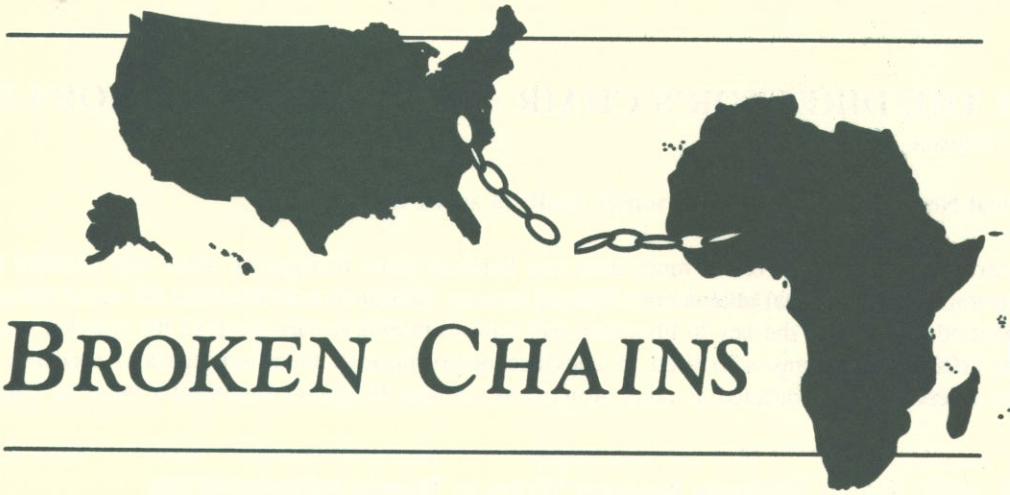
Colonial Williamsburg AFRICAN-AMERICAN INTERPRETATION AND PRESENTATIONS



BROKEN CHAINS

VOL. I, NO. 2 SEPTEMBER 1992

1954

Supreme Court strikes down "separate but equal"

Washington, D.C., May 17

The case of Brown v. the Board of Education has culminated in a unanimous Supreme Court decision that overturns previous decisions permitting the segregation of public schools by race. The long-standing "separate but equal" policy was declared unconstitutional because "separate educational facilities are inherently unequal," as the opinion written by Chief Justice Earl Warren stated.

The case began in 1950 when the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People decided to initiate a large-scale effort aimed at abolishing educational segregation. The N.A.A.C.P. put more than $100,000 into research and a campaign. A team of lawyers headed by Thurgood Marshall was assembled. Other members of the team included Robert L. Carter, Jack Greenberg, Louis Redding, James Nabrit, George E. C. Hayes, and Spotswood Robinson 3d. Many of the arguments presented by the N.A.A.C.P. were based on social and psychological research material gathered by Kenneth Clark. As a result of this campaign, in 1953 the Supreme Court ordered five school desegregation cases to be brought before it. The current decision, which began in a Topeka, Kansas, school district, sets a precedent that guides decisions in the other cases presently before the court, and in future cases.

"The Problem We All Live With," by Norman Rockwell, seems to capture the quiet determination of one small child in the struggle for equality.

The "separate but equal" doctrine had its roots in a precedent that was set by the Massachusetts Supreme Court in 1849. A Negro, Benjamin F. Roberts, sued the city of Boston for damages when his 5-year-old daughter was refused admission to a white public school. The case was argued with no success and the supreme court of Massachusetts rejected the appeal. The "separate but equal" doctrine was further established by an 1896 case that involved a New Orleans Negro who was arrested and convicted for having attempted to ride in a white railroad car. The defendant, Homer Plessy, then appealed to the Supreme Court, but was rebuffed with the ruling that the maintenance of "separate but equal" facilities was a "reasonable" use of state police funding and power. The court further ruled it had not been the intent of the 14th Amendment to abolish segregation

By Michelle Carr

It is our intent to make you aware of the struggles and contributions made by our forefathers to achieve quality education for all. The effort to mend the broken chains can be summarized by the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation's and United Negro College Fund's mission statements:

"A mind is a terrible thing to waste."
"That the future may learn from the past."

We challenge you to learn something from this publication and repair the links of the chain. This issue is dedicated to education.

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR

Robert C. Watson

A Historical Note

African-Americans have for more than two hundred years focused on achieving equality and first-class citizenship through educational attainment. This is because African-Americans, like all other Americans, always believed that education was the key to liberation and upward mobility. However, in the colonial era, there were a number of African-Americans who tried to convince others through their writings and speeches that African-Americans deserved to be educated as other Americans, witness Benjamin Banneker's letter to Thomas Jefferson in 1791.

Benjamin Banneker Writes to Thomas Jefferson—1791

> "Sir, I have long been convinced that if your love for yourselves, and for those inestimable laws, which preserved to you the rights of human nature, was founded on sincerity, you could not be solicitous, that every individual, of whatever rank or distinction, might with you equally enjoy the blessings thereof; neither could you rest satisfied short of the most active effusion of your exertions, in order to the promotion from any state of degradation, to which the unjustifiable cruelty and barbarism of men have reduced them . . ."

The formal education of African-Americans (with a few exceptions) has always been subjected to the largess of the white population. This rule or code prevailed through the period of slavery. When sympathetic whites violated restrictive laws against teaching rudimentary educational skills to slaves; religious groups in the North and Middle Atlantic states took up the challenge of educating blacks. American history is replete with examples like the one cited above. It behooves all of us to learn more about how African-Americans have struggled to become educated.

For information about African-Americans' quest for education, read the following:

Mary McCleod Bethune. Essays,
Another "Begging" Letter
A College on Garbage Dump
(Found in Gerda Lerner,
Black Women in White America)
James Blackwell. *The Black Community: Diversity and Unity*
Frederick Douglass. *Life and Times*
W. E. B. DuBois. *Dust of Dawn*
The Soul of Black Folks
Booker T. Washington. *Up From Slavery*
Ida B. Wells. *Red Record*
Carter G. Woodson.
Miseducation of the Negro
Negro in our History
Monroe N. Work. *The Negro Yearbook*

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Suggestions, comments, questions, articles are welcomed.
Send to Franklin Street Annex, Room 106.
Editor . . . . . Michelle Carr
Department Director . . . . . Robert C. Watson

ECHOES FROM THE PAST . . .

Important Dates in Black History

September 9, 1915 Association for the Study of Negro Life and History formed by Carter G. Woodson.

September 15, 1963 Four African-American girls killed in bombing of Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama.

September 22, 1950 Ralph J. Bunche, former United Nations Mediator in the Palestine dispute, awarded Nobel Peace Prize.

September 23, 1961 President Kennedy named Thurgood Marshall to United States Circuit Court of Appeals.

September 24, 1957 Nine children integrated Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas.

September 29, 1760 The Bray School in Williamsburg opened.

MEET BRISTOL . . .

Callers at the front door of Thomas Everard's house were greeted by Bristol, Everard's black footman, who was dressed in livery. Bristol's uniform, a respectable suit trimmed with braid and brass buttons, was not as elegant as livery worn by footmen at the Governor's Palace, however.

In 1768 Everard had purchased Bristol, who was in his late twenties, from the estate of Lieutenant Governor Fauquier. Everard owned other slaves—an elderly groom, two young men who waited on the table and did other chores, and a cook, laundress, and housemaid.

As Everard's manservant, Bristol's main duty was to wait upon his master. In the morning he shaved him and laid out his clothes. At mealtimes he supervised the young men who brought the food to the table and served it. When Everard went out during the day, Bristol usually accompanied him. In the evening he turned down his master's bed, used a bed warmer to take the chill off the sheets, and saw that the fire was well banked for the night.

Bristol was intelligent. He had learned to read (although he could not write), so Everard relied on him to deliver messages, run errands, and purchase provisions for the household. Bristol was proud of his abilities and of the confidence his master placed in him, but he never forgot that he was a slave.

Bristol looked forward to running errands to the Palace. When he had delivered his master's gift of fish and peaches to the governor, the butler had tipped him generously. More importantly, Bristol's trips to the Palace often allowed him a glimpse of Venus, Everard's laundress who had been hired out to work on the governor's staff. Venus always exclaimed at how handsome Bristol looked in his uniform. Occasionally when Bristol had a little free time in the evening, he returned to the Palace scullery where Venus and other black servants gathered. On those occasions Bristol could court her openly. One day soon he planned to ask his master's permission to marry Venus. **(Source:** ***Official Guide to Colonial Williamsburg*****)**

WE'VE GOT A VISITOR
Guest Writer

Rex M. Ellis,
Smithsonian Institution
Director of Office of Museum Programs

Living and Teaching Black History in Mainstream Museums

Question any African-American on their thoughts about Mike Tyson; their concerns about Clarence Thomas; Marion Barry's future in politics, or the recent riots in Los Angeles, and the answers would be as diverse as the population. Ask the same African-Americans about the institution of slavery and most will have the same response: It is a blot on the American psyche as well as our culture, and is a subject that should be avoided at all cost.

In the last decade, many museums have begun programming for the public that mentions the unmentionable . . . slavery. But as these institutions begin grappling with the slavery issue, they are finding it increasingly difficult to attract African-Americans who are willing to help tell the story. Add to this a fairly new method of presentation called "Living History," and the number of blacks interested plummets. Some institutions like Colonial Williamsburg in Virginia, Greenfield Village in Michigan, Plymouth Plantation in Massachusetts, and Conner Prairie in Indiana consistently use character portrayals to help teach about the history of their sites. Many museums find that role-playing is an excellent way to teach as well as entertain an audience. Its power to enliven and personalize history makes visiting a museum more than just walking through an old building and looking at old things you can't touch. Character portrayals, however, are fraught with challenges that make them particularly difficult.

Many museum people seem baffled by this phenomenon. Slavery has been studied for decades and African-Americans have been a part of American history since the beginning. Why, then, is there such reluctance to tell the truth about that segment of American history? Part of the answer may be that we have all been raised on healthy diets of heroes and heroines. We have studied, written about, and revered those founding fathers and mothers, those "shakers and movers" whose history is worthy of our memory. Harriet Tubman was a fighter; Sojourner Truth had "grit in her craw"; Frederick Douglass was an articulate orator and reformer; Benjamin Banneker was a mathematician and scientist; Ida B. Wells Barnett was an educator, journalist, and civil rights leader, when the only work expected of blacks was to serve whites. All redeemed themselves and went further than the institution of slavery ever intended.

Like other cultures, African-Americans want to talk about the virtues of their culture too. After all, isn't that what whites have done? Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, and Patrick Henry owned slaves too but that fact is dwarfed by the "greater contributions" they made to America's development. Why shouldn't we do the same? Further, isn't it true that the Jeffrey Dahmer killings, the Rodney King beating, and the escalating atmosphere of racism and intolerance in America is an indication that we haven't come that far and that blacks are still coping with the legacy of slavery? Isn't contemporary reality enough of a reminder that the horrors of slavery both mentally and physically are still with us?

And what about those few African-Americans who have taken jobs at museums? Now that they have begun talking about "the peculiar institution" with John Q. Public, what challenges do they face? What does one stand to experience by beginning a conversation, in first person, with a complete stranger? What kind of fortitude, self-esteem, and daring does it take to portray a character who openly discusses a topic that has remained tabu in the black community for over two hundred years? What does one gain by discussing family matters outside of the family?

Thirteen years ago the adventure began in the historic town of Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia. As part of a "living history program" that was beginning at the colonial capital, local students from black colleges in the area were invited to audition for summer acting jobs. They were told up front that they would be portraying slaves and free blacks of the period. Because I was a native of Williamsburg and an instructor in the theater department at Hampton University, so I also auditioned. When the smoke cleared, one of my students, Darin Taylor, a friend, Montrose Cones, and I began what was to be a radical departure from the progressive academic environment of a black university.

The characters created were Gowan Pamphlet, Nioto, Belinda, Rebecca, Jack, and Caesar Valentine. Together we represented the first major effort to interpret African-American history at Colonial Williamsburg. Rumors quickly spread through the black community in town that "Colonial Williamsburg was trying to bring back slavery times." During those

first weeks of performing before the public, none of us really knew what we were getting ourselves into. After about two weeks of living "in the skins" of our characters, it all became crystal clear. On the day I was to begin doing my character at Wetherburn's Tavern, which was an exhibition building that illustrated how taverns were run during the period, I was introduced to the supervisor of the site by my supervisor. In his introduction to the site, my supervisor pointed out two break rooms I could use when I went on break. One was upstairs in the main part of the tavern, the other was in the basement. The white female supervisor of the house, upon hearing this, volunteered, "he might be more comfortable in the basement."

There were also mixed reactions from visitors. Some were delighted that Colonial Williamsburg had finally begun to discuss the other 52 percent of the town's population during the eighteenth century. Some were amused and others curious. Many seemed appreciative and genuinely moved by our presentations. But the vast majority of blacks who saw our portrayals were so ashamed that many of them simply walked away before they even heard the presentations. Seeing the costume and knowing that we were portraying slaves was enough for them. It did not matter that some were free and very progressive–even by today's standards. Even the fact that all of the characters represented proof positive that the institution of slavery was an inhuman experience was not positive enough. Seeing it in such a stark way was a discomfort that many chose not to witness. Even black employees who worked in other areas of Colonial Williamsburg were hostile to the three of us. They felt we jeopardized their "roles" by causing visitors to assume that they were characters also. Few of them spoke to us and even fewer came to see and hear our presentations.

As the years progressed and the legitimacy of "living history" interpretation became more of an accepted than expected event at many museums, the audience's perceptions of "character interpreters" changed for the better, but the obstacles associated with "living in the skin" of a slave was a phenomenon that continued–no matter how accepted the mode of presentation. Putting on that costume remained a burden even as the years wore on. Walking through the streets of the Historic Area became a test of mental fortitude. After awhile we began to think that all eyes were on us, that people were not interested in what the characters had to say, instead we feared they used our portrayals to confirm their prejudices. Ironically, the more we attempted to be like our historic counterparts, the more we "got into

character," the greater our misery and discomfort. It's one thing to come up with an idea or script on paper, it's quite another to actually depict a slave before a live and sometimes antagonistic audience.

Providing the historic setting in terms of buildings and artifacts is one challenge that, in all of its difficulty, is infinitely easier than enlivening that set with the people and events of the day. If Colonial Williamsburg were the Smithsonian Institution, they could gather a multiracial committee and agonize over an exhibit like "From Field to Factory" or "Seeds of Change" with the assurance that at some point the labels, audiovisuals, or graphics would carry the day. Even if it were Freetown Village, a living history program in Indiana that focuses on free blacks during the nineteenth century, they'd be safer. But instead they, and many institutions like them, are involved with an eighteenth-century living history museum, with a multicultural history in which one culture is the enslaver and the other culture is enslaved. As if that weren't enough, the story of these two cultures is being told for the most part by the same two cultures–most of whom are still dealing with the alienation, distrust, fear, intimidation, non-communication, and frustration they historically inherited. To top it off, they incorporate a method of presenting the story that removes the comfort, separation, and safety of third-person presentation and tells the most controversial part of the town's history through a medium that is stark, conspicuous, and evocative.

At Colonial Williamsburg, and places like it, the teachers are not labels, or displays, or films, or multi-image projectors, or interactive videos. The major teachers are still human beings. They bring with them all the baggage and hang-ups that make all kinds of situations possible. You can't challenge a film, you can't argue with a label, but you can surely interact with the living and breathing people who portray historical characters. And therein lies the difficulty.

How should these challenges be handled? First, those blacks who are recruited should be convinced, that they must know the history. Not just a few key points, but be constant students of history, especially black history. The reality is not that they will use it more than white interpreters will, the reality is that it will serve them better. The specifics of the truth will be their shield from those who have been just as victimized by a distorted history as they have. Second, caring institutions should experiment with methods aimed at encouraging greater sensitivity by co-workers. There are those who simply are not sympathetic to the harm that unkind remarks can cause. Creating opportunities to communicate such issues in frank and open discussions is essential. Those who run museums should also realize that there are some negative behaviors on the parts of co-workers cannot be changed or altered no matter how innovative the approach. But allowing them to remain is courting failure. In those instances where there is little hope that black and white co-workers can work together, a decision should be made to deal with the situation aggressively, otherwise the blacks that were persuaded to join an institution could very well leave. Administration (supervisors, managers, and directors) should enforce behaviors that align with the mission of the museum. Lastly, those blacks who choose to work in museums, especially ones that incorporate character portrayals, must be made aware of the challenges they will face. As museum educators we must take the students, our public, just as they are and find methods to challenge and compel them to see all history for what it really is, not what they wish it to be. Sometimes we will fail, sometimes we will win. But if our interest in teaching history is only legitimate when we have "A" students who all think we are wonderful, then we're asking for more than we can realistically hope for. Not with the subject of slavery and certainly not with the challenges that living characterization brings.

First-person is a wonderful way to teach history. Few other modes of presentation have the potential to evoke, compel, and teach in the same manner. But while I recommend it as a method, I also advise careful thought and planning. First-person is not a cure-all. It works best in conjunction with other types of programming. It is not for everyone. I have witnessed just as much trouble with aspiring actors and actresses as I have with the average Joe on the street.

Good leadership is essential. Someone must be in charge who understands education, the basic elements of theater and group dynamics. It is also important to have more than a passing understanding of racism and multicultural interaction. Listening to those who are recruited is essential. Each situation will be different, but the best way to determine what support systems are needed is to work intimately with those who put themselves on the line each day, those who "put on the skins of their ancestors" and meet the public.

(Source: Upcoming article in *American Visions*)

EDUCATION FACTS

Fact 1

Approximately three of every five blacks over 25 years of age who live in the West, North Central, and Northeast have graduated from high school. In the South, however, only two in every five blacks over 25 are high school graduates.

Fact 2

In 1976, approximately one-fifth of black students pursuing professional programs were enrolled in historically black colleges.

Fact 3

A child walking to or from school is three times more likely to be injured in an accident than a child who is being bused.

Fact 4

Black colleges continue to be the predominant source of professional degrees in many areas of the South. Meharry Medical College conferred 96% of the dentistry and 92% of the medical degrees awarded blacks in Tennessee. Texas Southern conferred two-thirds of all law degrees awarded blacks in Texas, and Howard 92% of the dentistry and 84% of the medical degrees awarded blacks residing in the District of Columbia.

Fact 5

Black college students are more likely than whites to suffer from withdrawal of financial aid. In 1974, the college dropout rate for blacks receiving financial aid was 24%, but it was 46% for blacks receiving no aid. For whites, the rates were 21% when aid was received, 29% for whites without aid.

IF WALLS COULD TALK

On-Site Report by Michelle Carr

"De Lawd will set you free! Amen."

Umph, umph, umph, I wish Mister Frank would stop snoring, can't even hear. Child, church scoop is the real deal. Shoot, you get the news with a blessing from above. And if you read lips, you're home free. Oh, I'm not going to tell your secret, but you KNOW I KNOW that's why you go to church on Sundays, to get your news to tell your workfolk during the week.

Look at Sistah Sattie, passing the rumor about that new guy in our department, trying to be slick, on a piece of paper. Oh you didn't hear? Girlfriend, I've got the 411. His name is **LARRY EARL**, he works at Carter's Grove, and he's nice. If you want to know more, you've got to check him out yourself. Welcome Brother Earl.

Oh, gosh, here comes Deacon Perry, noseying around, tending everyone elses business. He needs to tend on staying awake. Maybe he's using the quiet time to send condolences to **ARTHUR JOHNSON** on the death of his aunt and **JERROLD ROY** on the death of his grandfather. Honey, our prayers are with the both of you.

Now I want to know why does Sistah Clarice needs a fan everytime she comes to church, whether it's summer or winter? Well, I know I can say one thing, summer is over. A round of applause to the participants of the summer programs. Jobs well done.

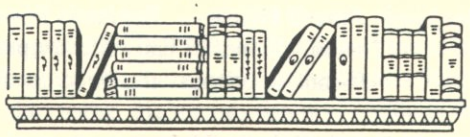
What's that you say Rev. Brother Curtis? We ought to be shame of ourselves spreading the news. Wasn't it you that told me about **MR. WATSON**? You know what you said. You know I don't repeat gossip, but did you hear about his...Naw I'll tell ya later! Amen.

THE BOOKSHELF

Weevils In The Wheat, Interviews with Virginia Ex-Slaves
Edited By Charles L. Perdue, Jr.,
Thomas E. Barden, and Robert K. Phillips

Perdue, Barden, and Phillips produce oral history at its best. With interviews from Virginia ex-slaves, dialect recordings, statistics, first-hand accounts of experiences, and an annotated bibliography of slave narratives dealing with slavery in Virginia, this is one of the most valuable books on slavery to appear in recent years, and it is one of the most fascinating. As quoted from the introduction, "Weevils in the wheat" (often simply "bugs in the wheat") was an expression used by slaves to communicate to one another that their plans for a secret meeting or dance had been discovered and that the gathering was called off. The "weevils" were either members of the patrols that were organized to discourage movement of the slaves off the plantation at night or fellow slaves who, as part of a loosely organized spy system, were willing to turn informer for small favors granted them by the slaveowners. The use of such a secret code was only one of numerous adaptive strategies developed by the slaves that enabled them to lead relatively full lives - - in spite of "weevils in the wheat."

Seventy-five years after the end of the Civil War, the emotion which comes through these narratives most strongly, and which seems to have



characterized daily life under slavery, is terror. We have here the slaves' own view of life under the peculiar institution. From the one-time Virginia slaves speaking in a collection of raw interviews come the tales of beatings, of the crowds packed into pens, then sold with women and children wailing, of the fears stirred by the night-riding "paddy rollers," and of the small but surprising acts of rebellion. This book is a major contribution to African-American history and anthropology.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Baldwin, James. *Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone*

Brown, Claude. *Manchild in the Promised Land.*

Buxton, Thomas F. *The African Slave Trade and its Remedy.*

Genovese, Eugene. *Roll, Jordon, Roll.*

King, Martin L., Jr. *Chaos or Community.*

McMillan, Terry. *Waiting to Exhale.*

Tate, Thad. *The Negro in Eighteenth-Century Williamsburg.*

Toppin, Edgar. *A Biographical History of Blacks in America.*

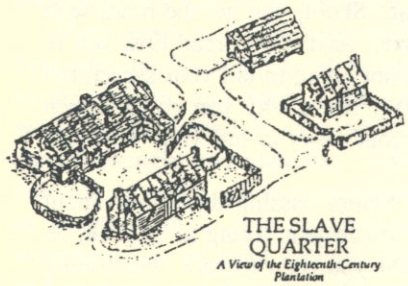
Wiley, Ralph. *Why Black People Tend To Shout.*

CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

SITES AND BUILDINGS that interpret or exhibit the black experience.

Brush-Everard Site — Tours of this property and original house feature the lives of Thomas Everard, immigrant and public official, and his family. Learn more about the African-Americans who lived and worked on the property. Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays 10, 11 A.M., 1, 3, and 4 P.M.

Carter's Grove Slave Quarter — Interpreters will welcome you to the slave quarter, rebuilt on its original location, and direct you through buildings and outdoor spaces that reveal much about the lives of the Africans and African-Virginians whose labors supported the eighteenth-century plantation. Open Tuesdays through Sundays, and Monday, September 7, 9 A.M. to 5 P.M.



THE SLAVE QUARTER
A View of the Eighteenth-Century Plantation

George Wythe House and Domestic Activities — A large number of "black" artifacts are housed on this site. Inside the main house, on the second floor, is the southwest bedchamber, a room possibly used by one of Wythe's female slaves. Visit the laundry and kitchen as well as the stable.

Benjamin Powell House — Benjamin Powell was a carpenter and builder who lived next to Christiana Campbell's Tavern. Scenes of daily life are portrayed by people of the past representing family members, friends, and African-Americans who lived on the property.

PEOPLE OF THE PAST Portrayals of eighteenth-century people.

Meet . . .

Gowan Pamphlet, African-American Preacher, gives a short sermon and answers questions about slave religious life in the eighteenth century. Tuesdays at 1 P.M. behind the Lumber House ticket office, weather permitting.

Matthew Ashby, Carter, Attends to business about town. 10 A.M. to 11 A.M. at the Prentis Store, weather permitting.

SPECIAL TOURS

The Other Half — This tour gives an in-depth look at the black experience.

WALLACE GALLERY SPECIAL PROGRAMS

The Storyteller — A series of African and African-American stories that focus on morals and techniques of survival within the colonial black community. September 6. Hennage Auditorium at 4 P.M.

The Runaway — This video examines an aspect of the enslaved black's experience in eighteenth-century Virginia. September 1, 4. Hennage Auditorium at 4 P.M.

UPCOMING EVENTS

History Forum — November 5 – 8, 1992 "Slavery and Freedom: An American Paradox." Guest faculty and Colonial Williamsburg staff members will examine the origins and development of one strand of America's cultural fabric — the African-American. Origins and evolution of slavery in North America; the formation of distinctive African-American culture and its impact on language, government, music, and religion are a few topic discussions.

EACH ONE, TEACH ONE

THE THINK TANK

1. Q: This ex-slave became the leading spokesman of African-American vocational education and sought black justice through white friendship.

2. Q: This amendment made African-Americans citizens.

3. Q: Name the ancient Egyptian scholar and physician who has been called the "real father of medicine." He is acknowledged to have described the circulation of blood four thousand years before Europe discovered this important body function.

   A. King Tut B. Rames
   C. Imhotep D. Kush

4. Q: Jan Matzeliger was the African-American inventor who revolutionized this industry in 1863 with his patented invention of a "lasting" machine which made production of these items easier and faster. He worked ten years on his invention, which all the industry experts claimed was impossible to make. What manufactured items did Matzeliger improve the production of?

5. Q: This Colonial Williamsburg Foundation site was opened for interpretation in 1989. It has raised the level and significance of African-American history to new heights. No other history museum in the United States has attempted to reconstruct this structure on its original site using eighteenth-century methods of construction. Name this site.

6. Q: Jesse Owens won four gold medals in the Olympics, a standard of athletic greatness which inspired Carl Lewis in his four-gold-medal achievement in 1984 in Los Angeles. Name the year and the city in which Jesse Owens accomplished his feat.

7. Q: This outstanding African-American woman rose from a field hand picking cotton to the position of confidante and advisor to Franklin Roosevelt. The seventeenth child of sharecropping parents, this outstanding educator founded and built a well-known southern liberal arts college that bears her name.

8. Q: What is the name of the African-American security guard who detected and detained a group of men installing surveillance equipment in the Democratic Party National Headquarters at the Watergate office complex in Washington, D. C., that led to the infamous Watergate Scandal and rocked the Nixon administration?

FAMOUS AFRICAN-AMERICAN INVENTORS

(Unscramble)

1. JILMYECAOHC
2. KENBRAMIJENBNAEE
3. LLTWASMIEIRE
4. WDCSHAERRLE
5. TNATMGREARGOR
6. XTBORUENRRLLILIE

AFRICAN PROVERB: (Ethiopia) "He who learns, teaches."

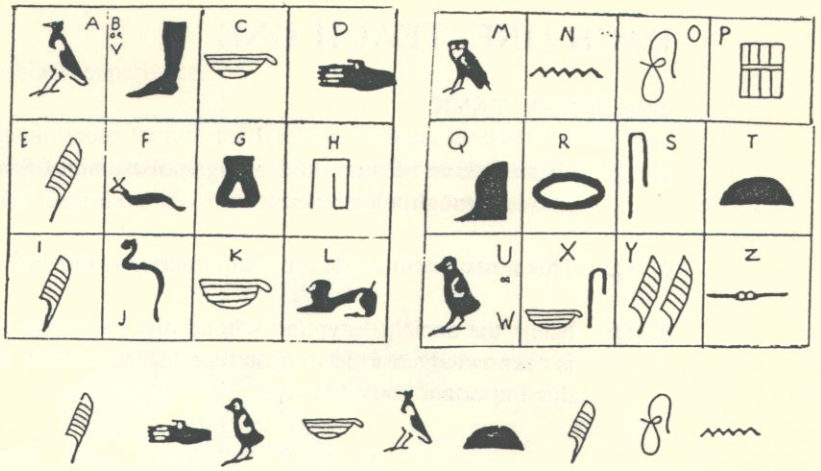
CHILDREN'S CORNER

Junior Think Tank

A Note from Africa

Hieroglyphs

The drawing at the right shows Egyptian picture writing. It looks like many little drawings. They are called *hieroglyphs*. Each picture stands for a sound, a group of sounds, or sometimes an entire word. There were hundreds of different picture symbols in Egyptian hieroglyphic writing. Can you transcribe the word below the table?



(Drawings by L. Maurice Scipio, Williamsburg Lodge Audiovisual)

AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY RAP

By Sharon Jordan Holley

I say A B C D E F G
African-American History
H I J K L M N O P
African-American History
Q R S, T U V
African-American History
W X Y and Z
This is a story all about me;
A for African-American,
My true identity.
B for Benjamin Banneker,
Surveyor of Washington, D. C.
C for my community,
A place that I call home.
D for all the discoveries
I made just on my own.
E for education
We use from day to day.
F for all the families
And the love that they portray.
G for all the talents and gifts
Of those who entertain.
H for the writers—Hughes and Hurston—
Who wrote about the people plain.
I for rhythm, blues, and jazz
And all our instruments.
J for Jesse Jackson
Who ran for president.
K for Martin Luther King
We honor with a holiday.
L for the cowboy, Nat Love,
"Deadwood Dick" they say.
M for Madam C. J. Walker
A black woman millionaire.
N for the prophet Nat Turner,
A freedom fighter who dared.
O for oppression that we must fight
To keep our struggle alive.
P for the principles some have held
that fill our hearts with pride.
Q for the questions that I ask
about my history.
R for religion
Islam to Christianity.
S for the seven days
Of the Kwanzaa celebration.
T for Harriet Tubman,
Conductor on Freedom's station.
U for the underground Railroad,
A secret passageway.
V for the values that make me strong
From unity to faith, I pray.
W for Woodson, Carter G.,
A vision he did see
When he proclaimed February
For Black History.
X for the name that Malcolm took
Because it means unknown.
Y for You—to be all you can
From the first day you are born.
Z for zenith, the highest point
in this universe.
You're reaching up
When you learn
An African-American history verse.
I say A B C D E F G
African-American History
H I J K L M N O P
African-American History
Q R S, T U V
African-American History
W X Y and Z
This is a story all about me.
This is a story all about me.
This is a story all about me.

(Source: *Talk That Talk* edited by Linda Goss and Marian E. Barnes)

A PEEK INTO THE PAST

What is a PROVERB?

The word **proverb** comes from the Latin *proverbium* (*pro* meaning "in front of, on behalf of" and *verbium* meaning "word"), suggesting that a proverb takes the place of ordinary words. There is an Ibo saying that reinforces this idea: **"Proverbs are the palm oil with which words are eaten."** Just as food often tastes better with a sauce, so words, too, are easier to digest with the "seasoning" of proverbs. Thus the Somali say that proverbs "put spice into speech."

Proverbs are important in all traditional societies. They are kernels of wisdom, moral and philosophical precepts reduced to a few very carefully crafted words or phrases. Their brevity aids in memorization, so that everything important and relevant in daily life can be recollected easily and passed on from person to person, generation to generation. A well-chosen proverb can have a far weightier impact than a good deal of ineffective talk, which is why the Yoruba say, "Proverbs are the horses of words [ideas]. When a word is lost, we use a proverb to look for it." One famous collection is the Book of Proverbs in the Old Testament. Proverbs are like **morals**, the lessons that are attached to fables. **(Source: *The African Literary Tradition*)**

AFRICAN PROVERB: (Guinea) "Knowledge is like a garden: if it is not cultivated, it cannot be harvested."

What were the courses of study and methods of teaching employed at the Bray School in Williamsburg?

In 1763, Nicholas and Hunter's successor William Yates drew up rules for the guidance of the schoolmistress (teacher). Mrs. Wager was to take only scholars approved by the trustees, open the school at seven o'clock in the winter and six in the summer, enforce regular attendance, and keep her pupils "diligently to their business during the Hours of schooling."

A number of rules governed religious instruction and worship: the students were to learn to read the Bible, the instructor was to catechize them according to the doctrines of the Church of England, and the teacher was to take the children to church regularly as well as conduct prayers in the school. The teacher was also expected to insist upon personal cleanliness, neatness of dress, and moral behavior from the students.

Finally, she was to "teach her scholars the true spelling of names, make them mind their stops [possibly punctuation] and endeavor to bring them to pronounce and read distinctly." While the heaviest emphasis was on religion, it is still clear that the intention was to provide a reasonable amount of formal academic training for the youngsters.

WHY THE RABBIT IS ALERT

By Ardie Stuart Brown

Long ago Sungura (Swahili word for rabbit) had a long, gorgeous tail and four long, graceful legs. But he couldn't decide where he wanted to live. He looked at the water and thought that might be nice. So he jumped in, but his legs got tired from trying to keep afloat. "No, no, too much!"

Then he looked at the earth. He dug a shallow hole and rested. Soon ants, gophers, and even a mole disturbed him, saying, "Dig a deeper hole, the earth must breathe."

"Too much work," said Sungura. So he looked up at the trees where the monkeys lived, and he climbed up there. He had food, he could rest, and he could see all around. Plus the monkeys did nothing to disturb him. So Sungura rested. Soon the wind began to blow, and the monkeys warned him that he should move to a stronger limb. But Sungura said, "Maybe tomorrow."

The monkeys warned him again as they climbed to stronger branches. "Move to a stronger limb, Sungura!" But the rabbit relaxed. Then a strong, howling wind broke the branch he was resting on, and Sungura fell to the ground. His lovely tail broke off, and his two hind legs were broken. Once more the monkeys warned him: "Go see the healer so she can set your legs properly."

But Sungura said, "Maybe tomorrow I will see the healer. Not today." He sat and relaxed. His hind legs healed just as they had broken. And ever since that time, all rabbits are born with crooked hind legs. But Sungura learned a lesson. Now rabbits are alert and quick. They hop very fast. They never wait. And you too can learn from the rabbit's mistake. If you have something to do, *do it now!*

(Source: *Talk That Talk* edited by Linda Goss and Marian E. Barnes)

A HISTORICAL NOTE

By Michelle Carr

> Education is our passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to the people who prepare for it today.
>
> **Malcolm X**

> One's work may be finished some day, but one's education never.
>
> **Alexandre Dumas, *pere***

> The impulse to dream had been slowly beaten out of me by experience. Now it surged up again and I hungered for books, new ways of looking and seeing.
>
> **Richard Wright**

The African-American has long possessed a deep faith in the power of education to bring about a change in his status and in the conditions affecting his personal life. He has believed that education is the key to many of the shackles that bind him. In the days of slavery this belief was strengthened by slave masters who, believing in the importance of education, declared it criminal for blacks to learn to read and write.

The history of education for black Americans can be traced to the church. The Quakers in Philadelphia provided schools for Africans as early as 1774. In New York, the African Free School was opened in 1787. Many Africans imported to the English colonies in 1619 had brilliant cultural and educational backgrounds. As the importation of slaves increased, education in America met great difficulties. Statutes prohibiting education for blacks were strengthened following the slave uprising by Nat Turner and Denmark Vesey, yet progress was made.

For a hundred years before the end of the Second World War, the black man struggled with the courts of America over the question of the education of his children. In 1849, the courts of Massachusetts ruled that black children could be excluded from white schools if a black school was available. In reaction to this decision, the Massachusetts legislature passed an act desegregating the schools in 1855. Charles Sumner, a senator from Massachusetts who had been involved on the side of the blacks in the Massachusetts court case, tried unsuccessfully to get a provision for desegregated schooling included in the federal Civil Rights Act of 1875—the act declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in 1883.

When the principle of "separate but equal" was set up in the case Plessy *vs.* Ferguson in 1896, it was of course applied to education as well as to transportation and public accommodations.

Unfortunately, there was no real attempt to make the separate schools equal. For example, in 1915, the South Carolina public school system spent an average of $23.76 per white child and only $2.91 per black child. By 1954, the federal courts had eased the legal restrictions on black people in the area of voting rights and had ruled against the use of restrictive real estate covenants to bar blacks from owning property. Yet education in the South remained as segregated as it had been in 1900. The N.A.A.C.P. finally decided to make a frontal attack on legally segregated school systems. Under the leadership of Thurgood Marshall, who later became the first black justice on the United States Supreme Court, a campaign against segregated schools was carefully planned.

Desegregation cases were initiated in South Carolina, Kansas, Virginia, and Delaware. The cases eventually reached the Supreme Court, grouped together under the designation Brown *vs.* Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas. The court, in a unanimous decision issued in May 1954, ruled that segregated schools were unconstitutional under the Fourteenth Amendment—that they were inherently unequal and deprived black children of equal protection of the laws. In its ruling, the court gave the following explanation: "Segregation of white and colored children in public schools has a detrimental effect upon the colored children. The impact is greater when it has the sanction of the law; for the policy of separating the races is usually interpreted as denoting the inferiority of the Negro group."

(Compiled from: Thomas R. Frazier, editor of *Afro-American History: Primary Sources)*

EMPLOYEES' CORNER

Behind The Scenes

Spotlight

Emily Fraser James, the second of five children, was born in a village by the name of Brandon Hill, St. Andrew, in Kingston, Jamaica, West Indies. Emily attended Brandon Hill Elementary school and graduated from Oberlin High School. She received a certificate in Telephone Operating from the Jamaica Commercial Institute.

In 1985, Emily migrated to the United States and joined the staff of Riverside Hospital as a Dietary Aide and volunteer.

In 1986, she was hired as a Private Nursing Assistant in Chesapeake, Virginia. In 1987, Emily joined the staff of Colonial Williamsburg as an interpreter.

As an African-American Interpreter, she feels privileged to be an ambassador for her foreparents. Things they were unable to accomplish, she is able to educate others in telling the story about their lives.

(Spotlight is a brief profile of a member of the Department of African-American Interpretation and Presentations.)

AFRICAN PROVERB: (Congo) "The teeth are smiling, but is the heart?"

In The News

PHILIP MORRIS AWARDS $100,000 GRANT FOR AFRICAN-AMERICAN INTERPRETATION

Colonial Williamsburg has received a $100,000 grant from the Philip Morris Companies, Inc. The grant will help bolster the foundation's efforts to provide visitors with a view of the Historic Area and Carter's Grove by 1994 that fully incorporates eighteenth-century African-Americans.

The grant will be used to fund a two-part visitor and interpreter survey and to train interpreters.

Robert C. Watson, Director of the Department of African-American Interpretation and Presentations, will serve as the grant's project director.

Members of his staff will assist in surveying and provide research for various sites, according to Dennis O'Toole, Vice President and Chief Education Officer.

Watson looks forward to his staff playing a "key role" in implementing the grant. When it comes to interpreting African-American history, "we've been doing it the longest and we are the paradigm in the museum world," he said.

O'Toole said one of the planned surveys will evaluate visitors' knowledge of early American and African-American history and will gauge what they expect to learn at Colonial Williamsburg. A follow-up survey will assess how their visit met those expectations and whether it increased their knowledge.

The interpreter survey will measure how interpreters rate their ability to convey African-American history and how much time they devote to the subject.

After making changes at various sites based upon the responses, the foundation will hold additional surveys to determine their effectiveness. Since 1976, Philip Morris has donated $426,693 in corporate contributions and matching gifts. (Source: *Colonial Williamsburg News*)

Dennis A. O'Toole, the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation's Vice President and Chief Education Officer, has accepted the position of executive director at Strawbery Banke Museum in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. The Department of African-American Interpretation and Presentations wishes him much success and best wishes.

SOLUTIONS TO PUZZLES:

Each One, Teach One

1. Booker T. Washington
2. The Fourteenth Amendment
3. (C) Imhotep
4. Shoes
5. Carter's Grove Slave Quarters
6. 1936, Berlin, Germany
7. Mary McLeod Bethune
8. Frank Wills

Famous African-American Inventors

1. Elijah McCoy
2. Benjamin Banneker
3. Lewis Latimer
4. Charles Drew
5. Garrett Morgan
6. Norbert Rillieux

CHRONOLOGY OF BLACK EDUCATION

1634 TO 1865

1634 French Catholics are instrumental in providing instruction for laborers in Louisiana. The French and Spanish had liberal attitudes toward slaves.

1685 Virginia laws prohibiting slaves from attending Quaker meetings for the purpose of instruction are denounced by the Reverend Morgan Goodwyn in a sermon preached in Westminster Abbey, London.

1700 A monthly meeting for blacks is established by William Penn. Penn advocated the emancipation of slaves so they might have the opportunity for improvement. Many colonists were teaching slaves.

1701 Chief Justice Sewall of Massachusetts publishes an anti-slavery pamphlet. The Sewall pamphlet represented the first direct attack on slavery in New England. Earlier, Cotton Mather and other Massachusetts Puritans made efforts to organize black people when they founded the Society of Negroes in 1693. Later, in 1717, Mather began an evening school for Indians and blacks.

1701 Dr. Thomas, sent to Maryland by the Bishop of London in 1669, exerted a profound influence in the conversion and education of blacks.

1724 A document encouraging the Christian education of Indian, black, and mulatto children is circulated in Virginia. The document stated that slaves should be educated and that baptized children who understood the Christian religion should receive exemption from taxes until the age of 18.

1745 French Code Noire makes it incumbent upon masters to enlighten their slaves in order that they might grasp the principles of Christianity.

1750 Anthony Benezet opens an evening school for Philadelphia blacks in his home. Quakers made the most conscientious efforts to fight slavery and educate blacks.

1756 Mr. Bray died.

1760 The Bray School opens in Williamsburg.

1773 Benjamin Rush advocates the abolition of the slave trade and urges the education of blacks.

1774 Benjamin Franklin opens a school for blacks. Benjamin Franklin, Jonathan Boucher, and Dr. Rush devised plans to educate slaves for freedom.

1777 New Jersey begins educating black children. By 1801, schools are in operation in Salem, Burlington, and Trenton.

1787 New York African Free School is established by the Manumission Society.

1791 Thomas Jefferson writes to Benjamin Banneker, a black mathematician and astronomer. Jefferson declared that he wished to see blacks improve their condition and stated that lack of progress was due to the degraded condition of the black man in Africa and America. Writing the Declaration of Independence, he had in mind the rights of blacks as well as whites, and declared that blacks had a natural right to education and freedom.

1798 A school for black children is established in the home of Primus Hall, a prominent Boston black.

1800-1830 Individual schools for blacks are developed by churches, slaveholders, and free blacks. Despite legal restrictions in the South, many blacks did receive some education from their masters and in small clandestine private schools in the new nation.

1830-1860 Educational opportunities for blacks are curtailed due to a rising fear of the increasing power of slaves. This was precipitated by the fear aroused in the white population after the slave insurrection led by Nat Turner in Virginia in 1831. "Black Codes" were then enacted in several states to keep the black "in his place" by denying him access to educational facilities of any kind.

1865 The Freedman's Bureau is founded under General Oliver O. Howard. The Bureau was created by Congress on March 3, 1865, to cooperate with benevolent and religious societies in the establishment of schools for blacks.

(Source: *The Negro Almanac*)

THE VALUE OF AN EDUCATION!

The value of an education is measured in many ways.
Some see it as a step to more gainful employment.
Ask a child what they hope to become when they're older.
The answers may vary, but the bottom line is the same.
They want a job that will pay them a lot of money.
The value of an education is measured in dollars and cents.

The value of an education is not the same to everyone.
Some view it as an opportunity for personal enhancement.
They believe that "A mind **IS** a terrible thing to waste."
Knowledge is the key to the future and opens many doors.
You can do more from inside than you can from outside.
The value of an education is measured in common sense.

The value of an education is more than money can buy.
Some see an obligation to those who came before us.
Booker T. and W. E. B. did not agree in philosophy.
They did however, agree in the importance of education.
Brown vs. Topeka Board; Little Rock; hurdles we overcame.
The value of an education is measured in blood and tears.

The value of an education is often taken for granted.
Some see it as a chance to become a professional athlete.
Football, baseball, basketball some think more important.
They look at you like a piece of meat, nothing more.
Discarded like the fat off a steak, when you are useless.
The value of an education in measured in points and runs.

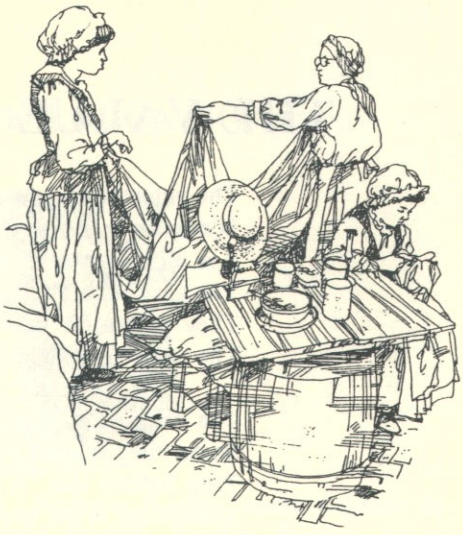
The value of an education cannot be stressed too much.
For years it was not allowed for African American people.
Keep them ignorant and they will be easier to control.
A few schools opened up, but they didn't offer very much.
Dishwashers, cooks, maids, butlers, all they'll ever be.
The value of an education is measured in what you do.

The value of an education is determined by each person.
What may be important to him may be insignificant to her.
English, Science, History, Mathematics they need to know.
But children also need someone to teach them how to grow.
Education begins in the home, where the values are laid.
The value of an education is what the parents have made.

The value of an education can be seen with the naked eye.
It is the result of the efforts of many, many people.
It can be traced as far back as Ghana, Mali, and Songhay.
A Nigerian proverb says it best:
Not to know is bad, not to wish to know is worse.
The value of education: Knowledge is better than riches.

Jerrold W. Roy

ON MYNE OWN TYME



The Department of African-American Interpretation and Presentations offers the following programs at various times. All programs are meant to provide unique glimpses into the lives of eighteenth-century African-Americans.

Publick Times
The annual observance re-creates the Publick Times of the mid- to late- 1700s when visitors from across the colony came to the capital to attend court, transact business, and socialize. Music, dances, games, auctions, horse races, barbecues, magic shows, military reviews, and booths selling eighteenth-century wares and food provide activity throughout each of the three days. Military reenactors camping in the Historic Area keep the town lively.

Night Walking
Slaves in eighteenth-century Williamsburg were building and reinforcing family and community networks. When the workday ended, visiting began. Brief scenes portray moments in their public and private lives. Programs are held on the Governor's Palace grounds on Tuesday, September 1, 7:30 P.M. and 9:00 P.M.

Other Half Tour
Half of the population in Williamsburg during the eighteenth century was black. This ninety-minute walking tour gives an in-depth look at the black experience from the arrival of the first blacks in Virginia in 1619 through the abolition of the slave trade by the English in 1807. Tour given daily at 10:00 A.M. and 3:00 P.M. Patriot's Pass holders can participate in this special tour at no extra charge. Each tour limited to 25 participants.

For further information about programs and cost, please telephone 1-800-HISTORY.

AFRICAN PROVERB: (Niger) "Ashes fly back into the face of him who throws them."

The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

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