

CHAPTER 12

Answer these questions

DOCUMENT SET 1

Life in Bondage: Voices from Below

Essential to an understanding of the Civil War is a familiarity with the antebellum South's central social and economic institution, chattel slavery. Recognizing its importance, your textbook emphasizes slave life and African-American culture in its treatment of the Old South. However, any attempt to assess the impact of enslavement on the slaves themselves is complicated by serious methodological difficulties, most of them rooted in the scarcity and unreliability of evidence. One serious problem is the potential bias in the elite sources often used in historical research and writing. Since most slaves were illiterate, leaving few letters, diaries, or memoirs, later generations interpreted their lives through the eyes of the master class or contemporary outside observers.

In recent years, however, scholars have turned increasingly to social history and the examination of the past "from the bottom up." This trend has led to an increased emphasis on the story of the underclass in America, including a strong focus on black history. The result has been a heightened awareness of the research problems encountered in interpreting slavery and its impact on those who struggled within its confines.

Among the most important sources of documentation in this effort are slave narratives and the memoirs of escaped slaves. While both are valuable, they present significant challenges to students and scholars seeking to form a balanced view of the "peculiar institution." Modern scholars understand the special value of oral tradition in preserving black culture and depicting black experience, but they also recognize the limitations of relying on memory as well as the possible influence of an interviewer. Significant as slave memoirs are, the purposes of black abolitionists also must be considered when evaluating their recollections as accounts of enslavement.

The primary problem addressed in the following documents is slavery's impact on the enslaved as seen from the slave's perspective. As you review the evidence, be aware of the factors that influenced the authors' accounts. Ask whether the source persons were educated and whether they remained slaves until after the war. Determine what their goals were in providing the accounts. Compare these accounts with your textbook's treatment of slave discipline, family life, black music, and the nature of resistance.

Questions for Analysis

1. What do the documents reveal about the relationships between slaves and their masters and mistresses? Was the experience of bondage different for men and women? How? Why?
2. How was slave culture influenced by enslavement? What were the respective roles of religion, musical expression, and the family in slave life? What do the documents reveal about the black and the white perspectives on these institutions?
3. What was the impact of enslavement on slave personality? What light do the documents shed on the self-images developed by slaves? What was the impact of bondage on the slave's view of the world and response to slavery?
4. Compare the recollections of escaped slaves who fled north with the memories of those who remained entrapped in the "peculiar institution." How would you account for the differences? What is the significance of disagreements revealed by the available evidence?
5. What precautions should scholars take in evaluating slave music, narratives, and memoirs? What are the limitations of the evidence? What unique opportunities does it offer?

Answer these questions in short essay format, 1/2 page per question

1. Frederick Douglass Comments on the Pain of Enslavement, 1845

I have met many religious colored people, at the south, who are under the delusion that God requires them to submit to slavery, and to wear their chains with meekness and humility. I could entertain no such nonsense as this; and I almost lost my patience when I found any colored man weak enough to believe such stuff. Nevertheless, the increase of knowledge was attended with bitter, as well as sweet results. The more I read, the more I was led to abhor and detest slavery, and my enslavers. . . . Knowledge had come; light had penetrated the moral dungeon where I dwelt; and, behold! there lay the bloody whip, for my back, and here was the iron chain; and my good, *kind master*, he was the author of my situation. The revelation haunted me, stung me, and made me gloomy and miserable. As I writhed under the sting and torment of this knowledge, I almost envied my fellow slaves their stupid contentment. . . . It was this everlasting thinking which distressed and tormented me; and yet there was no getting rid of the subject of my thoughts. All nature was redolent of it. Once awakened by the silver trump of knowledge, my spirit was roused to eternal wakefulness. Liberty! the inestimable birthright of every man, had, for me, converted every object into an asserter of this great right. . . .

My feelings were not the result of any marked cruelty in the treatment I received; they sprung from the consideration of my being a slave at all. It was *slavery*—not its mere *incidents*—that I hated. I had been cheated. I saw through the attempt to keep me in ignorance; I saw that slaveholders would have gladly made me believe that they were merely acting under the authority of God, in making a slave of me, and in making slaves of others; and I treated them as robbers and deceivers. The feeding and clothing me well, could not atone for taking my liberty from me. . . . [P]ious as Mr. Covey was, he proved himself to be as unscrupulous and base as the worst of his neighbors. In the beginning, he was only able—as he said—“to buy one slave”; and, scandalous and shocking as is the fact, he boasted that he bought her simply “*as a breeder*.” But the

worst is not told in this naked statement. This young woman (Caroline was her name) was virtually compelled by Mr. Covey to abandon herself to the object for which he had purchased her; and the result was, the birth of twins at the end of the year. At this addition to his human stock, both Edward Covey and his wife, Susan, were ecstatic with joy. No one dreamed of reproaching the woman, or of finding fault with the hired man—Bill Smith—the father of the two children, for Mr. Covey himself had locked the two up together every night, thus inviting the result.

But I will pursue this revolting subject no further. No better illustration of the unchaste and demoralizing character of slavery can be found, than is furnished in the fact that this professedly Christian slaveholder, amidst all his prayers and hymns, was shamelessly and boastfully encouraging, and actually compelling, in his own house, undisguised and unmitigated fornication, as a means of increasing his human stock. I may remark here, that, while this fact will be read with disgust and shame at the north, it will be *laughed at*, as smart and praiseworthy in Mr. Covey, at the south; for a man is no more condemned there for buying a woman and devoting her to this life of dishonor, than for buying a cow, and raising stock from her. The same rules are observed, with a view to increasing the number and quality of the former, as of the latter. . . .

[A]s I now look back, I can see that we [slaves] did many silly things, very well calculated to awaken suspicion. We were, at times, remarkably buoyant, singing hymns and making joyous exclamations, almost as triumphant in their tone as if we had reached a land of freedom and safety. A keen observer might have detected in our repeated singing of

“O Canaan, sweet Canaan,
I am bound for the land of Canaan,”

something more than a hope of reaching heaven. We meant to reach the *north*—and the north was our Canaan.

2. Slave Music and the Desire for Liberation

Go Down, Moses

Go down, Moses,
'Way down in Egypt land,
Tell ole Pharaoh,
To let my people go.

Go down, Moses,
'Way down in Egypt land,
Tell ole Pharaoh,
To let my people go.

When Israel was in Egypt land,
Let my people go,
Oppressed so hard they could not stand,
Let my people go,
Thus spoke the Lord, bold Moses said,
Let my people go,
If not I'll smite your first-born dead,
Let my people go.

Go down, Moses,
'Way down in Egypt land,
Tell ole Pharaoh,
To let my people go.

I Thank God I'm Free at Last

Free at last, free at last,
I thank God I'm free at last.
Free at last, free at last,
I thank God I'm free at last.

Way down yonder in the graveyard walk,
I thank God I'm free at last,
Me and my Jesus gonna meet an' talk,
I thank God I'm free at last.

On-a my knees when the light pass by,
I thank God I'm free at last,
Thought my soul would rise an' fly,
I thank God I'm free at last.

One o' these mornin's bright an' fair,
I thank God I'm free at last,
Gonna meet my Jesus in the middle o' the air,
I thank God I'm free at last.

Free at last, free at last,
I thank God I'm free at last,
Free at last, free at last,
I thank God I'm free at last.

3. A Slave Perspective on Family Ties

Once Massa goes to Baton Rouge and brung back a yaller gal dressed in fine style. She was a seamster nigger. He builds her a house 'way from the quarters, and she done fine sewing for the whites. Us niggers knowed the doctor took a black woman quick as he did a white and took any on his place he wanted, and he took them often. But mostly the children born on the place looked like niggers. Aunt Cheyney always says four of hers was Massa's, but he didn't give them no mind. But this yaller gal breeds so fast and gits a mess of white young-uns. She larnt them fine manners and combs out they hair.

Oncet two of them goes down the hill to the doll-house, where the Missy's children am playing. They wants to go in the dollhouse and one the Missy's boys say, "That's for white children." They say, "We ain't no niggers, 'cause we got the same daddy you has, and he comes to see us near every day and fatches us clothes and things from town." They is fussing, and Missy is listening out her chamber window. She heard them white niggers say, "He is our daddy and we call him daddy when he comes to our house to see our mama."

When Massa come home that evening, his wife hardly say nothing to him, and he ask her what the

matter, and she tells him, "Since you asks me, I'm studying in my mind 'bout them white young-uns of that yaller nigger wench from Baton Rouge." He say, "Now, honey, I fotches that gal just for you, 'cause she a fine seamster." She say, "It look kind of funny they got the same kind of hair and eyes as my children, and they got a nose look like yours." He say, "Honey, you just paying 'tention to talk of little children that ain't got no mind to what they

say." She say, "Over in Mississippi I got a home and plenty with my daddy, and I got that in my mind."

Well, she didn't never leave, and Massa bought her a fine, new span of surrey hosses. But she don't never have no more children, and she ain't so cordial with the Massa. That yaller gal has more white young-uns, but they don't never go down the hill no more to the big house.

4. Religion as Social Control: A Catechism for Slaves, 1854

Q. Who keeps the snakes and all bad things from hurting you?

A. God does.

Q. Who gave you a master and a mistress?

A. God gave them to me.

Q. Who says that you must obey them?

A. God says that I must.

Q. What book tells you these things?

A. The Bible.

Q. How does God do all his work?

A. He always does it right.

Q. Does God love to work?

A. Yes, God is always at work

Q. Do the angels work?

A. Yes, they do what God tells them.

Q. Do they love to work?

A. Yes, they love to please God.

Q. What does God say about your work?

A. He that will not work shall not eat.

Q. Did Adam and Eve have to work?

A. Yes, they had to keep the garden.

Q. Was it hard to keep that garden?

A. No, it was very easy.

Q. What makes the crops so hard to grow now?

A. Sin makes it.

Q. What makes you lazy?

A. My wicked heart.

Q. How do you know your heart is wicked?

A. I feel it every day.

Q. Who teaches you so many wicked things?

A. The Devil.

Q. Must you let the Devil teach you?

A. No, I must not.

5. A Slave Recollection of Insecurity

Weren't none o' de slaves offen our plantation ever sold, but de ones on de other plantation of Marse William were. Oh, dat was a terrible time! All de slaves be in de field, plowin', hoein', and singin' in de boilin' sun. Ole Marse, he come through de field with a man call de speculator. Dey walked round just lookin', just lookin'. All de darkies know what dis mean. Dey didn't dare look up, just work right on. Den de speculator he see who he want. He talk to Ole Marse, den dey slaps de handcuffs on him and take him away to de cotton country.

Oh, dem was awful times! When de speculator was ready to go with de slaves, if dere was anyone who didn't want to go, he thrash 'em, den tie 'em be-

hind de wagon and make 'em run till dey fall on de ground, den he thrash 'em till dey say dey go without no trouble. Sometime some of dem run away and come back to de plantation, den it was harder on dem dan before. When de darkies went to dinner de ole nigger mammy she ask where am such and such. None of de others want to tell her. But when she see dem look down to de ground she just say: "De speculator, de speculator." Den de tears roll down her cheeks, cause maybe it her son or husband and she know she never see 'em again. Maybe dey leaves babies to home, may be just pappy and mammy. Oh, my lordy, my ole boss was mean, but he never sent us to de cotton country.

Dey was very few schools back in dat day and time, very few. We darkies didn't dare look at no book, not even to pick it up. Ole Missie, dat is, my first ole missie, she was a good ole woman. She read to de niggers and to de white chillun. She come from 'cross de water. She weren't like de smart white folks

livin' here now. When she come over here she brung darky boy with her. He was her personal servant. 'Course, dey got different names for dem now, but in dat day dey calls 'em "Guinea niggers." She was good ole woman, not like other white folks. Niggers like Ole Missie.

6. Memories of a Brutal Institution

Me and my husband couldn't live together till after freedom 'cause we had different marsters. When freedom come, Marster wanted all us niggers to sign up to stay till Christmas. After dat we worked on shares on de Hart plantation; den we farmed four-five years with Mr. Bill Johnson.

I'm goin' to tell you de truth. I don't tell no lies. Dese has been better times to me. I think it's better to work for yourself and have what you make dan to work for somebody else and don't get nothin' out of it. Slavery days was mighty hard. My marster was good to us (I mean he didn't beat us much, and he give us plenty plain food), but some slaves suffered awful. My aunt was beat cruel once, and lots de other slaves. When dey got ready to beat you, dey'd strip you stark mother naked and dey'd say, "Come here to me, God damn you! Come to me clean! Walk up to dat tree, and damn you, hug dat tree!" Den dey tie your hands

round de tree, den tie your feets; den dey'd lay de rawhide on you and cut your buttocks open. Sometimes dey'd rub turpentine and salt in de raw places, and den beat you some more. Oh, it was awful! And what could you do? Dey had all de advantage of you. I never did get no beatin' like dat, but I got whip-pin's—plenty o' 'em. I had plenty o' devilment in me, but I quit all my devilment when I was married. I used to fight—fight with anything I could get my hands on.

You had to have passes to go from one plantation to another. Some de niggers would slip off sometime and go without a pass, or maybe Marster was busy and dey didn't bother him for a pass, so dey go without one. In every district dey had about twelve men dey call patterrollers. Dey ride up and down and round looking for niggers without passes. If dey ever caught you off your plantation with no pass, dey beat you all over.

7. Josiah Henson Recalls Broken Families and Personal Opportunity

Common as are slave-auctions in the southern states, and naturally as a slave may look forward to the time when he will be put upon the block, still the full misery of the event—of the scenes which precede and succeed it—is never understood till the actual experience comes. . . . Young as I was then, the iron entered into my soul. The remembrance of the breaking up of McPherson's estate is photographed in its minutest features in my mind. The crowd collected round the stand, the huddling group of negroes, the examination of muscle, teeth, the exhibition of agility, the look of the auctioneer, the agony of my mother—I can shut my eyes and see them all.

My brothers and sisters were bid off first, and one by one, while my mother, paralyzed by grief, held me

by the hand. Her turn came, and she was bought by Isaac Riley of Montgomery county. Then I was offered to the assembled purchasers. My mother, half distracted with the thought of parting forever from all her children, pushed through the crowd while the bidding for me was going on, to the spot where Riley was standing. She fell at his feet, and clung to his knees, entreating him in tones that a mother only could command, to buy her *baby* as well as herself, and spare to her one, at least, of her little ones. Will it, can it be believed that this man, thus appealed to, was capable not merely of turning a deaf ear to her supplication, but of disengaging himself from her with such violent blows and kicks, as to reduce her to the necessity of creeping out of his reach, and mingling the groan of

bodily suffering with the sob of a breaking heart? As she crawled away from the brutal man I heard her sob out, "Oh, Lord Jesus, how long, how long shall I suffer this way!" I must have been then between five and six years old. I seem to see and hear my poor weeping mother now. . . .

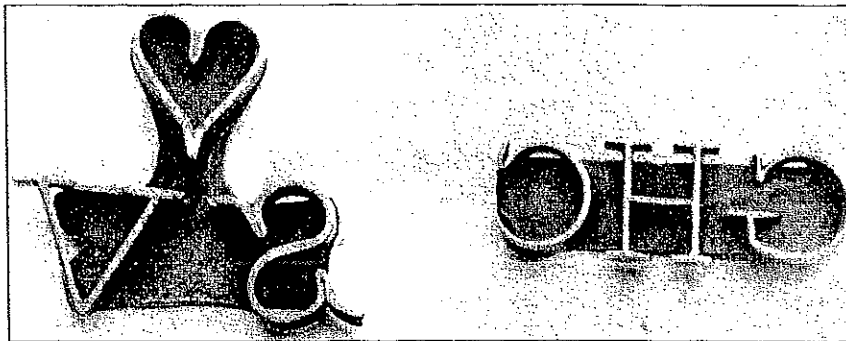
The character of Riley, the master whom I faithfully served for many years, is by no means an uncommon one in any part of the world; the evil is, that a domestic institution should anywhere put it in the power of such a one to tyrannize over his fellow beings, and inflict so much needless misery as is sure to be inflicted by such a man in such a position. . . . The natural tendency of slavery is to convert the master into a tyrant, and the slave into the cringing, treacherous, false, and thieving victim of tyranny. Riley and his slaves were no exception to the general rule, but might be cited as apt illustrations of the nature of the relation. . . .

My situation as overseer I retained, together with the especial favor of my master, who was not dis-

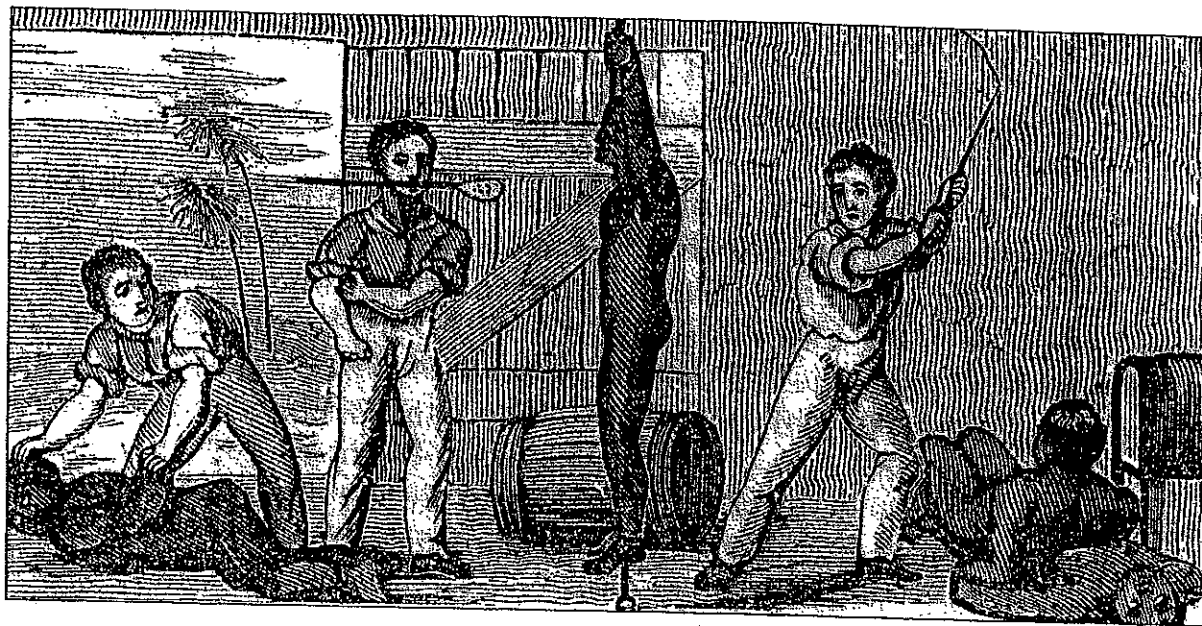
pleased either with saving the expense of a large salary for a white superintendent, or with the superior crops I was able to raise for him. I will not deny that I used his property more freely than he would have done himself, in supplying his people with better food; but if I cheated him in this way, in small matters, it was unequivocally for his own benefit in more important ones; and I accounted, with the strictest honesty, for every dollar I received in the sale of the property entrusted to me. . . . For many years I was his factotum, and supplied him with all his means for all his purposes, whether they were good or bad. I had no reason to think highly of his moral character; but it was my duty to be faithful to him in the position in which he placed me; and I can boldly declare, before God and man, that I was so. I forgave him the causeless blows and injuries he had inflicted on me in childhood and youth, and was proud of the favor he now showed me, and of the character and reputation I had earned by strenuous and persevering efforts.

8. Slaves as Property

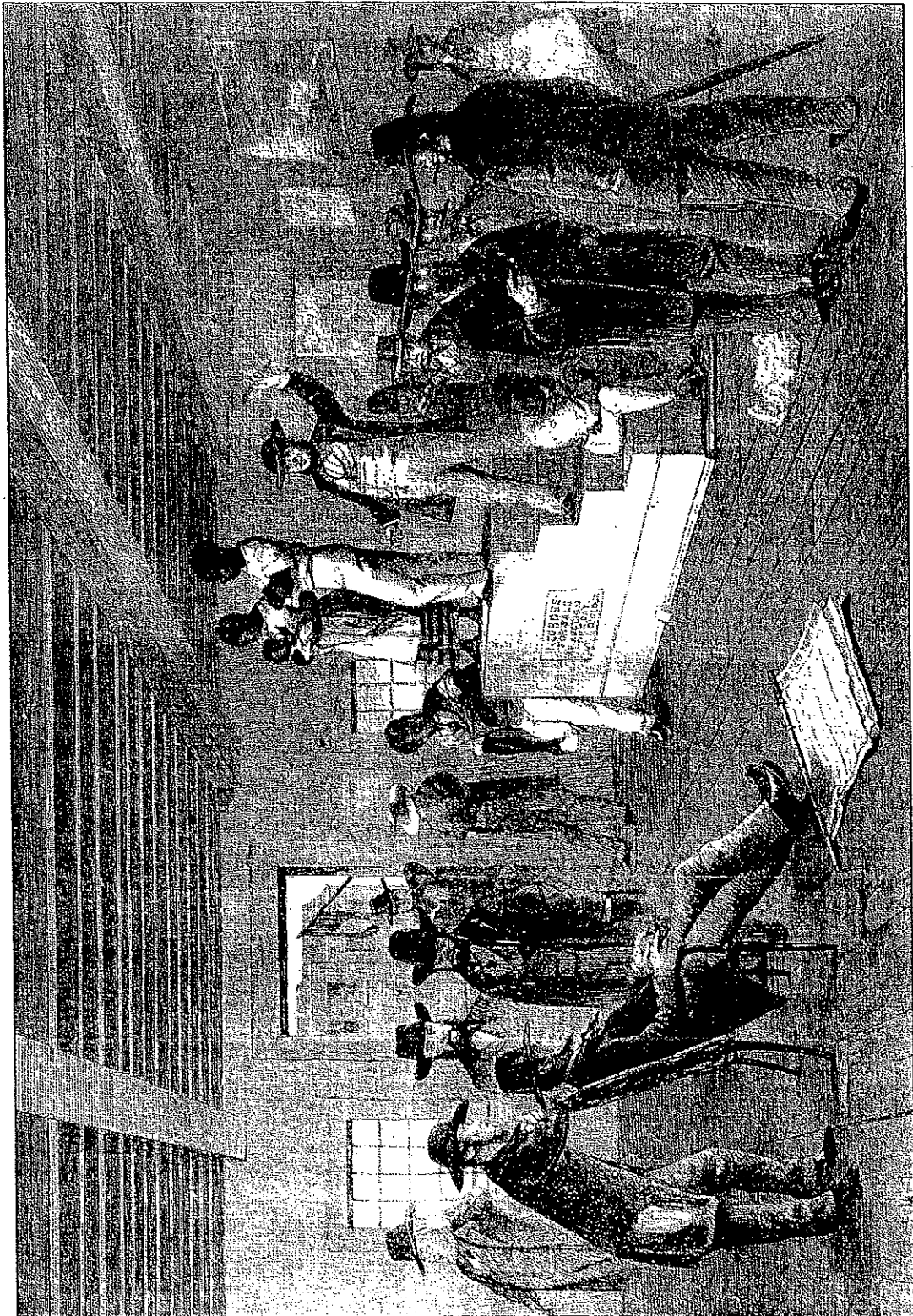
A. Slave Branding Irons, Early Nineteenth Century



B. An Abolitionist View of Slave Discipline



C. Slave Auction in Virginia, ca. 1850s



explore the authors' backgrounds and intent, determine what factors influenced their arguments.

5. Beginning with the statistical evidence from Helper, compare the divergent patterns in the southern and northern economies in the 1840s and 1850s. What factors discouraged industrialization in the South? Why did the South undergo little significant socioeconomic change, while the North underwent a major transformation?

X C I G. WHAT IS "KING COTTON" AS REFERRED TO IN DOCUMENT # 1?
7. IN DOC. # 4 WHAT DO THE 4 WEALTHIEST SOUTHERN STATES HAVE IN COMMON?

1. David Christy on the Cotton Economy, 1855 (USE TEXT + READINGS)

Slavery is not an isolated system, but is so mingled with the business of the world, that it derives facilities from the most innocent transactions. Capital and labor, in Europe and America, are largely employed in the manufacture of cotton. These goods, to a great extent, may be seen freighting every vessel, from Christian nations, that traverses the seas of the globe; and filling the warehouses and shelves of the merchants, over two-thirds of the world. By the industry, skill, and enterprise, employed in the manufacture of cotton, mankind are better clothed; their comfort better promoted; general industry more highly stimulated; commerce more widely extended; and civilization more rapidly advanced, than in any preceding age. . . .

KING COTTON cares not whether he employs slaves or freemen. It is the *cotton*, not the *slaves*, upon which his throne is based. Let freemen do his work as well, and he will not object to the change. Thus far the experiments in this respect have failed, and they will not soon be renewed. The efforts of his most powerful ally, Great Britain, to promote that object, have already cost her people many hundreds of millions of dollars: with total failure as a reward for her zeal. . . .

KING COTTON is a profound statesman, and knows what measures will best sustain his throne. He is an acute mental philosopher, acquainted with the secret springs of human action, and accurately perceives who will best promote his aims. He has no ev-

idence that colored men can grow his cotton, but in the capacity of slaves. It is his policy, therefore, to defeat all schemes of emancipation. . . .

In speaking of the economical connections of Slavery with the other material interests of the world, we have called it a *tri-partite alliance*. It is more than this. It is *quadruple*. Its structure includes four parties, arranged thus: The Western Agriculturists; the Southern Planters; the English Manufacturers; and the American Abolitionists! By this arrangement, the Abolitionists do not stand in direct contact with Slavery:—they imagine, therefore, that they have clean hands and pure hearts, so far as sustaining the system is concerned. But they, no less than their allies, aid in promoting the interests of Slavery. Their sympathies are with England on the Slavery question, and they very naturally incline to agree with her on other points. She advocates *Free Trade*, as essential to her manufactures and commerce; and they do the same, . . . England, we were about to say, is in alliance with the cotton planter, to whose prosperity *Free Trade* is indispensable. Abolitionism is in alliance with England. All three of these parties, then, agree in their support of the *Free Trade* policy. It needed but the aid of the Western Farmer, therefore, to give permanency to this principle. His adhesion has been given, the *quadruple alliance* has been perfected, and Slavery and *Free Trade nationalized!*

2. James D. B. De Bow Calls for Economic Diversification, 1847

No mind can look back upon the history of this region for the last twenty years, and not feel convinced that the labor bestowed in cotton growing during that period has been a total loss to this part of the country. . . .

No country has ever acquired permanent wealth by exporting its unmanufactured products. And if any such case could be found in history the experience of the southwest would furnish satisfactory tes-

timony that the exportation of the commodities produced here, tends rather to impoverish than to enrich the country. With the experience and the lights of the past before them it would seem to be madness to persevere in a course so detrimental to their interest. If when the prices of the leading staples were much better than they are likely to be for the future, and when the lands were more fertile and productive than now, this system proved unprofitable and ruinous, what hope is there that the result of the future will be better? Nay, is it not quite certain that each succeeding year will accelerate the progressive deterioration until a state of irredeemable ruin will ensue? . . .

This is the great evil under which the southwest labors. She is yearly wearing out her soil in the production of one great staple, which has become ruinously low in price by reason of its great supply: she parts with this staple at prime cost, and purchases almost all her necessary appliances of comfort from abroad, not at prime cost, but burthened with the profits of merchants, the costs of transportation, duties, commissions, exchange, and numerous other charges, all of which go to support and enrich others at her expense. This is the true reason that she is growing poorer while the rest of the world is growing rich, for it is easy for the world to enrich itself from such a customer on such terms.

If she were wise she would cease to carry on a traffic in which she always has been and always must be a loser; she will set up for herself, and instead of parting with the products of all her labor to support the balance of the world, she will manufacture her own clothing, and not stopping at this, proceed to manufacture the whole of her crop, and thereby draw upon the world for a portion of her former losses. . . .

I have endeavored to show, that the agricultural system hitherto pursued in the south and southwest, has proved ruinous to the country by exhausting the soil, and thereby rendering it every year, less and less capable of producing the appliances of human want and of human comfort; and that it has a tendency to divide the population into two classes, widely differing from each other in many important respects; that to these and other causes, must be assigned the reason of the small increase of the population of the older southern states for the ten years preceding the year 1840; and the great want of education among the poorer classes. On the other hand, I have endeavored to show some of the effects which may be expected from the introduction of manufactures into the southwest; among which I have supposed that the moral condition of the people would be improved, and that by diversifying the employments of the country, the means of human comfort would be greatly increased, and that all classes of the population would share in these benefits; that the value of the exports would be greatly enlarged by the process of manufacturing, and that instead of a constant drain from the country of the products of all its labor and soil, that wealth would flow into it from every part of the world. I have called the attention of the south and southwest to the rapid increase of labor in this region, and the necessity of finding profitable employment for it; and have taken the liberty of suggesting a plan of introducing manufactures by degrees as well for the purpose of preventing a shock to the established pursuits of the country, as to avoid the creation of a state of indebtedness. These with various other topics I have desired to impress upon the mind of the people of the southwest.

3. James Henry Hammond Acknowledges Slavery's Disadvantages, 1852

In an economical point of view—which I will not omit—Slavery presents some difficulties. As a general rule, I agree it must be admitted, that free labor is cheaper than slave labor. It is a fallacy to suppose that ours is *unpaid labor*. The slave himself must be paid for, and thus his labor is all purchased at once, and for no trifling sum. . . . But besides the first cost of the slave, he must be fed and clothed, well fed and

well clothed, if not for humanity's sake, that he may do good work, retain health and life, and rear a family to supply his place. When old or sick, he is a clear expense, and so is the helpless portion of his family. No poor law provides for him when unable to work, or brings up his children for our service when we need them. These are all heavy charges on slave labor. Hence, in all countries where the denseness of

the population has reduced it to a matter of perfect certainty, that labor can be obtained, whenever wanted, and the laborer be forced, by sheer necessity, to hire for the smallest pittance that will keep soul and body together, and rags upon his back while in actual employment—dependent at all other times on alms or poor rates—in all such countries it is found cheaper to pay this pittance, than to clothe, feed, nurse, support through childhood, and pension in old age, a race of slaves. Indeed, the advantage is so great as speedily to compensate for the loss of the

value of the slave. . . . But the question is, whether free or slave labor is cheapest to us in this country, at this time, situated as we are. And it is decided at once by the fact that we cannot avail ourselves of any other than slave labor. We neither have, nor can we procure, other labor to any extent, or on anything like the terms mentioned. We must therefore, content ourselves with our dear labor, under the consoling reflection that what is lost to us, is gained to humanity; and that, inasmuch as our slave costs us more than your free man costs you, by so much is he better off.

4. Hinton Rowan Helper Urges Southern Commercial Development, 1857

Product of Manufactures in the Free States—1850

<i>States</i>	<i>Val. of annual products</i>	<i>Capital invested</i>	<i>Hands employed</i>
California	\$ 12,862,522	\$ 1,006,197	3,964
Connecticut	45,110,102	23,890,348	47,770
Illinois	17,236,073	6,385,387	12,065
Indiana	18,922,651	7,941,602	14,342
Iowa	3,551,783	1,292,875	1,707
Maine	24,664,135	14,700,452	28,078
Massachusetts	151,137,145	83,357,642	165,938
Michigan	10,976,894	6,534,250	9,290
New Hampshire	23,164,503	18,242,114	27,092
New Jersey	39,713,586	22,184,730	37,311
New York	237,597,249	99,904,405	199,349
Ohio	62,647,259	29,019,538	51,489
Pennsylvania	155,044,910	94,473,810	146,766
Rhode Island	22,093,258	12,923,176	20,881
Vermont	8,570,920	5,001,377	8,445
Wisconsin	9,293,068	3,382,148	6,089
	\$842,586,058	\$430,240,051	780,576

Product of Manufactures in the Slave States—1850

<i>States</i>	<i>Val. of annual products</i>	<i>Capital invested</i>	<i>Hands employed</i>
Alabama	\$ 4,538,878	\$ 3,450,606	4,936
Arkansas	607,436	324,065	903
Delaware	4,649,296	2,978,945	3,888

Product of Manufactures in the Slave States—1850 (Continued)

<i>States</i>	<i>Val. of annual products</i>	<i>Capital invested</i>	<i>Hands employed</i>
Florida	668,338	547,060	991
Georgia	7,086,525	5,460,483	8,378
Kentucky	24,588,483	12,350,734	24,385
Louisiana	7,320,948	5,318,074	6,437
Maryland	32,477,702	14,753,143	30,124
Mississippi	2,972,038	1,833,420	3,173
Missouri	23,749,265	9,079,695	16,850
North Carolina	9,111,245	7,252,225	12,444
South Carolina	7,063,513	6,056,865	7,009
Tennessee	9,728,438	6,975,279	12,032
Texas	1,165,538	539,290	1,066
Virginia	29,705,387	18,109,993	29,109
	<u>\$165,433,030</u>	<u>\$95,029,877</u>	<u>161,725</u>

Whether Southern merchants ever think of the numerous ways in which they contribute to the aggrandizement of the North, while, at the same time, they enervate and dishonor the South, has, for many years, with us, been a matter of more than ordinary conjecture. . . . Let them scrutinize the workings of Southern money after it passes north of Mason and Dixon's line. Let them consider how much they pay to Northern railroads and hotels, how much to Northern merchants and shop-keepers, how much to Northern shippers and insurers, how much to Northern theatres, newspapers, and periodicals. Let them also consider what disposition is made of it after it is lodged in the hands of the North. Is not the greater part of it paid out to Northern manufacturers, mechanics, and laborers, for the very articles which are purchased at the North—and to the extent that this is done, are not Northern manufacturers, mechanics, and laborers directly countenanced and encouraged, while, at the same time, Southern manufacturers, mechanics, and laborers, are indirectly abased, depressed, and disabled? . . . And yet, our cousins of the North are not, by any means, blameworthy for availing themselves of the advantages which we have voluntarily yielded to them. They have shown their wisdom in growing great at our expense, and we have shown our folly in allowing them to do so. Southern merchants, slaveholders, and slave-breeders,

should be the objects of our censure; they have desolated and impoverished the South; they are now making merchandize of the vitals of their country; . . .

What about Southern Commerce? Is it not almost entirely tributary to the commerce of the North? Are we not dependent on New York, Philadelphia, Boston, and Cincinnati, for nearly every article of merchandise, whether foreign or domestic? Where are our ships, our mariners, our naval architects? Alas! echo answers, where? . . .

True it is that the South has wonderful powers of endurance and recuperation; but she cannot forever support the reckless prodigality of her sons. We are all spendthrifts; some of us should become financiers. We must learn to take care of our money; we should withhold it from the North, and open avenues for its circulation at home. We should not run to New York, to Philadelphia, to Boston, to Cincinnati, or to any other Northern city, every time we want a shoe-string or a bedstead, a fish-hook or a handsaw, a tooth-pick or a cotton-gin. In ease and luxury we have been lolling long enough; we should now bestir ourselves, and keep pace with the progress of the age. We must expand our energies, and acquire habits of enterprise and industry; we should arouse ourselves from the couch of lassitude, and inure our minds to thought and our bodies to action.

5. Frederick Law Olmsted Critiques the Slave Economy, 1861

The interests of the owners of all soil in the Slave States which is not adapted to cotton culture, and of all capital not engaged in cotton culture, or in supplying slaves for it, are thus injured by the demand for cotton, they being, in fact, forced to be co-partners in an association in which they do not share the profits.

And as to what are commonly called the Cotton States, if we assume that cotton cultivation is profitable only where the production is equal to two bales for each slave employed, it will be seen that wherever the land will not yield as much as this, the owner of it suffers all the disadvantages of the difficulty of getting good labourers as much as the owner of the land which produces seven or ten bales to the hand, although none of the profits of supplying the cotton demand, which gives this extraordinary price to labour, come to him.

According to the Census, the whole crop of cotton is produced on 5,000,000 acres. It could be produced, at the rate common on good South-western plantations, on less than half that area. The rest of the land of the Slave States, which amounts to over 500,000,000 acres, is condemned, so far as the tendencies I have indicated are not outweighed here and there by some special advantages, to non-cultivation, except for the hand-to-mouth supply of its people. And this is true not only of its agricultural but of all other of its resources.

That for all practical purposes this is not an exaggerated statement is clearly enough shown by the difference in the market value of land, which as officially given by De Bow, as, notwithstanding the extraordinary demand of the world upon the cotton land, between four and five hundred per cent. higher in the Free than in the Slave States, the frontier and unsettled districts, Texas, California and the territories not being considered.

One of the grand errors out of which this rebellion has grown came from supposing that whatever nourishes wealth and gives power to an ordinary civilized community must command as much for a

slaveholding community. The truth has been overlooked that the accumulation of wealth and the power of a nation are contingent not merely upon the primary value of the surplus of productions of which it has to dispose, but very largely also upon the way in which the income from its surplus is distributed and reinvested. Let a man be absent from almost any part of the North twenty years, and he is struck, on his return, by what we call the "improvements" which have been made: better buildings, churches, schoolhouses, mills, railroads, etc. In New York city alone, for instance, at least two hundred millions of dollars have been reinvested merely in an improved housing of the people; in labour-saving machinery, waterworks, gasworks, etc., and much more. It is not difficult to see where the profits of our manufacturers and merchants are. Again, go into the country, and there is no end of substantial proof of twenty years of agricultural prosperity, not alone in roads, canals, bridges, dwellings, barns and fences, but in books and furniture, and gardens, and pictures, and in the better dress and evidently higher education of the people. But where will the returning traveller see the accumulated cotton profits of twenty years in Mississippi? Ask the cotton-planter for them, and he will point in reply, not to dwellings, libraries, churches, schoolhouses, mills, railroads; or anything of the kind; he will point to his negroes—to almost nothing else. Negroes such as stood for five hundred dollars once, now represent a thousand dollars. We must look then in Virginia and those Northern Slave States which have the monopoly of supplying negroes for the real wealth which the sale of cotton has brought to the South. But where is the evidence of it? where anything to compare with the evidence of accumulated profits to be seen in any Free State? If certain portions of Virginia have been a little improving, others unquestionably have been deteriorating, growing shabbier, more comfortless, less convenient. The total increase in wealth of the population during the last twenty years shows for almost nothing. One year's improvements of a Free State exceed it all.

6. A Southern Plea for Southern Commerce, 1858

Let our citizens feel the truth of this statement now and act as they should in relationship to the mechanics of Atlanta. Let them foster, encourage, and support those worthy members of our community who are engaged in these avocations. Heretofore there has been a habit among many of our people of sending off to some other place, to some Northern town or to some smaller other Southern town, for articles which they could easily obtain at home. We know this to be the fact of several merchants in Atlanta, as well as others. Such a policy, let us tell them, is not only directly opposed to the interests of the city but to their own interests, and the man who upon reflection will

not abandon such a course doesn't deserve to receive the patronage of his fellow citizens.

If you will build up a substantial community, you will gradually increase in wealth and thus be better able to indulge in all comforts and luxuries, support and sustain your domestic manufacturers and mechanics. Whatever you can buy from your neighbor in your own town, don't send off somewhere else for it because you can obtain it a fraction cheaper. What will be gained in that way will be lost tenfold in the long run. The merchant who doesn't sustain the home mechanic should not receive in turn for his goods the hard-earned money of the mechanical population.

Chapter 12:

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