happy, contented



Figure 2: Addison N. Scurlock's self-portrait, 1920. The slight angle of Scurlock's hat and his direct, insistent eye contact with the viewer communicate the confidence and self-possession that became hallmarks of New Negro portraits. Note that although he wore a hat, Scurlock's face is brightly lit, an important artistic touch that would come to be known as the "Scurlock look."

slave) and “Mammy” (who purportedly loved slavery, her master and mistress, and especially her master’s children), were created by slave masters in order to justify the enslavement of other human beings. Such images served as propaganda, and as such they represent excellent primary sources—if we want to learn about masters’ need to excuse the institution of slavery. Sharing these images can also illuminate the challenges African Americans faced in their struggle for equality in the United States. But such images cannot represent any form of “authentic” blackness. One required text in my course, Michael D. Harris’s *Colored Pictures: Race and Visual Representation*, provides a number of examples of racist images and explains quite plainly that the main role of such representations was the establishment of white identity and the assertion and maintenance of white social, political, and economic power.⁶

Photographer Addison Scurlock specialized in portraiture, and his photographs provide excellent examples of New Negro attempts to remake the black image. A significant collection of Scurlock’s photographs are available online at the Smithsonian’s website.⁷ His talent for positioning studio lighting created an effect that came to be known as the “Scurlock look,” special because of the way that “soft lighting evenly illuminated the features of the face.”⁸ The appeal of the “Scurlock look” to African American subjects is revealed by comments offered by Frederick Douglass; though describing non-photographic imagery, his words apply to this format as well. “It seems to us next to impossible for white men to take likenesses of black men, without most grossly exaggerating their distinctive features. And the reason is obvious. Artists, like all other white persons, have developed a theory dissecting the distinctive features of Negro physiognomy.”⁹ In 1850, anthropologist Louis Agassiz charged photographer J. T. Zealy with creating photographs of black slaves that would help to prove correct his belief in polygenesis, a theory rooted deeply in scientific racism that asserted that blacks did not belong to the same species as whites. Pro-slavery Americans would have welcomed such “proof” as Zealy intended to provide, as it would allow them to justify the enslavement of Africans and their descendants based on the theory that they belonged to a different (and inferior) species. Zealy posed the slaves “nude to point up anatomical details in which the scientist had shown special interest,” a technique which proves the truth of Douglass’s observations regarding the dissection of African American features.¹⁰ The images, some of which can be viewed online, present individuals subjected to harsh lighting; many of the subjects’ faces are partially shadowed.¹¹ Since the African American relationship to photography began in such a negative way, the importance of a technique that showcased the beauty of African Americans by properly lighting facial features cannot be underestimated.



Figure 3: Addison Scurlock's portrait of Agnes Thomas (ca. 1920) similarly captures the spirit of the New Negro. Fashionably dressed in a beaded gown accented by a string of pearls, Thomas's image represents the beauty found in the African American community. Her slight head tilt and direct eye contact with the camera (and therefore the viewer) communicate the poise and assurance of the New Negro.

As blacks began to take greater control over the representation of blackness, portraits of the New Negro depicted individuals who were “vibrant with a new psychology.” They felt “the new spirit” that was “awake in the masses,” and enjoyed “renewed self-respect and self-dependence” as well as greater “self-expression.”¹² Contributors to the NNM represented an extremely diverse group: black and white, young and “mature,” radical and moderate. They shared several goals, the most important of which was improving the image and reputation of African Americans in society in the hope that more accurate representation would result in the extension to blacks of the rights and privileges enjoyed by whites. They came together to remake the image of African Americans by drawing upon their own special talents and perspectives: they were painters, sculptors, and writers; soldiers; members of the National Association of Colored Women (NACW), the United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP); middle class and working class; intellectuals trained in colleges and intellectuals educated by real life. They sometimes clashed over methods, but they kept their eyes focused on the ultimate prize of greater inclusion and equal justice as American citizens.

“Dakota Sidney Talbert, about 1915” (see Figure 4), attributed to John Johnson, communicates a sense of strength and self-confidence, two important messages in the NNM. Born in 1898, Talbert was approximately 17 when Johnson took the photograph. He served in World War I, so this picture was very likely taken at a pivotal point in Talbert’s life—legally, he was about to become a man, and he was about to assert his masculinity by providing potentially dangerous service to his country.¹³ Almost certainly, he was also aware that as a soldier, he would be representing both his nation and his race. In this photograph, Talbert’s prominently displayed shoes reveal the careful construction of the image. They resemble “Patent Leather Button Shoes” and “Patent Leather Cloth Top Button Evening Shoes, without toe-caps,” made by Brooks Brothers, shoes described as “formal footwear.”¹⁴ Talbert did not choose to wear these shoes for his photo shoot casually, and it seems unlikely that either subject or photographer was unaware of their extreme visibility. The expression on his face hovers near a serious one—he does not smile—but there is something in his eyes, the slope of his hat, and the edges of his mouth that hints at irreverence, as if he is only barely concealing a full or perhaps a mischievous smile. Like the New Negro of his era, Dakota Sidney Talbert was self-assured, self-possessed, and comfortable in his own skin.

Using portraits of African Americans created by African American photographers during the NNM visually demonstrates New Negroes’



Figure 4: In “Dakota Sidney Talbert, about 1915,” attributed to John Johnson, the expression on Talbert’s face and his shoes, prominently displayed, communicate his New Negro identity.

conscious attempts to reclaim and reshape the image of blackness. So that my students could immerse themselves in key visual primary sources that provide examples of these attempts, I arranged for my campus, SUNY Fredonia, to host a traveling exhibit, “Recovered Views: African American Portraits, 1912-1925.”¹⁵ The photographs in the collection have been attributed to John Johnson, the son of a black Civil War veteran and a lifelong resident of Lincoln, Nebraska. The photographs which comprise the exhibit are widely available to share with students.¹⁶ Anyone with a scanner and PowerPoint can easily incorporate these images into his or her lecture.¹⁷ Moreover, for those historians who are not comfortable producing their own interpretation of these historical images, a brief analysis of each photograph is provided.¹⁸ Digitized collections available online also provide excellent resources: the Scurlock collection, available through the Smithsonian and Smithsonian website, contains a large number of photographs which might prove useful in the classroom. The New York Public Library also has a large collection of portraits online that could be used to represent the New Negro.¹⁹

Using Portraiture to Shift Paradigms

Hosting the exhibit allowed me to underscore several important themes regarding the NNM. For example, I emphasize to students that, although Harlem was a central hub of African American artistic creativity during this period (thus the rise of the term “Harlem Renaissance”), many attempts to create alternative representations of blackness occurred outside of Harlem as well. Sharing a collection of images produced in Lincoln, Nebraska with the students underscored that point. “Ethel and Charles Smith with Anna Hill at Salt Creek” (see Figure 5) conveys both the spirit of the New Negro and the fact that the desire to remake the image of blackness was widespread geographically. The beautiful background (sans high-rise towers) makes it clear that these individuals are not in Harlem or any other large urban location that began appealing to African Americans as the Great Migration got underway in the 1910s and 1920s. Yet we should not let the casual setting fool us into thinking that the representation of these individuals was inadvertent, the mere coincidence of the shutter’s snap. “[T]he careful subject placement evident throughout the photographer’s work suggests that this, too, is a highly structured photograph and anything but accidental,” the exhibit’s “Notes to the Photographs” tell us.²⁰ Charles Smith’s pose becomes quite interesting, then: the tilt of the hat and the expression on his face, a sort of half-smile, almost a smirk, suggest a positive self-confidence and self-assuredness reminiscent of New Negro attitudes.²¹



Figure 5: “Ethel and Charles Smith with Anna Hill at Salt Creek,” attributed to John Johnson. Taken in Lincoln, Nebraska circa 1912-1925, it demonstrates that the New Negro desire to control representations of blackness existed far beyond the limits of Harlem.

In order to emphasize to students the importance of viewing, analyzing, and interacting with the photographs, I took the class to view them as a group, under my watchful supervision. The students moved slowly and carefully through the exhibit, taking notes, sharing observations with each other, and approaching me with questions. The exhibit remained available for several weeks, so they had the opportunity to return. I circulated the essay prompts before our group viewing (two questions, of which they could choose one), so the students were able to think about the ways that the photographs would help them to shape their discussion of the New Negro. They knew that they would need to draw on a multitude of sources in order to place the photographs in their historical context and to explain their significance to the NNM. Both questions asked them to grapple with the importance of African American self-representation within the historical context; one question gave them the opportunity to focus on this goal specifically in relation to women.

“Wedding Couple” (see Figure 6), attributed to John Johnson, opens the door to student interpretations that demonstrate which students “look” and which ones “see.” The identity of this couple is not known, but their clothing suggests the occasion. As the “Notes” indicate, the relationship

is also implied by “the proprietary way the man grasps the arm of the woman’s chair.”²² A student who was merely “looking” would describe the picture, noting the clothing, the expressions, and, if very observant, the hand on the chair. But a “seeing” student would make the connection between this photograph and some of the stereotypes associated with the Old Negro. We spoke at some length in my class about the “Mammy” and “Jezebel” stereotypes: Mammy was usually depicted by whites as fat, older, sexually unattractive, and thrilled to serve her white family, while Jezebel was often represented as young and possessed of an unquenchable sexual appetite. Mammy made it comfortable to have a female domestic, whether during or after slavery—neither wives nor abolitionists need worry that white men might make sexual overtures to Mammy. Jezebel, on the other hand, relieved white men from any blame when they raped or in other ways took advantage of their black house slaves or (post-war) servants; they could not help it if they were seduced by these “ravenous animals.” Understanding this historical background, a “seeing” student, when analyzing this photograph, would comment upon this New Negro attempt to capture an image of respectability. Focusing specifically on the woman in this photo, we see someone who is beautiful (unlike Mammy) and respectable (unlike Jezebel)—this is a “real” African American woman. “Seeing” students might note the long sleeves and high collar and make observations about the message that this photograph was intended to send. (Other pictures conveying the respectability of black women and the black family can be found online via the New York Public Library’s Digital Gallery; I recommend “Robert Cicero Pannell and Family,” “John Richard Curtis and Family,” and “Edison Henshaw Gaines and Wife.”)

While I am relatively comfortable using these interdisciplinary sources in the classroom, I recognize that students in a history class might be less comfortable if asked to interpret a poem, a painting, or a photograph on their own. To further prepare them for their assignment, I required them to attend a lecture that I arranged in conjunction with the exhibit by Deborah Willis, Professor of Photography and author of a number of articles and books about the representation of African Americans in photography. Willis reiterated several key points that I had already discussed with them regarding the goal of self-representation, but for each point she mentioned, she displayed one (or more) of a vast number of photographs that she collected for her own publications. She mentally engaged the students in the process of breaking down a photograph into its many constitutive parts, showing them how to recognize certain important aspects of the images’ creation.²³ For example, she encouraged students to consider the clothing of the subject, the presence of props in the photograph (or lack thereof), the expression on the individual’s face, and the way that the



Figure 6: “Wedding Couple,” attributed to John Johnson, emphasizes the importance of family and respectability to the New Negro.

lighting did (or did not) illuminate the subject’s face. She also discussed the intended message of certain pictures, forcing students to think about who controlled the image and how photographer and subject both strove to influence the representation of blackness—an issue at the heart of black desires to create a more authentic image for African Americans.

She presented a wide variety of photographs, many from the time period in question, but also some created before and after the NNM. Images symbolic of the Old Negro helped her to establish the long history of unfriendly representations of African Americans in various media, and they helped my students to understand African Americans' desire to control their own image. Photographs created after the NNM showed that the desire for self-representation remained long after the frenetic pace of creative activity associated with the movement slowed.

Willis and I asked my students to think about both the subjects of the photographs and the photographer as conscious creators of a historical record. New Negroes strove to teach the general American public that the dominant narrative of black inferiority was false by introducing them to the totality of African American life. They employed a number of strategies, including artistic expressions of the self. In their efforts, we can view them as individuals struggling to be good teachers to a wider classroom—the American public.

Ken Bain and James Zimmerman describe challenges facing teachers and the tactics that great teachers employ. Using these standards, it appears that many New Negroes were in fact excellent teachers. Bain and Zimmerman tell us that students “are most likely to question and perhaps shift their paradigms if … they find themselves in a situation where their existing paradigms produce incorrect or unsatisfactory explanations.”²⁴ The image of the Old Negro had been embedded in the American psyche since the early days of slavery; it served to justify that institution as well as the unequal treatment afforded to African Americans post-slavery. In the minds of many New Negroes, the best way to convince Americans to shift their paradigm was to confront them with an alternative reality that in no way matched the stereotypes that had long been accepted as reality. Images of dignified, responsible, intelligent, well-dressed African Americans, whether created visually or linguistically (in poems, novels, essays, and newspaper articles), confronted Americans with two irreconcilable versions of reality. The hope was that this sudden shock might convince white Americans to respond with what Bain and Zimmerman termed “a deep approach,” which called for the individual to “grappl[e] with how this new information will irrevocably change their mental model, ultimately creating a new and deeper conceptual understanding.”²⁵

“The Talbert Family: Reverend Albert, Dakota, Mildred, and Ruth” (see Figure 7), attributed to John Johnson, provides an excellent example of an “affirmative” image.²⁶ It presents a “respectable” and stable family; they are well-dressed and carefully coiffed. The expressions on each of their faces, and particularly on Rev. Talbert’s face, convey a sense of dignity and pride in their station. The photograph communicates the message



Figure 7: “The Talbert Family: Reverend Albert, Dakota, Mildred, and Ruth,” attributed to John Johnson, shows a strong family controlling the representation of their image.

that the Talberts are worthy of documenting on film. It also demonstrates that family is of vital importance in the African American community, and that in this regard, the Talberts are similar to many other typical American families.²⁷ Whether through literature, visual arts, essays, or numerous other forms, these messages—the beauty of the black race and the shared goals and aspirations of white and black Americans—were at the heart of the NNM.

Teaching the movement at a temporal distance, we can still employ the tactics that New Negroes hoped would change Americans' perceptions, tactics aimed at forcing individuals to confront the incongruity between society's perceptions of previous stereotypes of an Old Negro and a New Negro. The words and images created by New Negro artists are invaluable tools which allowed them to express themselves openly and honestly. Such communications addressed both the strength and beauty in their communities, often unseen by whites, either because they employed different standards of beauty, or because the lessons of slavery and racism had taught many African Americans to keep that which was most important to them hidden from white eyes. New Negroes could also use such outlets to express the pain and humiliation of racism and racial violence, though portraiture was generally reserved for the former message.

Bain and Zimmerman's insights into teaching are quite helpful for those of us who strive to teach our students to move beyond superficial learning towards deep historical analysis. They distinguish between "surface learners," who attempt "to remember as many details as possible, trying as best they [can] to replicate what they [read]"; "strategic learners," who are "primarily concerned with making good grades" rather than emphasizing "understanding or application"; and "deep learners," who not only absorb information, but think about it, "identif[ying] key concepts, mull[ing] over assumptions, and even consider[ing] implications and applications."²⁸ Of course, I wanted deep learners in my classroom, so I provided many opportunities to learn through a wide variety of methods. I gave a background lecture in class, defining the NNM, examining why such a concerted effort at image readjustment was necessary by introducing them to the stereotypes of Sambo, Mammy, and Jezebel as representatives of the Old Negro. Then I familiarized them with some of the various ways that New Negroes made their voices heard. We discussed Dick Rowland and the Tulsa Riots, read poems by Claude McKay, evaluated paintings by Aaron Douglas and William Johnson, and analyzed the music of some of the best blues women in the business, Bessie Smith and Ida Cox.

When it came time to evaluate how well my students had absorbed this background information, "Church Group at the Home of Rev. Oliver and Anna Burckhardt" (see Figure 8) attributed to John Johnson, helped me



Figure 8: “Church Group at the Home of Rev. Oliver and Anna Burckhardt,” attributed to John Johnson, helped me to identify my surface, strategic, and deep learners.

to separate my surface, strategic, and deep learners. The woman in the center of the bottom row is wearing a belt that has a swastika as its buckle. Almost all of my students were drawn to this, and most of them commented upon it in their papers. My surface learners mentioned it, noting, as the object label informed them, that it was “a common symbol in the 1910s signifying friendship, good luck, and good health”: they were simply repeating details.²⁹ My strategic learners sought to impress me by going beyond the basic information provided on the object label: a couple of them did a little bit of Internet research about the meaning of the swastika as a symbol, for example. I learned more than I wanted to about the swastika’s symbolic meaning in World War II, but these strategic learners hoped that effort rather than results would impress me; they did not make significant connections between the emblem and the historical situation facing African Americans in the 1910s and 1920s. My deep learners—and I am afraid that when it came to analysis of this picture, there were relatively few—tried to analyze what the swastika, and its signification of friendship, good luck, and good health, meant within the historical context. One noted



Figure 9: Zoom of woman's belt buckle, "Church Group at the Home of Rev. Oliver and Anna Burckhardt," attributed to John Johnson.

that while the belt clasp might simply have been a gift from a friend or a loved one, the decision to wear it for this photograph, which captured the Stewardess Board of the Church of Christ Holiness, might say something about the place that she felt she held in her church and her community. It might indicate a sense that, because of the work of the Stewardess Board specifically as well as some of the changes taking place nationally, she was looking forward to a period of uplift—of good luck and good health—for those in her church as well as those of her race. Of course, there is no way to know, today, what this object really signified to its owner, but it is this sort of thoughtful analysis of *possibilities* (situated firmly within the historical context) that the photographs invite and allow.

Conclusion

The NNM and “Recovered Views” allowed me to introduce my students to some important people and events of the past. But history is not merely the memorization of names and dates: it requires deep thought and careful analysis to reach interpretive conclusions about *why* and *how* ideas changed over time. Introducing my students to photographic primary sources taught them to expand their definitions of primary sources; they learned that, as historians, we can be called upon to interpret more than just words on a page. People in the past, now the subjects of historical study, found so many other ways to communicate. New Negroes continue to tell their stories in the music that they sang, the pictures that they painted, the poems that they wrote, and the photographs that they created. The photographer and subjects featured in formal portraiture gave significant thought to their self-representation. Because they chose their message and embedded it in the photographs so painstakingly—through their expressions, their clothing, the props in the photos—these primary sources are vested with a deep sense of personhood that can be lost if we focus solely on the written word.

Perhaps most importantly, in terms of our students’ larger lives beyond our classrooms, my students learned that ideas circulating in the past have relevance to our lives today. I spent the last week of our course discussing the present state of race relations in the United States, focusing particularly on Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath. Discussions about New Negroes’ struggle to control the representation of blackness and the viewing of photographs that comprise the “Recovered Views” exhibit prepared students to consider modern representations of African Americans. I explained to them that, just as New Negroes felt unseen or inaccurately represented and sought to correct their public image, many African Americans today still struggle with the challenges presented by media representations that disproportionately associate blackness with poverty

and criminality. Images of the lopsided number of African Americans stranded after Hurricane Katrina finally made a large population of African Americans visible, but they were still reflected unfavorably: according to captions accompanying pictures which flashed across the Internet, whites who waded through the waters carrying various items were “finding,” while blacks were “looting.” Discussing the long history of unfavorable representations of African Americans, the significant efforts by African Americans to overturn those stereotypes, and the various ways that historians have analyzed and interpreted those representations and efforts, demonstrates to students that history does indeed matter to their present lives. Comments about “finding” and “looting” in the aftermath of Katrina did not result from an insignificant slip of the tongue. They are part of a long history of racism grounded in the conflicts of America’s past.

Portraits produced under the shared control of artist and subject during the NNM caress the faces of African Americans. They portray the dignity that was central to the black community. The “Recovered Views” photographs in particular remind viewers that African Americans share in every aspect of American history. They lived in small towns in the Midwest as well as urban centers like Harlem. Their story in the early decades of the twentieth century encompassed more than just the aftermath of slavery and the prejudice of whites. They valued family, home, and community. Studying these photographs helped my students to understand who New Negroes were, the historical context in which they lived, and the struggle that they faced to control the representation of their own image. From a “big picture” perspective, collecting a large number of these photographs together and inviting students to reflect on past representations of African Americans in a respectful, thoughtful way encouraged them to reconsider the ways in which we view, and still, on occasion, stereotype, African Americans in our community, our nation, and even at times in our historical scholarship.

Notes

1. Many, many thanks to Arthur McWilliams, Jr., for allowing John Johnson’s photographs to circulate in the “Recovered Views” exhibit and for authorizing me to share several of them in this article.

2. John Carter, Abigail Davis, and Edward F. Zimmer, “Recovered Views: African American Portraits, 1912-1925—Notes to the Photographs,” *Nebraska History* 84, no. 2 (Summer 2003), Photograph 20.

3. Timothy Gangwer, *Visual Impact, Visual Teaching: Using Images to Strengthen Learning* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 2009), 2.
4. Ibid., 77.
5. Alain Locke, "The New Negro," in *The New Negro*, ed. Alain Locke (New York: Simon & Schuster, [1925] 1997), 3.
6. Michael D. Harris, *Colored Pictures: Race and Visual Representation* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003).
7. Smithsonian Institute, available at <<http://www.siris.si.edu/>>; in the "Search all catalogs" box, enter "Addison Scurlock."
8. "Reflections in Black: Smithsonian African American Photography—A Teacher's Guide to Selected Works from the Exhibition" (Frist Center for the Visual Arts), available online at <<http://www.fristcenter.org/site/files/cm/File/pdf/ReflectionsInBlackTeacherGuide.pdf>>, p. 6.
9. Quoted in Deborah Willis, *Reflections in Black: A History of Black Photographers, 1840 to the Present* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2000), xvii.
10. "Faces of Slavery," *American Heritage Magazine*, June 1977, 28, n. 4.
11. Some of Zealy's images can be seen online at <<http://www.artic.edu/webspaces/museumstudies/ms242/westerbeck2.shtml>>; a larger selection appears in Alan Trachtenberg's *Reading American Photographs: Images as History, Matthew Brady to Walker Evans* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1989).
12. Locke, 3-5. It is interesting to compare the photographic portraits discussed in this article with Winold Reiss's hand-drawn portraits which were included in *The New Negro*. The former are available online through the New York Public Library at <http://digitalgallery.nypl.org/nypldigital/dgkeysearchresult.cfm?parent_id=577855&word=&s=1¬word=&d=&c=&f=&k=0&lWord=&lField=&sScope=&sLevel=&sLabel=&snum=0&imgs=20>.
13. Carter, Davis, and Zimmer, Photograph 22.
14. O. E. Schoeffler and William Gale, *Esquire's Encyclopedia of 20th-Century Men's Fashions* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1974). Consult the image on p. 295; the shoes are labeled 16K03 and 16K04, respectively. One significant difference is that Talbert's shoes have seven buttons, one more than 16K04, and two more than 16K03.
15. "Recovered Views: African American Portraits, 1912-1925," is curated by John E. Carter, Special Projects Coordinator at the Nebraska State Historical Society in Lincoln. The exhibition is organized by the Nebraska State Historical Society and toured by ExhibitsUSA. The purpose of ExhibitsUSA is to create access to an array of arts and humanities exhibitions, nurture the development and understanding of diverse art forms and cultures, and encourage the expanding depth and breadth of cultural life in local communities. ExhibitsUSA is a national division of Mid-America Arts Alliance, a private, nonprofit organization founded in 1972. "ExhibitsUSA is generously supported by the Adair Margo Gallery Inc.; Altria Group Inc.; James H. Clement, Jr.; ConocoPhillips; the Cooper Foundation; Douglas County Bank/Ross and Marianna Beach; DST Systems Inc.; Edward Jones; the William Randolph Hearst Foundation; the Helen Jones Foundation; the William T. Kemper Foundation, Commerce Bank, trustee; the Richard P. Kimmel and Laurine Kimmel Charitable Foundation Inc.; Land O' Lakes Inc.; Mrs. Tom Lea; the National Endowment for the Arts; the National Endowment for the Humanities; SBC Missouri; the Society of North American Goldsmiths; Sonic, America's Drive-In; Sterling Vineyards; the Summerlee Foundation; the Courtney S. Turner Charitable Trust; Valmont Industries; the Woods Charitable Fund; and the state arts agencies of Arkansas, Illinois, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Texas." (This accreditation language was supplied by the Mid

America Arts Alliance in a press release that accompanied the exhibit.)

16. The Summer 2003 issue of *Nebraska History*, published by the Nebraska Historical Society (a group that was significantly involved in the development of the exhibit), printed the entire exhibit catalog, including all of the photographs and the instructive, interpretive material (the “Notes to Photographs”) that appeared on the plaques beside each photo.

17. According to copyright law, you should obtain permission from the journal before doing so.

18. If your library does not own the journal, it can be requested through interlibrary loan; however, as libraries are often hesitant to send entire journals, I would recommend purchasing a copy from the Nebraska Historical Society. You can order online at <<http://www.nebraskahistory.org/magazine/index.htm>> (click on “back issues” and find volume 84, number 2, Summer 2003), or call them at 1-800-833-6747 or 402-471-3447. The journal costs \$1 plus \$6 for shipping. They tell me that their stores are rapidly depleting, so order quickly!

19. New York Public Library Digital Gallery, <<http://digitalgallery.nypl.org/nypldigital/index.cfm>>. For a broad search of their holdings, simply type in “African American” in the search box. There are many portraits from the New Negro era categorized into collections which can be located by typing the collection name into the search box. I recommend “American Civilization and the Negro: The Afro-American in Relation to National Progress,” the “Jesse Alexander Photograph Collection,” and “A History of the American Negro: Virginia Edition.”

20. Carter, Davis, and Zimmer, “Recovered Views,” Photograph 34.

21. Those seeking images available online should study “Addison and Mamie Scurlock,” available on the Smithsonian website, or “Young African-American Couple in the Woods,” available through the New York Public Library’s Digital Gallery at <<http://digitalgallery.nypl.org/nypldigital/index.cfm>>. Both picture attractive, well-dressed individuals depicting the identity of the New Negro in an outdoor setting free of any trappings of urban life.

22. Carter, Davis, and Zimmer, “Recovered Views,” Photograph 3.

23. Willis’s *Reflections in Black* will be extremely helpful for those teachers wishing to learn more about how African American subjects and photographers shaped black identity. Part II, “The New Negro Image,” is especially relevant to the topics addressed in this article.

24. Ken Bain and James Zimmerman, “Understanding Great Teaching,” *Peer Review* 11 no. 2 (Spring 2009): 11.

25. Ibid.

26. As Anne Elizabeth Carroll’s recent monograph has shown, W. E. B. Du Bois’s work as editor of *The Crisis*, the voice of the NAACP, provides a very useful example of New Negroes’ attempts to juxtapose conflicting images. A Professor of English, Carroll argues in *Word, Image, and the New Negro: Representation and Identity in the Harlem Renaissance* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, [2005] 2007) that Du Bois often juxtaposed “protest” texts, which highlighted the injustice of racism and racial violence, against “affirmative” texts, which emphasized the contributions of African Americans. For example, the “Men of the Month” column “might come after a list of acts of violence toward African Americans; it might be followed by an NAACP report on a lynching, itself followed by descriptions and portraits of African American college graduates.” In her description of the significance of these juxtapositions, we can hear echoes of Bain and Zimmerman’s comments about shifting paradigms: “Readers or viewers have to struggle to make sense of the disparate elements, and thus they must

fully engage with the composite text.” Through this engagement, “reading is turned into ‘a participatory, subjective experience’ that presents ‘a more forceful lesson because it is *experienced* rather than merely understood.’” In other words, the incongruity of the juxtaposed stories or images might encourage a reader of *The Crisis* to adopt “a perception of a new reality” (Carroll, 26-28). African American portraiture created during the era of the New Negro often provides excellent examples of the sort of “affirmative” images that were intended to shift the public paradigm.

27. “John Richard Curtis and Family,” referenced above and available online, is also quite useful in this regard.

28. Bain and Zimmerman, 9.

29. Carter, Davis, and Zimmer, “Recovered Views,” Photograph 32.