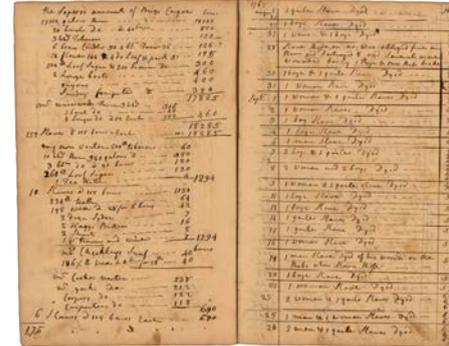


BLACK MECHANICS

The Making of an American University & a Nation



Date	Event	No
August 21	1 girl Slave Dyed	21
25	1 boye Slave Dyed	22
27	1 Woman & 1 boye Dyed	23
		24
28	Slaves rose on us was obliged fire on them and Destroyed 8 and several more wounded badly 1 thye & ones thye broke	25 to 32
30	1 boye & 1 girl Slave Dyed	33 34
31	1 Woman Slave Dyed	35
Sept. 1	1 Woman & 1 girl Slaves Dyed	36 37
2	1 Woman Slaves Dyed	38
3	1 boy Slave Dyed	39
4	1 boye Slave Dyed	40
6	1 man Slave Dyed	41
7	3 boye & 1 girl Dyed	42 43 44 45
8	2 Women and 2 boye Dyed	46 47 48 49
9	1 Woman & 1 girl Slave Dyed	50 51
11	1 boye Slave Dyed	52
12	1 boye Slave Dyed	53
14	1 girl Slave Dyed	54
15	1 girl Slave Dyed	55
16	1 Woman Slave Dyed	56



Account book from the Slave Ship Sally, September 11, 1764–December 20, 1765

The voyage of the Sally, was, even in a contemporary context, particularly disastrous. The enslaved captives started to die even before the journey to the Caribbean slave markets began. In his captain's log Hopkins records that one of the first to die was a woman who "hanged her Self between Decks." On August 28, 1765 the enslaved Africans rose up against the crew. Hopkins provides no further details of this act of resistance, other than the crew "obliged fire[d] on them" and eight died.

Courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University

Curatorial Note

Since its founding in 2012, the Center for the Study of Slavery & Justice (CSSJ) at Brown has curated exhibitions which explore complex and oftentimes forgotten histories of racial slavery in the Americas. We do this while paying careful attention to the ways in which this social system continues to influence American life. Drawing on materials from previous CSSJ exhibitions and exploring new sources, *Black Mechanics: The Making of an American University and a Nation* examines the ways in which slavery shaped the founding of our country and its universities. The exhibition's title *Black Mechanics* comes from a 2016 poem written by Evie Shockley commissioned by the Center. The poem's line, "you are the byproduct of a process that does not know your names: you are our black mechanics, our working parts, so work it..." reflects the exhibition's focus on the unnamed and unrecognized individuals whose labor was the foundation of our nation and universities. *Black Mechanics* speaks to tensions between the ideas of freedom and liberty in the nation's founding documents, the ways in which these have been denied throughout American history and how people have fought to reclaim them. The poem's dual focus on the structures and individuals entanglement articulates a conversation that we have not yet had in the United States. Throughout the exhibition this tension between slavery, the proclaimed liberty of the Founding Fathers, and the enslaved's desire for freedom is explored through excerpts from Evie's piece *black mechanics (or, offshore manufacturing avant la lettre)*, artist Joseph Holston's *Colors in Freedom*, Professor Geri Augusto's *Negro Cloth Nkisi* and materials from local archives. Together they reveal how slave labor and the Atlantic slave trade fueled the creation of elite universities such as Brown, the United States, and our modern world.

Brown's story provides important insights into the historical and national dilemmas the country currently faces. How should slavery as a system be remembered? What are its continuing structural legacies? How might we create a democracy when such a difficult past continues to shape our present? We hope this exhibition provides the viewer with a space for reflection about the issues that continue to challenge our society today.

MAIYAH GAMBLE-RIVERS
 Manager of Programs & Outreach, Center for the Study of Slavery & Justice

SHANA WEINBERG
 Assistant Director, Center for the Study of Slavery & Justice

Poet Evie Shockley

As the 2016 Heimark Artist-in-Residence at the Center for the Study of Slavery & Justice, I had the honor of creating an original poem that would speak to connections between Naomi Wallace’s deeply moving and provocative play, *The Liquid Plain*, and the history of slavery in Rhode Island. The play stages powerful encounters between those who profited from the transatlantic slave trade and those whose bodies and labor fueled it and made it function. Having had the good fortune to see *The Liquid Plain* in its New York City production, I fully appreciated the play’s treatment of history: exploring the story of one woman’s callous murder at the hands of a slave ship captain confronts us with the repercussions of a specific tragedy in several individual lives and the broader implications of slavery’s dehumanizing exploitation across centuries.

My challenge was to write a piece that would complement Wallace’s achievement, while finding my own way into this territory of painful yet necessary remembering. I dove into the historical work that had most directly inspired Wallace’s play, Marcus Rediker’s *The Slave Ship: A Human History*, and also familiarized myself with the archive documenting Brown University’s former ties to the slave trade and its present-day efforts toward accountability for that past. I began drafting a poem that attends to the ways our language, our institutions, and our distribution of societal resources still bear the impress of slavery upon them to this day. The poem uses the words and melody of a traditional black girls’ playground chant as the thread linking irony (the Brown brothers’ slave ship was called the Sally) to triumph (Phillis Wheatley, whose poetry supplied the title of *The Liquid Plain*, was renamed after the ship that transported her into slavery). As the poem unfolds, it reckons with the economics of the transatlantic trade and slavery: the deadly gamble with human lives and ongoing legacy of black commodification that are clarified in Rediker’s analysis and both preserved and obscured in the discourse and terminology of work.

POET EVIE SHOCKLEY

*Associate Professor of English at Rutgers University
Jersey City, NJ*

black mechanics (or, offshore manufacturing avant la lettre)

“the wide-ranging, well-armed slave ship was a powerful sailing machine . . . it was also a factory and a prison, and in this combination lay its genius and its horror. . . . sailors not only worked in a global market, they produced for it, helping to create the commodity called ‘slave’ to be sold in american plantation societies.”

—marcus rediker, *the slave ship: a human history*

“in 1764, the year that [brown university] was founded, [esek] hopkins sailed to west africa in command of a slave ship, a one-hundred-ton brigantine called the sally. the sally was owned by nicholas brown and company, a partnership of four brothers, nicholas, john, joseph, and moses brown.”

—report of the brown university steering committee on slavery and justice

like clockwork they arrived : masts

high on the horizon, resurrected trees

rigged with taut rope branches and huge

white windblown blooms : oaks and pines,

trees planted in west africa’s coastal waters

by men whose hearts, it seemed, could not

be moved : a self-replenishing forest

of factories, slowly assembling the vital

parts of the american agricultural industrial

enterprise, the complex components

that made the machine of transatlantic trade run.

*strut miss sally sally sally
strut miss sally all night long*

who has the facts on the factories?
who has the goods on the goods?
what tale comes creaking from ships'
logs, those shivering timbers drenched
in blood, piss, rum, and sweat? what news
does the platform bear of the bodies
it has borne? : makeshift boards on which
captives were made to shift and rock
themselves raw to the ship's pitching,
to huddle, bent and curled, between decks
no more than five feet apart, stowed
sideways in space as dark and airless
as a drawer. the nail that holds the wood
together can be, in an instant, the tool
that picks the cuffs alose. ship that's true
friend to no one: captain nor crew, investor
nor insurer, and least of all the witches, thieves,
adulterers, warriors, farmers, and children
packed tight in the coffin-sized cell
of a new status : slave.

sally sally sally sally
"one Negrow Garl"

a ship named *phillis* produced
a girl named phillis. why not
a sally from the *sally*, a "*garle*

Slave" manufactured in accordance
with best practices : made to swallow
her allotment of foul water and her daily

portion of yam or *dab-a-dab* against
the fevers and flux : ripped or stolen
from her parents' arms, but danced

past the despair of the "*Woman Slave*"
who "*hanged her Self between decks*" :
perhaps pressed into service

as one of the captain's *favorites*—or, perhaps
finding the die cast for a different process
of molding. if this sally : not left "*all*

Most dead" on the windward coast
to compensate the *linguister* for nine months'
work traveling between tongues : not

one of the 8 insurrectionists
"*Destroyed*" by crew fire : not one
of those afterward "*so Desperited*"

they drowned or starved themselves : not
one of the 20 who, after a seven weeks'
crossing, died upon arrival in the *west indies*—

if this sally set her "*Negrow Garl*"
foot on antiguan soil, she found, perforce,
her place in the large machine

that turned her handiwork into sugar,
the sugar into rum, and so many gallons
of rum, in turn, into senegambian

or *negrow garles*, into "*3 Slaves*
2 men & 1 woman," a miracle of modern
industry: transatlantic transubstantiation.

here comes another one
just like the other one

one sally : a girl who had been born jolof,
perhaps, or gola, whose parents had named

her siffaye or musu, who learned
nakedness and orphanhood and revulsion

from sailors and the sea. another *sally* :
a guineaman built, maybe, for nonhuman—

not *inhuman*—trade, a brigantine
that became another sally’s brig. a rose’s

arose is arrows? : one john brown digs in
his well-heeled heels, stays in the slave

trade in the frowning face of a quaker
brother. another john brown gives his life

and loses his sons to the abolitionist
cause, dies in a raid on the government’s

armory, to arm the rebellious enslaved.
one john brown is not like another.

and what’s in a euphemism? the hungry
ships were fueled by african inter-ethnic

wars that just coincided with the sight
of sails : land-based piracy, raids,

kidnapping, justified by grievances
manufactured by the machine. call it

the *africa trade*, if you prefer. call its victims
prisoners of war—or *criminals* conveniently

convicted of social evils : sudden
adulterers, inadvertent debtors,

and witches as unwitting as salem’s. or call them
cargo. call them any name you please

as you count them, coming and going : going
on board or over, coming together like welded

metals. many millions become
many fewer : *e pluribus nigrum*.

*here comes another one
all night long*

“*The Salley’s Log*” accounts for
the transformation in this way:

* * *

August 1765

Dyed

Dyed

Destroyed

Dyed

Dyed

September “

Dyed

Dyed

Dyed

Dyed

Dyed

Dyed

Dyed

£ c., £ c.

of the 196 africans bought
and brought aboard: 108 *dyed*
mande, gola, igbo, fon, ewe,
fanti, ibau, and kru. the rest—
dyed black, sooner or later,
stewed and stained in the fluids
of the middle passage. think
of our so-called sally emerging
from the hold on the shores
of antigua, in “*very Indifferent*”
health, hand in hand with “*I*
Woman Slave” or “*I boy*
d[itt]o”, taking wavering steps
into fates unknown, uncertain,
or—worst of all—likely. think
of their fingers tightly inter-
locked, enmeshed like the teeth
of small cogs in a machine
whose parts are sold separately.

*strut miss sally sally sally
strut miss sally all day long*

strut, miss sally, we call on you to strut, miss phillis, strut miss
maria, miss harriet, miss frances ellen, miss anna julia, miss ida,
miss bessie, miss zora, miss lou, miss jessie, miss josephine, miss
gwendolyn, miss fannie lou, miss paule, miss ella, miss nina, miss
audre, miss rosa, miss shirley, miss elizabeth, miss jayne, miss ruby,
miss lucille, miss paula, miss ruth — doing what struts do : load-
bearing, shock-absorbing, strengthening, resisting : restraining
movement in some directions, allowing it in others : you are
the byproduct of a process that does not know your names :
you are our black mechanics, our working parts, so work it :
miss toni, miss sonia, miss angela, miss brenda marie, miss
nourbese, miss carrie mae, miss aishah, miss patrisse : you strut
like the ghosts in another machine, whose time it is now to run.

EVIE SHOCKLEY

May 24, 2016

SLAVERY

The Founding of a University & a Nation

In 1764, the same year as the founding of the College of Rhode Island (today Brown University), the Brown brothers, John, Nicholas, Moses, and Joseph, prominent Rhode Island merchants launched the slave ship *Sally*. Captained by Esek Hopkins, the first Commander-in-chief of the United States Navy, and brother to Stephen, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, the brigantine headed to West Africa in search of slaves to sell in the Caribbean.

The story of the *Sally* is intertwined with the history of Brown and the United States. Slave labor and the wealth derived from the trade in people of African and indigenous descent fueled colonial expansion of the Atlantic World. The institution of racial slavery catalyzed a network of trade between continents; the demand for people and goods created new businesses, and a powerful merchant class. These merchants used their wealth to found institutions of higher education in the “New World” in order to groom the next generation of powerful elites. In addition, colonial colleges like Dartmouth were tasked with assimilating the indigenous population. For colleges in the colonial era, including the College of Rhode Island, historical records show that many of the founders, trustees, and donors to the endowment acquired their wealth through commercial activities involving the African slave trade. The liberty imagined by the Founding Fathers did not include slaves. As a consequence, enslaved people developed different ideas of freedom that spoke to their own experience of bondage.

Sea Captains Carousing in Surinam, c. 1752–58

John Greenwood
Oil on bed ticking
37 ¾ x 75 in. (95.9 x 190.5 cm)

This scene from a tavern in the Dutch Caribbean colony of Surinam features a half dozen men who would become trustees of the College of Rhode Island, today known as Brown University. Their presence highlights Rhode Island’s close connection to the Caribbean as a result of the slave trade. Captain Esek Hopkins of the *Sally* is pictured near center, with a sick partygoer to his left.

Courtesy of the Saint Louis Art Museum,
Museum Purchase 256:1948



Stephen Hopkins, 1999

John Phillip Hagen
Oil on canvas

In 1764 the same year that his brother Esek, Captain of the *Sally*, left for Africa on a slaving voyage, Governor Stephen Hopkins penned the pamphlet, *The Rights of the Colonies Examined* arguing against taxes imposed on the colonists by the British. Hopkins is pictured here with University Hall in the background, built during his time as Chancellor. He would later sign the Declaration of Independence.

Courtesy of Brown University Portrait Collection

“...the unjust endeavors of others Reduce them to a state of Bondage and Subjection your honour Need not be informed that A Life of Slavery Like that of your petitioner Deprived of Every social privilege of Every thing Requisite to Render Life Tolable is far worse then Nonexistence.”

PRINCE HALL, former slave, *Slave Petition for Freedom to the Massachusetts Legislature, 1777*



Gravestone of “Pero, an African Servant to the late Henry Paget”

“Mary Young’s Negro Man,” “Earle’s Negro,” “Abraham,” and “Pero” are among the enslaved people who built the first building on the College of Rhode Island’s Providence campus. Records also show that Job, a Native American, and a free African named Mingow, also helped to construct University Hall, which today houses the President, Provost, and Deans’ offices.

Image Courtesy of Prof. Robert Emlen

“Liberty is the greatest blessing that men enjoy, and slavery is the heaviest curse that human nature is capable of... those who are governed at the will of another, and whose property may be taken from them... without their consent... are in the miserable condition of slaves.”

STEPHEN HOPKINS, signer of the Declaration of Independence and slave owner, *The Rights of Colonies Examined, 1764*

THE AMERICAN ECONOMY

Northern Industry & Southern Plantations

Shipping Sugar

Ten Views From Antigua, 1823

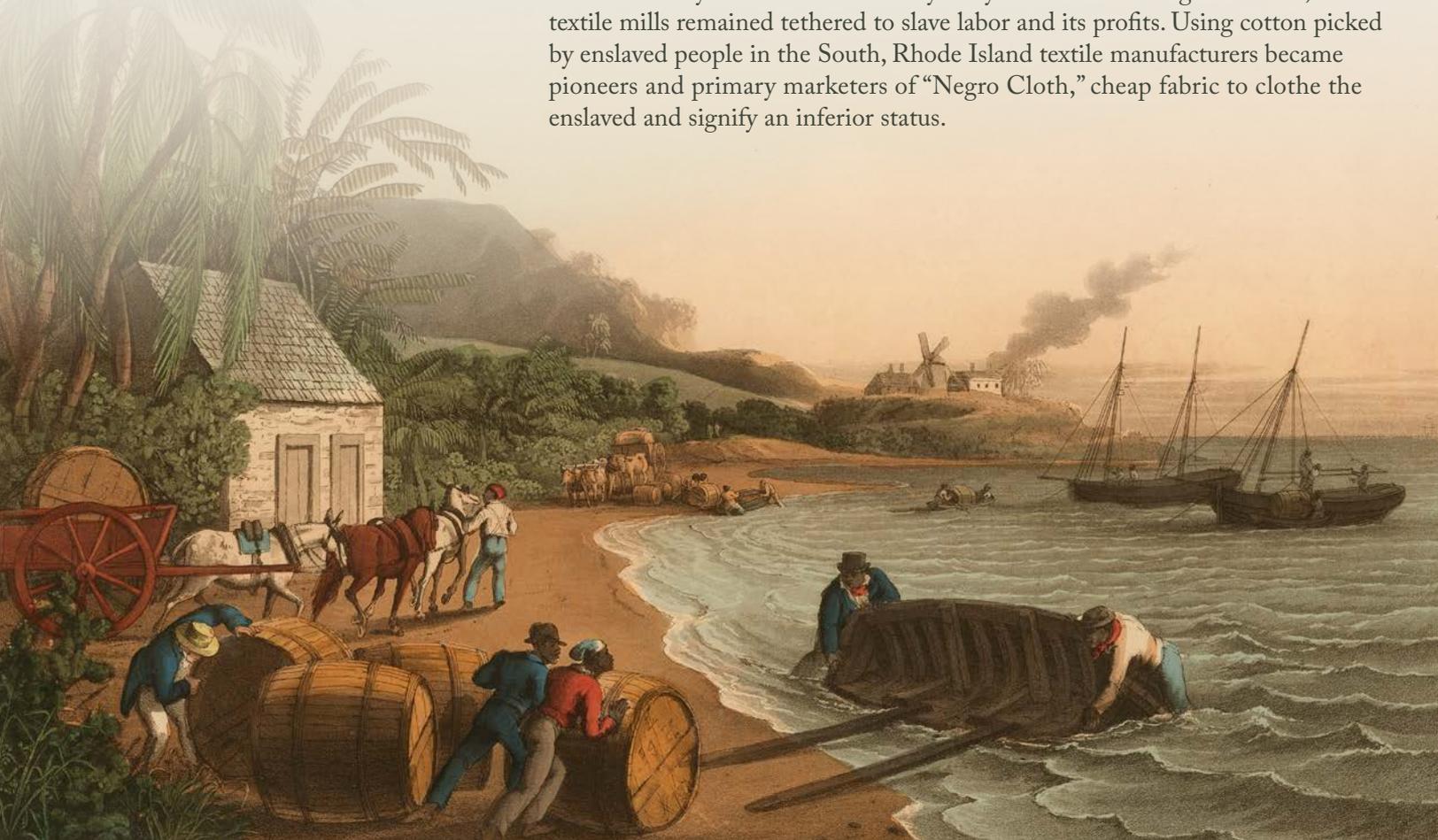
William Clark
lithograph, hand coloring
23.5 cm x 34.8 cm

Trade between Rhode Islanders and other societies dependent on African slaves contributed to the creation of a world economy. The economies of the Caribbean focused narrowly on sugar production by enslaved people which left the islands reliant on Rhode Island products ranging from Narragansett pacers to furniture and candles for use in their daily life. Sugar harvested by slaves in the West Indies, was used to distill Rhode Island rum.

Courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University

In colonial America, slave labor linked far flung places and local economies in a powerful global network. Rhode Island was deeply involved in the African slave trade as the colonists in the state searched for sources of labor and profit. Additionally Rhode Island and the Caribbean Islands developed an important and close trading relationship. Sugar, one of the major goods exported from slave plantations of the Caribbean, was an integral ingredient for rum distilleries thousands of miles north in Rhode Island. The State of Rhode Island's rum funded continued voyages to the West coast of Africa. Rum became a form of currency in exchange for newly enslaved Africans, who were taken first to the Spanish Caribbean to work on these sugar plantations and then to mainland Spanish America. Because the Caribbean plantations' economies focused almost exclusively on sugar production, these colonies relied on Rhode Island products such as furniture and home goods to outfit their plantations.

While some Rhode Islanders, such as Moses Brown, saw the "industrial revolution" as a way to move the economy away from slave trading businesses, new textile mills remained tethered to slave labor and its profits. Using cotton picked by enslaved people in the South, Rhode Island textile manufacturers became pioneers and primary marketers of "Negro Cloth," cheap fabric to clothe the enslaved and signify an inferior status.

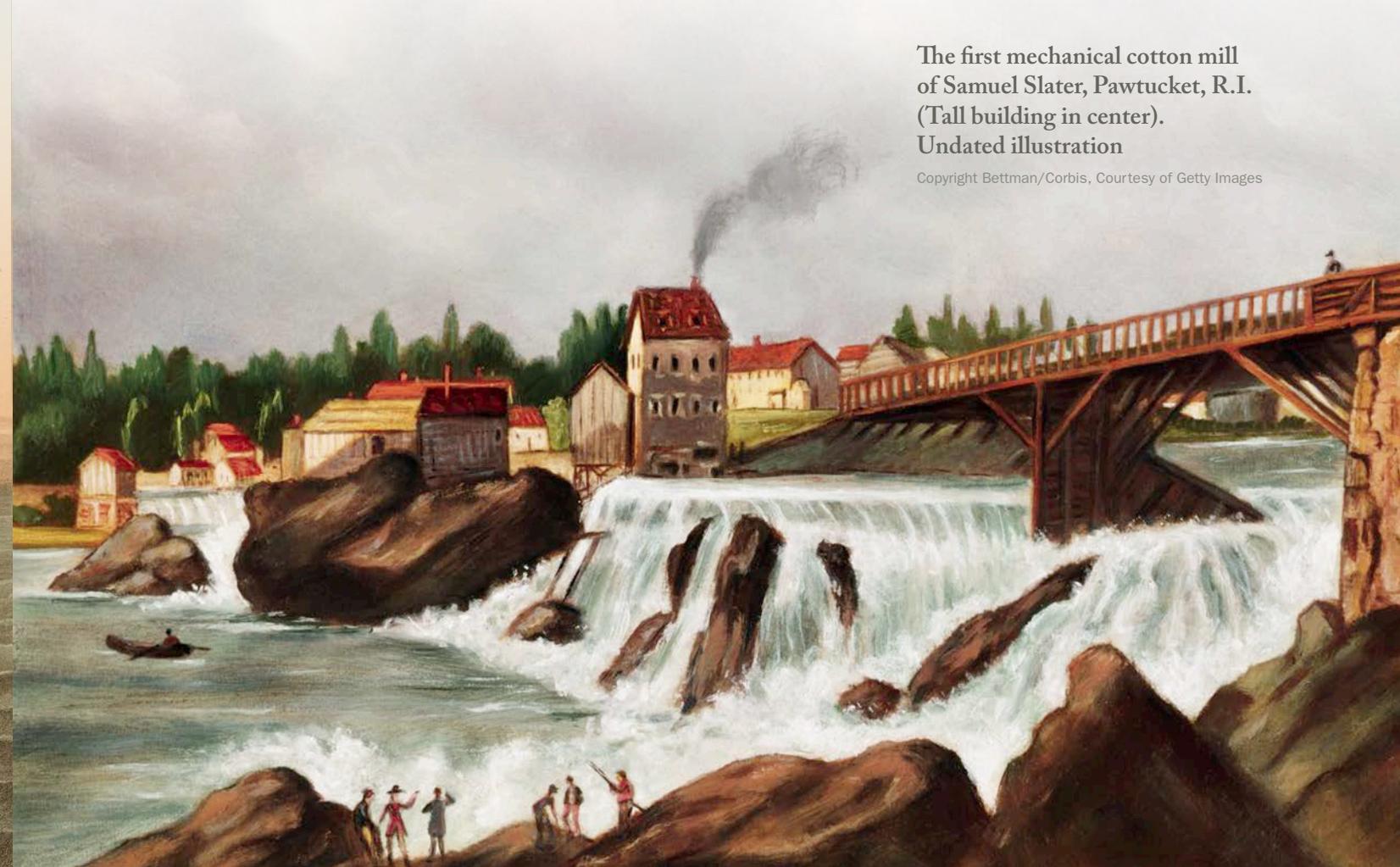


"I hope the abolition society will promote our own manufactories; especially the cotton manufactory, for which great experience has accrued and is accruing.... This is most certainly a laudable undertaking, and ought to be encouraged by all; but pause a moment – will it do to import the cotton? It is all raised from the labour of our own blood; the slaves do the work. I can recollect no one place at present from whence the cotton can come, but from the labour of the slaves."

JOHN BROWN, written during his 1789 newspaper writing campaign against the Providence Abolition Society

The first mechanical cotton mill of Samuel Slater, Pawtucket, R.I. (Tall building in center). Undated illustration

Copyright Bettman/Corbis, Courtesy of Getty Images





Negro Cloth Nkisi, 2016

Geri Augusto
 16" x 1 1/2" x 1 1/2"
 Assemblage: Rhode Island textile mill wooden shuttle; swatches of osnaburgh cloth, linsey-woolsey, calico, madras, coffee-bag sacking, and contemporary original-design "negro cloth" woven by Prof. Seth Rockman; copper wire, coral stone, sea-glass, and found objects.

Courtesy of Professor Geri Augusto

Rhode Island and the Slave Economy

The slave trade created a global network linked by the movement of enslaved people, raw materials and manufactured products. This map shows the networks that connected Rhode Islanders to the world economy.

Graphic courtesy of Erin Wells Design

Artist Statement Negro Cloth Nkisi

PROF. GERI AUGUSTO

In 1822, a South Carolina grand jury said, in response to complaints about slaves wearing ordinary clothing: "Negroes should be permitted to dress only in coarse stuffs. Every distinction should be created between whites and the Negroes, calculated to make the latter feel the superiority of the former." I imagine the many ways in which enslaved women and men subverted or resisted this stricture, including calling upon the interior power of religions they had known before enslavement – hence this assemblage of two powerful, opposing concepts.

Negro cloth – "a strong coarse cloth formerly used in making clothes for black slaves" (Merriam-Webster dictionary). Produced largely by New England and mid-Atlantic textile mills from slave-grown cotton and from wool, for sale to Southern plantation owners; enslaved women artisans also in many cases were forced to spin and weave this and other

cloths themselves, after a long day's field labor. Rhode Island was for decades the leading producer of negro cloth.

Nkisi – "the complex of physical matter, rules, songs, and ritual actions associated with activation of a specific spiritual force.... A *nkisi* could be housed within a portable shrine, be it a utilitarian clay vessel or an elaborate sculptural container... an artist's visualization of an immaterial force and its agency..." (Alisa Lagamma, "Kongo Power and Majesty," 2015). An object that a spirit inhabits, in the cultures of West Central Africa and the Congo Basin.

PROFESSOR AUGUSTO is interested in the dynamics of knowledge orders and their complex relationship to power. Her teaching, research and public engagement focuses on science and technology in society, indigenous knowledges and the knowledge of the enslaved. A significant part of her research is thinking about major historical moments in the emergence of science through plants, the visual and oral traditions of Africa and the African Diaspora. She is also a practicing visual textile maker. She currently teaches at Brown University.

RESISTANCE

Black Abolitionism, Another View of Freedom

The plantation system in the Americas not only created immense wealth, it also became an impetus for revolution. In 1791, former slaves Toussaint L'Ouverture and Jean-Jacques Dessaline led a large scale uprising against plantation owners, eventually leading to emancipation and the creation of an independent Black Republic, known as Haiti. The model of the Haitian Revolution loomed large in the minds of those enslaved in the United States. Decades later, during the American Civil War, Black troops would fight under regiments named after Haitian leader Toussaint L'Ouverture. Enslaved Africans in the Americas were constantly searching for freedom. They risked their lives to openly rebel, run away from plantations and form Maroon communities of free people in less accessible areas such as swamps or forests. Sometimes individual men and women acted to escape the violence of the slave system by committing suicide and by not allowing their children to be born into slavery.

Formerly enslaved and free persons in the United States created a major political movement in the 18th and 19th centuries, the Black Abolitionist Movement, which sought to abolish slavery and reform American society. To achieve these goals participants held conferences, published various anti-slavery newspapers and advocated on behalf of the enslaved. Frederick Douglass was one well known abolitionist. His powerful orations and papers helped to shape the Rhode Island Constitution of 1842 which was explicit about the inclusion of Black civil rights. Although this was so, there were instances of these rights not being upheld. Douglass' support of the Dorr Rebellion from 1841-1842, a movement that united disenfranchised Whites and local Black communities, helped to expand rights for all men under Rhode Island law. This included the formal abolition of slavery in the state as well as the extension of voting rights to Black men. These rights would be expanded nationally following the Civil War and the national abolition of slavery and then taken away under Jim Crow.



Touissant Blue, 2014

Edouard Duval-Carrié
Mixed media in artist's frame
29 x 29 x 3 in.

Courtesy of the Center for the Study of Slavery & Justice

The Maroons in Ambush on the Dromilly Estate in the Parish of Trelawney, Jamaica, 1801

François-Jules Bourgoïn
Aquatint colored
(engraving of original by J. Merigot)
55.3 x 81.5 cm

This painting depicts the Second Maroon War (1795-96) in which the Trelawney Town Maroon community in Jamaica fought to regain land rights. Maroons fought after the British reneged upon a signed treaty awarding them said lands. After many successful battles, the Trelawney Town Maroons were entirely defeated and exiled to Nova Scotia. In 1800, the community was again moved to Sierra Leone.

Courtesy of the British Library Board

The Fugitive Slave, 1837

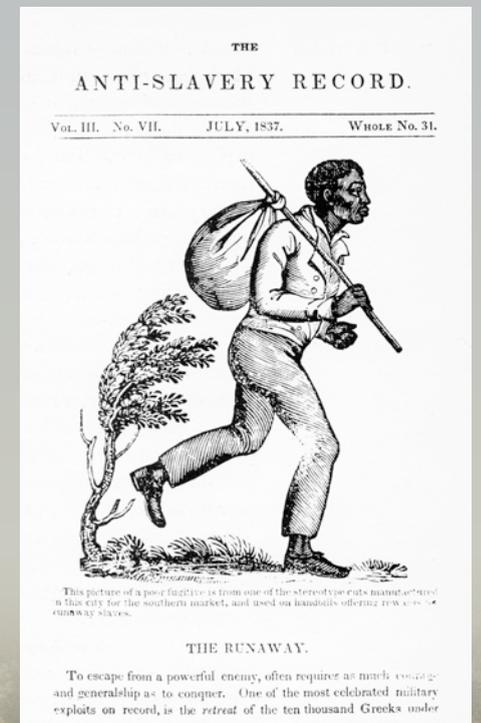
The Anti-Slavery Record
Wood engraving

Although this wood-engraving features the iconic image of the runaway slave commonly used in advertisement of the 19th century, abolitionist propaganda recast the image for anti-slavery publications.

Courtesy of the Brown University Library Instructional Image Collection

“[*The Trelawny Town Maroons*] threatened the entire destruction of the island; for had this body of Maroons evinced that their rebellion was not a temporary struggle, but a permanent and successful opposition to the Government, it is highly probable that the example might in time have united all the turbulent spirits among the slaves in a similar experiment...”

R.C. DALLAS, Jamaican born British writer and author of *The History of the Maroons, From their origins to the establishment of their chief tribe at Sierra Leone* (1802)



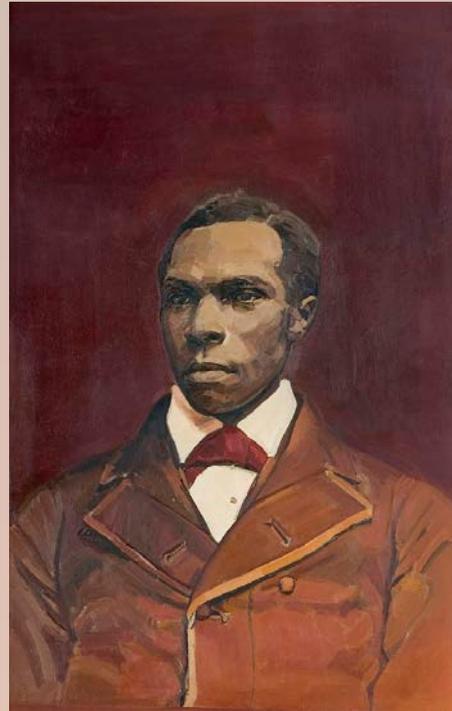
CIVIL WAR & Reconstruction

Inman Page, 1979

Richard Yarde
Oil on canvas

Born into slavery, Inman Page became one of the first recorded African American graduates of Brown University.

Courtesy of the Brown University Portrait Collection



Company E, 4th US Colored Troops at Fort Lincoln, November 17, 1865

William Morris Smith

The men in this picture are from Company E, 4th United States Colored Infantry. Theirs was one of the detachments assigned to guard the nation's capital during the American Civil War.

Courtesy of the United States Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division

The Civil War was a catalytic conflict over the future of slavery in the United States. The end of slavery created new opportunities for the African American community but barriers to full freedom and citizenship continued to exist. For many of the formerly enslaved, education was a way out of bondage and a path towards freedom. W.E.B. DuBois' *Black Reconstruction in America* makes the argument that the Civil War and its aftermath was democratic but in the end a failure, as it represented an "effort to reduce Black labor as nearly as possible to a condition of unlimited exploitation." Legislation implemented at the end of the war allowed for continued exploitation and bondage of Black citizens. The ratification of the 13th Amendment ended slavery officially, except "as a punishment for a crime." The use of forced labor continued through the creation of the convict leasing system. Under this system, companies and individuals paid fees to state and county governments in exchange for the labor of prisoners who were disproportionately Black. Traces of this system still remain today.

Inman Page was born enslaved in Virginia before escaping North. He would eventually become one of the first recorded African American graduates of Brown University, delivering the 1877 Commencement Class Day speech on the theme of "Intellectual Prospects of America." Reflecting on his own experience, he remarked, "the introduction into our body politic of a large class of citizens whose facilities for education are limited...call[s] upon us to exercise all the means in our power to extend the blessing of liberal culture to every nook and corner of the Republic." Page's dream of equality through education proved to be a significant challenge to the nation and the University, as both struggled to move into a new century.



A Ride for Liberty - The Fugitive Slaves, ca. 1862

Eastman Johnson
Oil on paperboard
21 15/16 x 26 1/8 in

A family of fugitive slaves, as seen by the artist, fleeing to Union lines near Manassas, Virginia in 1862. The representation of Black agency, in charge of their liberation without White intervention, is perhaps why this painting was never exhibited by the artist at the time.

Courtesy of the Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Gwendolyn O. L. Conkling, 40.59a-b

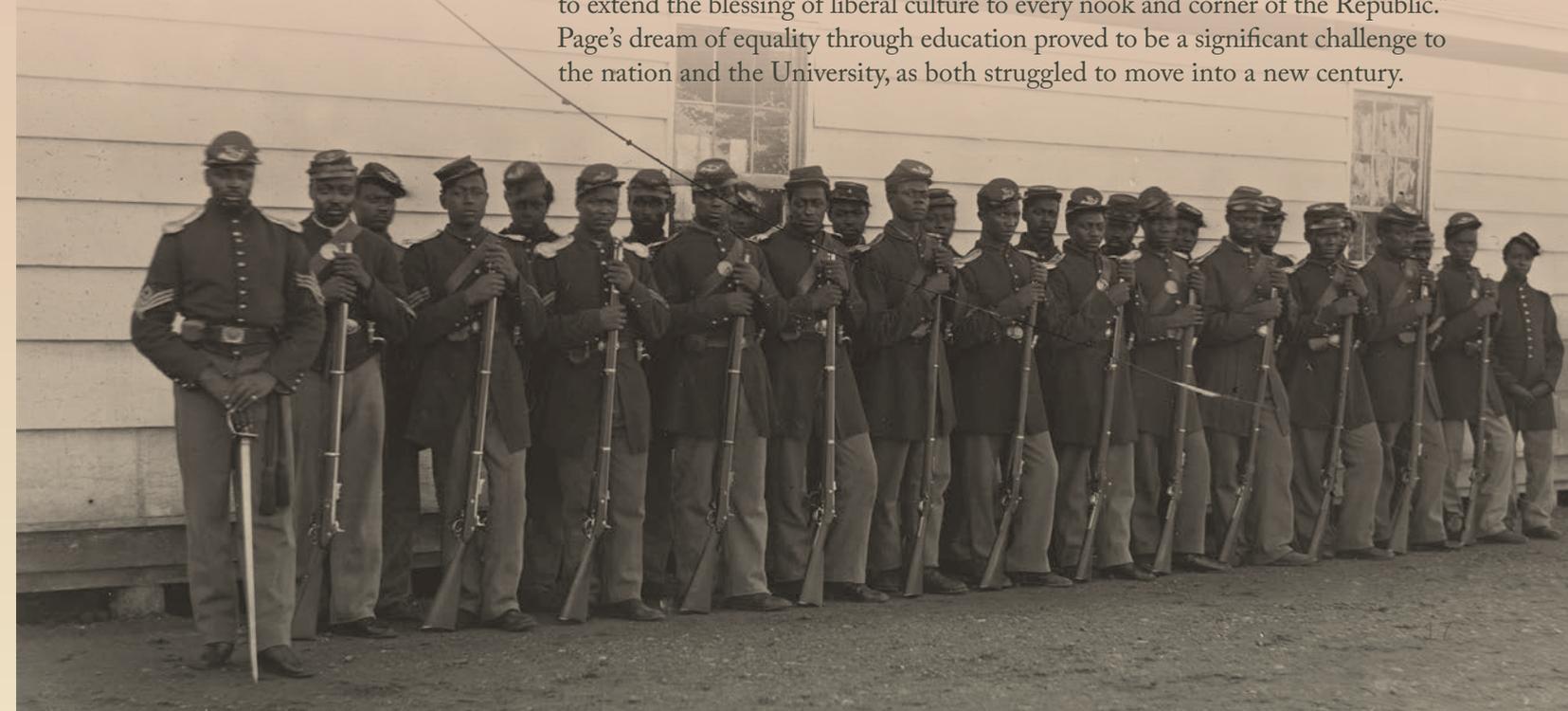
Whereas numerous Anti-Slavery Societies have recently been established in the several States where Slavery has ceased to exist; and whereas the designs and the proceedings of such Societies are, in the judgment of a large majority of this community, considered not only to be dangerous to the existing relations of friendship and of business between different sections of our country, but to menace with destruction the rights, privileges and blessings, enjoyed under the Union, and secured by the Constitution, *We, the People of Providence*, deem it to be a solemn duty to our fellow-citizens and ourselves, explicitly to declare our sentiments upon this vitally important subject. Therefore

1st. *Resolved*, That inasmuch as we are assembled, as citizens, to express our opinions upon a matter of simple constitutional right and grave public concern, we are not required to decide upon the moral character of the institution of Slavery.

Anti-abolition meeting

Providence Daily Journal
November 4, 1835

Rhode Island hosted numerous anti-slavery society meetings throughout the antebellum period, which raised funds to support the work of abolitionists in the South and escaped enslaved persons in the North. By 1835, the frequency of these anti-slavery activities in Providence became of concern to some members of the community. This article, published in the *Providence Daily Journal*, describes the nature of one meeting opposed to abolitionism in Rhode Island. The resolutions passed were designed to protect business interests from abolitionist activities.



**Slaves, J.J. Smith's Plantation,
South Carolina, 1862**

Timothy H. O'Sullivan
Albumen silver print
8 7/16 x 10 3/4 in

This image, taken shortly after President Abraham Lincoln's preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, depicts newly freed slaves on J.J. Smith's cotton plantation, which was occupied by the Union Army. While the country remained in the midst of Civil War, these individuals stood on the brink of freedom with their belongings packed, ready to leave behind a life of bondage.

Courtesy of the Collection of the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles



Convicts Inside Prison

Birmingham, AL. Thomas Dukes Parke Papers, 1900-1914.

The 13th Amendment's allowance of forced labor as punishment for crimes, led to a new system of bondage known as the convict leasing system, also referred to as "slavery by another name."

Courtesy of the Birmingham Public Library Department of Archives, File number 21.4.21A

JIM CROW

Civil Rights & The Southern Freedom Movement

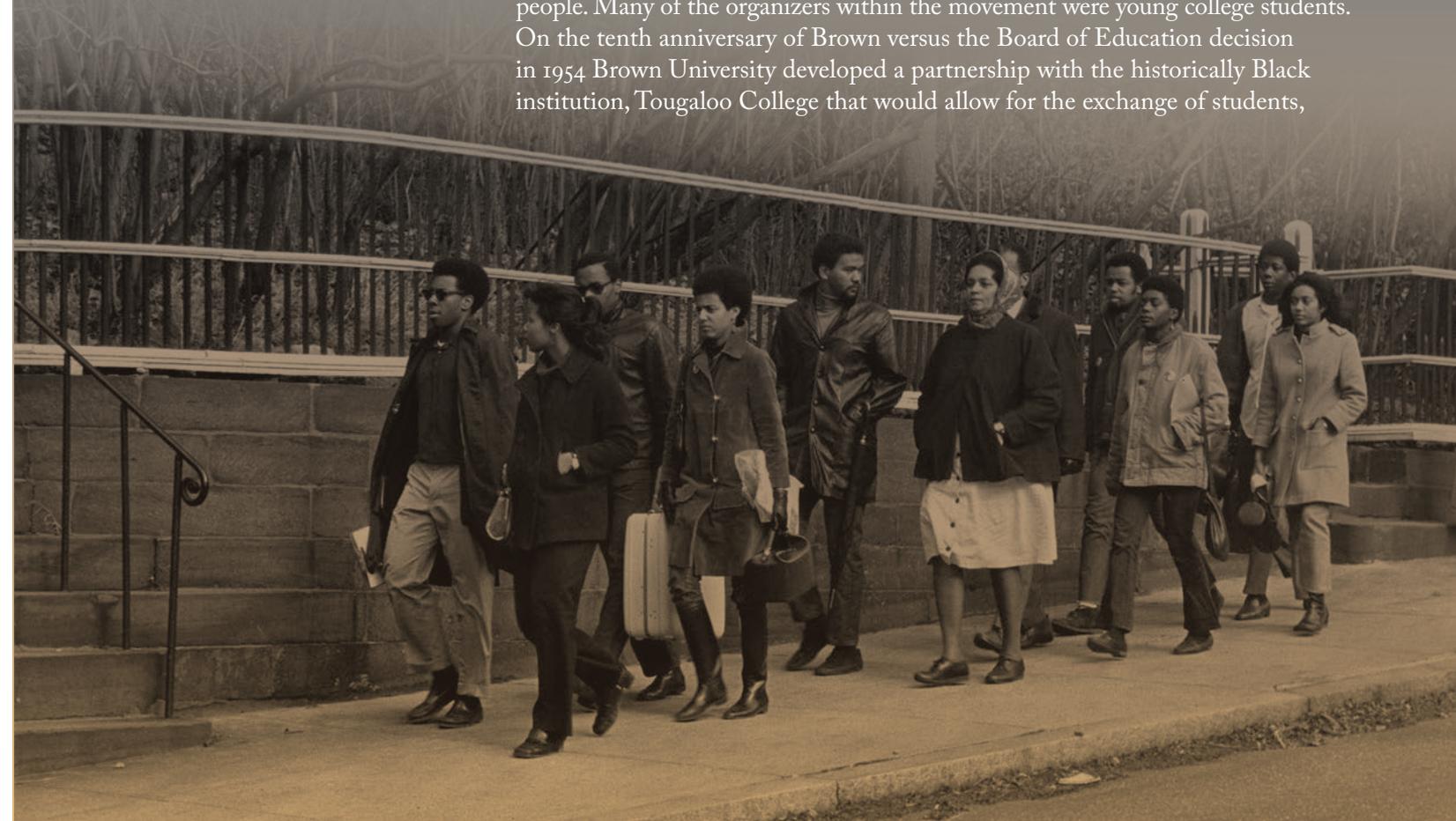
Following the emancipation of enslaved Africans in 1865, freed Blacks set out to define freedom on their own terms. However, the economic, social and racial structures born in slavery still permeated American society, thereby denying the newly freed people the rights of full citizenship. The racial caste system known as Jim Crow refers to a series of anti-Black laws passed across the country from as early as 1877 up to the 1960s. These laws classified Blacks as inferior and facilitated violence against them. This was a period of racial terror in which Black people were lynched; from the end of Reconstruction to the 1950s, 4,075 lynchings occurred across twelve Southern states. This number does not include the violence carried out against Black people in the Northern states. Today African Americans continue to experience various forms of violence. Jim Crow limited access of African Americans to education and to full rights of citizenship.

Brown University Walkout, 1968

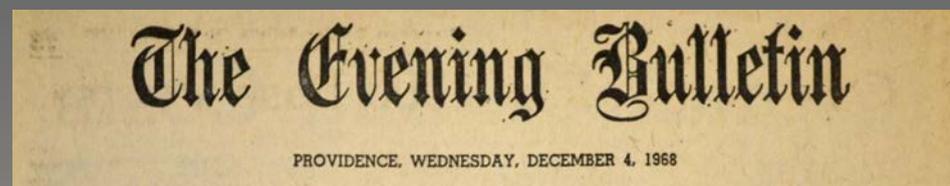
In 1968 Black students at Pembroke College and Brown University walked together with courage and conviction to challenge the administration's interpretation of and commitment to diversity in all its social, political and financial aspects.

Courtesy of the Brown University Archives

From the late 1950s—onwards, Blacks in the US began to openly challenge Jim Crow laws with growing force. Through collective acts of civil disobedience, the Civil Rights Movement turned national attention to the condition of Black people. Many of the organizers within the movement were young college students. On the tenth anniversary of Brown versus the Board of Education decision in 1954 Brown University developed a partnership with the historically Black institution, Tougaloo College that would allow for the exchange of students,



faculty, and ideas between the two institutions. The partnership aimed to address concerns about Civil Rights at Brown and nationally but for some it was a paternalistic gesture to remodel Tougaloo in its own image. Meanwhile at Brown and its sister institution Pembroke College, students of color staged a walkout and led a five day demonstration in 1968, challenging the administration to increase Black enrollment and diversity on campus. While Jim Crow laws have been abolished, their legacies remain with us today.



Perplexing

We share the perplexity of Brown University's President Ray L. Heffner over the threatened walk-out tomorrow of Negro students at Brown and Pembroke. The students are insisting that Pembroke adhere to a policy of admitting at least 11 per cent Negro freshmen beginning next fall.

Very properly, Dr. Heffner is resisting commitment to a quota system which an 11 per cent minimum would be, despite the students' opinion to the contrary. Any numbers requirement for any given classification of student would bind university officials in a way that could conceivably require lowering admission standards beyond a reasonable point, creating unusual incentives to attract Negroes if a sufficient number did not apply, and otherwise involving considerations not favorable to an institution of higher learning.

If Brown and Pembroke were insensitive to the racial question, we could better understand the students' "ultimatum." But Dr. Heffner has made a considerable effort to keep communications open, to alter administration policies in accord with acknowledged need, and to involve the university to a greater degree in the social problems so urgently in need of solution.

"I'm puzzled by their action," said Dr. Heffner. "I feel that there has been real progress made this fall, especially among the black students here." Alberta F. Brown, Pembroke's dean of admissions, has assured the students that officials recognize "that preferential treatment of black students is necessary and overdue." But she makes clear that both minimums and maximums for given groups are unsatisfactory restrictions in the determination of what students to accept, and we support this view.

Why this issue was chosen as a focal point for the racial question at Pembroke, we do not know. It is not likely to attract much support nor is the departure of the students apt to apply the kind of pressure the protesters have in mind. Valuable class time will be sacrificed by the participants, and dismissal of those who persist is not an impossibility.

We join Dr. Heffner and members of his staff in urging the students to reconsider their course of action and once more assist the university to improve Brown and Pembroke for students of every race, religion, national origin or geographical location.

The adoption of a quota system is not the way to accomplish that aim.

Perplexing, December 4, 1968

The Evening Bulletin

In this community response to the anticipated walkout led by Black students at Brown University and Pembroke College, the author questions protestors' demands to admit more students of color.

Courtesy of Brown University Archives



Providence Protests, April 17, 1960

Providence Sunday Journal

As the Civil Rights Movement gained traction across the nation, students and young people continued to be a crucial presence in marches, sit-ins, and boycotts of local organizations resistant to or openly defiant of racial equality and opportunity. The *Providence Sunday Journal* reports of one such protest held over several days in downtown Providence. Involving local high school and university students, including students at the University of Rhode Island, the Rhode Island School of Design, and members of the Brown University chapter of the NAACP, the picketers carried signs in front of the Woolworth's on Westminster Street and gathered signatures for a petition to end lunch-counter discrimination and other forms of urban segregation in the North.

Courtesy of the *Providence Journal*

Tougaloo Misrepresented, April 2, 1968

A visiting Tougaloo student responds to previous stories in *The Brown Daily Herald*, stating that the articles misrepresented Tougaloo College as an "unintelligent and unintellectual" institution. She also notes that the authors were negligent in sharing Brown University's shortcomings, especially around issues of race, lack of challenging courses at the Ivy League institution, and professional readiness.

Courtesy of *The Brown Daily Herald*



“Woke up this morning with my mind stayed on freedom

I said I woke up this morning with my mind stayed on freedom

Well I woke up this morning with my mind stayed on freedom

Hallelu, hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelu, hallelujah”

CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT FREEDOM SONG



Zellner, Bernice Reagon, Cordell Reagon, Dottie Miller (Zellner), and Avon Rollins, 1963

Danny Lyon

Gelatin silver print

8 1/2 x 12 3/4

Still a student at the University of Chicago in the early 1960s, Danny Lyon worked as a photographer for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). His images document the organization's resilient political efforts and the great personal hardships protesters endured daily. Attending one protest against a segregated community pool in Danville, Virginia in 1963, Lyon captured the following photograph of key SNCC leaders joined in song.

Courtesy of the David Winton Bell Gallery, Brown University, Gift of Gary Ginsberg and Susanna Aaron.

Copyright Danny Lyon/Magnum Photos

FREEDOM

A River of

“...I question America. Is this America, the land of the free and the home of the brave...”

FANNIE LOU HAMER's testimony at the Democratic National Convention, 1964

University of Missouri (Mizzou) Solidarity Teach-In at Brown University, 2015

Danielle Perelman

A coalition of concerned graduate students of color at Brown University came together to express their thoughts on the racial climate in higher education, and more specifically on Brown's campus, inspired by the organizing efforts at the University of Missouri. Following the wave of student protests, President Christina Paxson and Provost Richard Locke circulated an email that expressed Brown's commitment to diversity initiatives and support for students of color.

Courtesy of Danielle Perelman



Ray Kelly Protest, 2013

Richie Leng

On October 29, 2013, Brown University invited former New York City Police Chief Raymond Kelly to speak as part of the Noah Krieger '93 Memorial Lecture. The controversial talk titled, "Proactive Policing in America's Biggest City" initiated student protest actions leading up to the event and included a petition and vigil in honor of victims of racial profiling. People protested his visit. Although there were mixed responses to students' actions, the protest helped to begin conversations around the topic of structural racism.

Courtesy of Richie Leng

Freedom is like a river that runs through African American history, a dynamic and ever flowing current of Black struggles and Black resistance for freedom. The Founding Fathers' declaration that *all men are created equal* continues to ring hollow for many today. In the last several years, the Black Lives Matter (BLM) Movement has exposed the ways in which Black communities continue to be treated. The BLM Movement issued a global call to action to uncover the structures and systems that allow anti-Black racism to thrive, and to hold individuals and institutions accountable. This follows in the tradition of Black struggles for full citizenship, rights, and equality from the 1950s and 1960s. Today's students are demanding administrators to be more transparent about institutional histories and how these legacies continue to operate and shape university culture. From curricula, to the naming of buildings, to enrollment and faculty hires, students are demanding a more inclusive university, one which is committed to social justice and equality.

Under the direction of President Emeritus, Dr. Ruth J. Simmons, Brown University released the *Slavery & Justice Report* in 2006 and in the decade since many other universities have sought to examine their role in the transatlantic slave trade. Likewise, protests on other campuses, such as the 2015 University of Missouri protest, have caused a ripple effect of solidarity across the country, including at Brown. At Brown, demands by students, faculty, and staff, compelled the administration to create the *Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan* for the campus. In spite of all these struggles, the country and universities stand at a historic moment. The minds of many are still set on freedom and the country still has many rivers to cross.

NAB, Indigenous Peoples' Day, 2015

Professor Elizabeth Hoover

The Indigenous Peoples' Day Die-In was an important moment for the University as it began to work on its *Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan*. Students of the organization NAB (Native Americans at Brown) staged a die-in on campus after an op-ed in the University newspaper, *The Brown Daily Herald*, recommended that students embrace the "Columbian Exchange" and "celebrate Columbus Day, even if they have reservations about honoring Christopher Columbus himself." Students from diverse groups across campus came together in solidarity, lying down on the concrete for 50 minutes and 23 seconds to represent the 523 years of Indigenous resistance. As of 2016 the University has officially acknowledged the former, "Columbus Day Weekend," turned "Fall Weekend" now as *Indigenous Peoples' Day* on the academic calendar.

Courtesy of Professor Elizabeth Hoover





Subjugation, 2008
Movement I: The Unknown World
Joseph Holston
Mixed Media
48" x 42"

COLOR IN FREEDOM

Journey along the Underground Railroad

Color in Freedom: Journey along the Underground Railroad is an exhibition of paintings, etchings and drawings created by Joseph Holston to enhance viewers' understanding of the condition of slavery, and the powerful instinct toward freedom. In this body of work, Holston captures the essence of the enormous courage and perseverance required both to survive under and to escape from slavery. *Color in Freedom* is one artist's visual interpretation and expression of a range of human experiences and emotions within the framework of this particular period in American history.

Holston's sensitivity to all forms of artistic expression includes an appreciation of music. His understanding of musical composition informs a natural translation of the *Color in Freedom* themes to the parallels in movement and rhythm of classical symphonic pieces or the thematic approach of jazz long form compositions. This exhibit embraces that parallel in four "movements" that track the journeys of those who traveled along the Underground Railroad: 1) The Unknown World, 2) Living in Bondage—Life on the Plantation, 3) The Journey of Escape, and 4) Color in Freedom.

In his artist's statement, Holston says: "Creating this body of work was both a privilege and a source of inspiration. In seeking to capture the spirit and emotion of an essential part of my own history, I felt a connection and a bond with lives just a few generations removed. My goal was to honor those lives, and to do justice to their history and their stories. This was a very personal undertaking, during which I could almost feel the degradation of enslavement, the terror of escape, the dread of capture, and the exhilaration of freedom. I had many of my own down days while recreating this journey, which I now know were essential in order for me to communicate these stories."

JOSEPH HOLSTON is an American painter and printmaker who works from his studio in Takoma Park, Maryland.

Since his first solo museum exhibition in 1975, at the Butler Institute of American Art in Youngstown, Ohio, his art has been widely exhibited at museums and galleries throughout the United States and abroad. His works are included in numerous collections, including the Smithsonian American Art Museum, The Phillips Collection, the Georgia Museum of Art, the Baltimore Museum of Art, the Library of Congress, the Federal Reserve Board, the Yale University Art Gallery, and the Lyndon B. Johnson Library at the University of Texas.

Holston's monumental visual narrative *Color in Freedom: Journey along the Underground Railroad*, has been touring since 2008, including an exhibition at the United Nations in Geneva. *The Color in Freedom* etchings suite is included in the collection of the Library of Congress. *Color in Freedom: Journey along the Underground Railroad* was also the recipient of a Director's Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Joseph Holston is one of the artists recently invited by The Phillips Collection to submit a work for the museum's 61st Panel Project, that builds upon the narrative of Jacob Lawrence's Migration Series. Works by Holston were also included in two additional traveling exhibitions: "African American Art since 1950," and "Convergence: Jazz, Films and the Visual Arts," organized by the David C. Driskell Center at the University of Maryland. The screen print of his painting "Letter from Birmingham Jail," commemorating the 2011 dedication of the Martin Luther King National Memorial in Washington, D. C., is in the collections of the Library of Congress and the Federal Reserve Board.



Arrival in the Unknown, 2008
Movement I: The Unknown World
Joseph Holston
Mixed Media
48" x 42"



On the Block, 2008
Movement I: The Unknown World
Joseph Holston
Mixed Media
48" x 42"



Unbearable Loss, 2008
Movement I: Arrival in the Unknown
Joseph Holston
Mixed Media
42" x 48"



Place of Respite
Movement II: Living in Bondage—
Life on the Plantation
2008
Mixed Media
48" x 42"



After Harriet
Movement III: Journey of Escape
2008
Mixed Media
42" x 48"

A Closing Note

We now live in a time in which the afterlives of racial slavery are a part of our everyday present. The myth of a post-racial America has been laid bare over the past two years. When we began to think about this exhibition we first attempted to illustrate the work of the Center over the past four years. As it grew and morphed into what it now is, it became clear that we could not tell the story of racial slavery without considering contemporary events. The CSSJ has been devoted to telling a public history of slavery because we feel that history is not simply a set of facts and stories about the past. When that history has been shaped by catastrophic events then this history becomes a difficult and complex one, because dominant ideas within the present tend to shape an overarching historical narrative. The election of the first African American president shaped a historical narrative of uninterrupted progress from slavery to unending freedom. Now, that narrative has faltered and we see the open appearance of acts of aggression which are meant to put people of color in their place.

In such moments a new dominant historical narrative will be created, one which not only elides the past but will seek to actively repress it. This is the moment which we have entered and as such the work of public history is central to creating alternative perspectives on our past in order for us to grapple with our present. When public history began as a field and a practice it was about the agency of ordinary people making history. Over time it became the catchphrase for historical work done outside academia. Today, with the introduction of the field of public humanities, public history is seen as the historical work done in part by museums and communities bridging boundaries. The matter, however, is more complicated when we think of pasts such as racial slavery, in which violence inaugurated the social system. The various laws and customs which governed slavery makes this clear. In such a system the Black slave was not only socially dead, he/she was considered a thing amongst other things. Yet he/she was thing who was human and therefore had life and breath. To exercise that life and breath the enslaved attempted to carve out an idea of freedom, one which was different from that of the Founding Fathers. Prince Hall's petition at the Massachusetts legislature in 1777 illustrates this search for freedom. This was a freedom about abolishing human domination, not simply about political liberty. Today, when we think of freedom we tend to see only forms of political liberty rather than the various ways in which human domination might occur.

This exhibition is an attempt to tell briefly the paradoxes of American history but to do so by foregrounding the enslaved's desire of freedom. As public history it points to agency and to the structures which had been created. As public

history we wish to evoke thinking about our past in ways that allows us to see that there is another tradition of freedom within America, one which begins by thinking about the abolition of slavery and the present struggles for rights and deeper forms of equality for all. For the CSSJ, public history is about a historical practice which is alert to shadows while facing the tough questions of today. It is in that spirit that we present this exhibition.

ANTHONY BOGUES

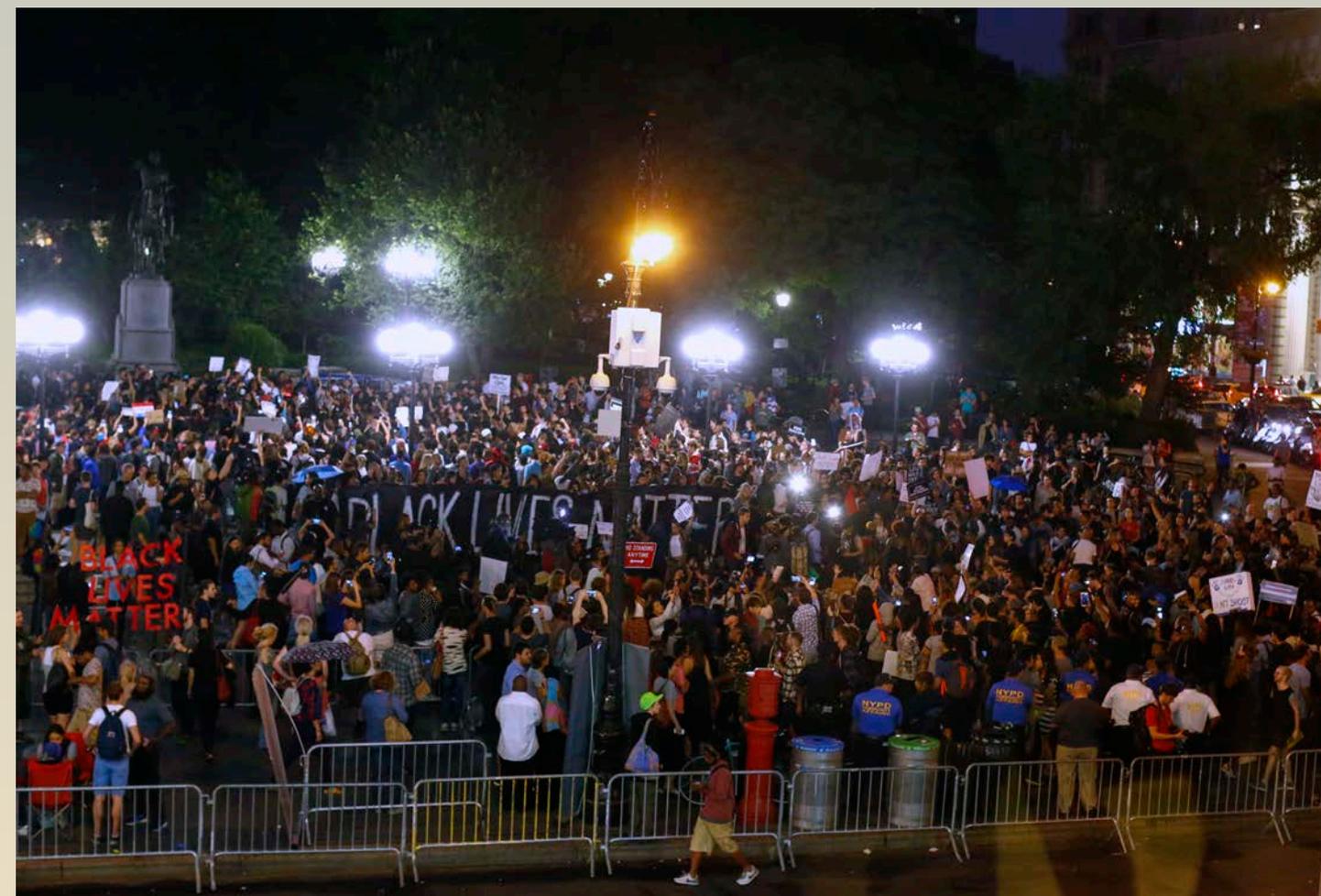
Director, Center for the Study of Slavery & Justice

US-Crime-Police-Shooting, July 9, 2016

Photo by Kena Betancur

Following the deaths of Alton Sterling and Philando Castile, two Black men killed by police, a gunman retaliated by killing white police officers in Dallas, Texas. In this picture protesters gather in New York City's Union Square in support of the Black Lives Matter Movement.

Courtesy of Kena Betancur/AFP/Getty Images





Selected Resources

Slavery and Justice Report, Report of the Brown University Steering Committee on Slavery and Justice. Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island, 2007. Print.

Douglass, Frederick. *The Life and times of Frederick Douglass: From 1817-1882.* London: Christian Age Office, 1882. Print.

DuBois, W. E. B. *Black Reconstruction in America, 1860-1880.* New York, NY: Atheneum, 1992. Print.

Equal Justice Initiative, *Lynching in America: Confronting the Legacy of Racial Terror* (Second Edition) <http://eji.org/reports/lynching-in-america>

Hedges, James. *The Browns of Providence Plantations.* Providence: Brown University Press, 1968. Print.

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Rothman, Joshua D. *Slavery's Capitalism: A New History of American Economic Development.* Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania, 2016. Print.

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Rhode Island Anti-Slavery Society Collections Box, ca.1836

wood
17.8 x 11.4 x 12.7 cm

This c. 1836 wooden abolitionist collection box proclaims "Deliver me from the Oppression of Man." A clipping attached to the front reminds donors that "it is the duty of every Abolitionist to lay up at least one cent per day in support of this cause, and that it is in the power of every man, woman, and child to adopt this plan without injury, by depriving themselves of the luxuries of life." Its caption succinctly captures the core of the slaves' oppression.

Courtesy of the Brown University Libraries Special Collections, photo by Rebecca Soules

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Shana Weinberg

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Renée Neely
Anni Pullagura
Daniel Wayland
Aisha Zamor

Account book from the Slave Ship *Sally*, September 11, 1764–December 20, 1765
COURTESY OF THE JOHN CARTER BROWN LIBRARY AT BROWN UNIVERSITY

1 barrel do	---	40	
2 large do @ 52 each	---	104	460
			<u>18285</u>
159 Slaves @ 115 bars each	---	18285	<u>18285</u>
my own Venter 600 ^{lb} tobacco	---	60	
10 Mad Min 980 gallons @	---	980	
3 66 ^{rs} do @ 40 bars	---	120	
260 ^{lb} Loaf Sugar	---	130	
1 Tea Kettle	---	4	<u>1294</u>
10 Slaves @ 115 bars	---	1150	
234 ^{lb} teeth	---	64	
198 wese @ 28 for 6 bars	---	42	
2 Duzn Sydes	---	7	
2 Kaggi Butters	---	16	
2 Shirts	---	8	
1 P ^r Flowers and Wine	---	7	<u>1294</u>
Mr Checkley Snuf	---	40	bars
186 ¹ / ₂ lb wax @ 2 bars for 28 ^{rs}	---	40	
Mr Cooker venter	---	238	
Mr York do	---	212	
Coopers do	---	122	
Carpenters do	---	118	
6 Slaves @ 115 bars each	---	690	<u>690</u>
			<u>690</u>

1.75

Center for the Study of
SLAVERY
& **JUSTICE**

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