

**Behind The Mask: Another Perspective
on the Slawewomen's Oral Narratives**

by

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(ABSTRACT)

In the last twenty years, studies in Afro-American slavery have given special attention to the slave community and culture. They have emphasized the slaves' control over their lives, while glossing over the brutality of the institution of slavery. Slavewomen have been ignored until very recently, and those few historians who studied their lives have applied the same categories of inquiry used by traditional historians with a male perspective. The topic of interracial sexual relations crystallizes this problem. This issue has been left aside in most scholarly studies and, when mentioned, addressed more often than not from a male perspective. As sexual abuse, it exemplifies the harshness of slavery.

The oral slave narratives, often referred to by the same historians, are one of the few primary sources by and on slavewomen. Yet, historians have not used them adequately in research on slavewomen, primarily because of inadequate conceptual frameworks.

This thesis devises and implements a theoretical framework to analyze the oral slave narratives, and exemplifies the potential of that framework through a study of interracial sexual relations. Special emphasis is placed on the time and place of the interviewing process that generated the slave narratives. The racial etiquette between the actors proved particularly important. Finally, comparison of two sets of interviews based on a textual analysis evaluates the biases inherent in the slave narratives.

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I am indebted to _____ in several ways. His computer expertise (and Mac!) helped me meet the deadlines for this work, while his friendship and faith have provided constant support and encouragement.

Last, but not least, I want to thank _____ and international friends in Blacksburg, who have helped make this experience abroad both rich and rewarding.

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"We wear the mask that grins and lies,
It hides our cheeks and shades our eyes,
This debt we pay to human guile;
With torn and bleeding hearts we smile,
And mouth with myriad subtleties."

Paul Laurence Dunbar,
"We Wear the Mask,"
Lyrics of Lowly Life (167)

"God is wonderful to some us to spare us
dis long, honey, to tell de tale."

Mrs. Patience M. Avery,
Weevils in the Wheat (15)

PROLOGUE

At 104, Susan Hamlin was "wonderfully well preserved"¹ according to Jessie A. Butler, who interviewed her for the Federal Writers' Project in the 1930's. Hamlin herself contended that, though she was "gettin' ole," and her memory was not as good as it used to be, she could "remember some things like it was yesterday."² Physical aging had not impaired her mental abilities. She was in her mid-twenties when the Civil War broke out. She was, therefore, the perfect subject for fieldworkers interviewing former slaves to get an account of what it was like to be a slave woman in antebellum Charleston, South Carolina.

Talking about slavery days brought back pleasant memories. Susan Hamlin often returned to the house where she had lived, and she evoked scenes of conviviality with other slaves around the cistern--a bucolic glimpse of a bunch of young people laughing and chatting while drinking fresh water in the hot and humid South Carolinian summer. In her

¹ George P. Rawick, ed., The American Slave: An Autobiography, 41 vols. Series 1, Supplement Series 1 and 2. (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1972, 1978, 1979). All references to the South Carolina narratives will be cited "S.C." followed by the section number. S.C. II, 223.

² S.C. II, 226.

interview with Jessie A. Butler, Hamlin insisted--almost vehemently--on the benevolence of her master, a man loved by all his slaves. Her master, Edward Fuller, would not allow her to go barefoot in cold weather, and paid particular attention to the dress of the children going to Sunday School. To prove her point, Hamlin told of the children's utter despair at their master's death and concluded: "he was a good man."³ Fuller would not sell slaves, so that Hamlin was never separated from her mother and her five brothers and sisters, though she was aware of the breakup of families in other places--she remembered particularly well the distress of mothers separated without warning from their infant children. Her recollections suggested a happy and carefree life under the benevolent supervision of her patriarchal master.

Susan Hamlin told her story in one of the numerous interviews fieldworkers conducted in South Carolina. The narrative immediately following hers painted quite a different picture of slavery, however. This former slave, whose name was not cited in the head line of the interview, immediately emphasized the breakup of families--the father belonged to another master--but also the sexual promiscuity between blacks and whites, or slaves and masters. The

³ S.C. II, 227.

informant hinted that her master had abused her mother--"my ma had three boys . . . William Fuller, son of our master, wus de bricklayer . . ."4 She stated that her father's master was "very mean," and proudly depicted the former's successful escape to the North, as well as his eventual manumission. Her father had apparently sought revenge on his master after a whipping, "giv[ing] him de same 'mount of lickin'" he had suffered.5 Corporal punishment had left an indelible mark on that former slave. She remembered vividly the washerwoman in her house, whom she described as being "very high-tempered," so much so that she caused the premature birth of her mistress's child by brutalizing her after the pregnant woman scolded her.6 Clory herself begged to be sold away, but the master never sold any slave, preferring to hire them out. And so he did, though not before punishing her severely. The narrator said: "dey whip 'er until dere wusn't a white spot on her body,"7 and concluded: "she [Clory] hated an' detest' both of them an' all de fambly."8 The informant could remember so well because she had had to

4 S.C. II, 233.

5 S.C. II, 233.

6 S.C. II, 234.

7 S.C. II, 234.

8 S.C. II, 235.

witness the punishment, together with all the slaves. Not only as an individual did she have "some terribly bad experiences," but more generally she ascertained that "people was always dyin' frum a broken heart."⁹ Physically as well as psychologically slavery had been a devastating experience, its impact perduring three quarters of a century later.

It is no surprise to find almost opposite descriptions of slavery in the South Carolina narratives. Obviously slavery could not have been experienced in the same way by millions of individuals--women and men--throughout the South, or by thousands in one state.

What is truly astonishing, though, is to discover at the end of this second text that both informants were the one and same person. The discrepancy between the two sets of narratives raises then a number of important questions. How and why did she give such different stories? In order to try and reach some understanding, it seems relevant here to consider her interviewers, for she was interviewed by two different fieldworkers--an exceptional event in the Slave Narrative Collection. One of her interviewers was a black male fieldworker, the other one was a white woman. To Augustus Ladson, the black male interviewer, Susan Hamlin blankly depicted the physical brutality of slavery, but to

⁹ S.C. II, 235.

Jessie A. Butler, the white female interviewer, an idyllic picture of a paternalistic system emerged: "Seem like Mr. Fuller just git his slaves so that he could be good to dem."¹⁰ Unless we decide that, due to her advanced age, Susan Hamlin had become senile--and neither of her interviewers mentioned any doubt as to her mental abilities--one has to wonder how she gave such different versions of her life. For some reason Susan Hamlin distorted, at least in one case, the reality of her experience as a slave, and chose to "wear a mask" behind which she could hide. What can historians do with this type of historical source?

In order to answer this question, we need to keep several factors in mind. First, it is necessary to remember that slavery was essentially based on the physical oppression, mild or severe, of slaves/blacks by masters/whites. The actual circumstances and time period under which the interviews of former slaves took place must be a major factor in understanding the interviewing process. Historians have been keenly aware of these questions, and have emphasized how critical an impact the racial etiquette prevailing in the South in the 1930s had on both informants and interviewers. Most have concluded that this was an

¹⁰ S.C. II, 228.

inhibiting factor on the reliability, and for the use of, the Slave Narrative Collection, while some have emphasized that, despite its weaknesses, the Collection is one of the few primary sources from the slaves themselves. The problem posed by Susan Hamlin's contradictory narratives offers a crisp example of the numerous objections put forward by historians on the reliability of the Slave Narrative Collection ever since George P. Rawick published the first volume.

In fact, Susan Hamlin's case provides precisely the tools necessary to decipher the slave narratives. A close textual study of the two narratives--an account of the similar or opposed elements, or those found in one interview and not in the other, as well as the tone of both informant and interviewer--enables us to discern what Susan Hamlin emphasized for each person interviewing her. Hamlin's interviews can thus provide an analytical framework to approach the major historiographical problem posed by the Slave Narrative Collection: how the relation between informant and interviewer influenced these sources historians must analyze as the best first-hand testimony on what it was like to be slave.

INTRODUCTION

The Oral Slave Narratives: A Description

More than a quarter of a century before the birth of the new social history, the Federal Writers' Project set out to give a voice to ordinary citizens and minority groups in the United States, people that traditional history had largely ignored until then. Among those interviewed were more than 2,000 ex-slaves throughout the South.¹ Except in Virginia, Louisiana, and Florida, where all-Negro units were also established, the interviewing staff was predominantly white.² The narratives were sent to the Library of Congress and reposed in the Rare Book Room until George P. Rawick began publishing them in 1972. Only fifteen Virginia narratives were sent to the national headquarters of the Federal Writers' Project in Washington and included in the Slave Narrative Collection. Charles L. Perdue has recovered and published all the interviews gathered in Virginia by two different teams: the Virginia Negro Studies Project--an all-Negro unit of thirteen fieldworkers who conducted 100 of

¹ Norman R. Yetman, "The Background of the Slave Narrative Collection," American Quarterly 19 (Fall 1967): 532.

² Yetman, "Background," 547.

the 159 interviews with 157 informants under the direction of Roscoe E. Lewis--and the Virginia Writers' Project, seven white fieldworkers who conducted nine interviews.³ Most of the oral slave narratives gathered by the Federal Writers' Project are now accessible to scholars.

The oral slave narratives present some distinct features that make them indispensable for the study of slavery in general, and the slaves in particular. They represent all the demographic, social, and occupational layers of the slave population--women, men, fieldworkers, house servants, artisans--from the Deep South as well as the Upper South, in contrast to the written slave narratives published in the nineteenth century, most of which related the experience of young male runaways who had lived in the border states.⁴ About half the informants interviewed in the 1930s were women.⁵ The Slave Narrative Collection is thus one of the few sources available for slavewomen's testimony on the

³ Charles L. Perdue, Jr., Thomas E. Barden, and Robert K. Phillips, Weevils in the Wheat: Interviews with Virginia Ex-Slaves (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1976), XXXVI-XXXVIII. Perdue notes that "the race of the interviewers is unknown for the remaining fifty interviews."

⁴ Yetman, "Background," 535.

⁵ David Thomas Bailey, "A Divided Prism: Two Sources of Black Testimony on Slavery," Journal of Southern History 46 (August 1980): 386.

institution of slavery, and their experiences.

In the past twenty years one focus of slavery studies has been the slave family, community, and culture, and scholars have drawn heavily on the slave narratives, recognizing that they are indeed the place to seek evidence on the slaves' perceptions of slavery.⁶ In studying slave sources, revisionist historians have accentuated the strength of the slave family and the slaves' ability to create a culture of their own, one shaped by their African origins and their adaptative faculties in dealing with new surroundings. Jerrold Hirsch points out different trends in scholarly research on this point. On the one hand, historians such as Eugene Genovese underline the reciprocal influence of slaves and masters on each other's culture. Others, such as Herbert Gutman, see slave culture as relatively autonomous.⁷ Peter Kolchin and Bertram Wyatt-Brown express reservations on this new trend in scholarly research. Kolchin argues that "the

⁶ Earlier studies had relied primarily on planters' diaries and plantation records, or travel accounts in the South by white Northerners or foreigners.

⁷ Jerrold Hirsch, "Reading and Counting," Reviews in American History 8 (September 1980): 312. In this book review of Paul D. Escott's Slavery Remembered: A Record of Twentieth Century Slave Narratives, Hirsch stressed the importance of the interviewing situation and of the cultural background in the elaboration of the narratives. I came upon his article after I had devised my own theoretical framework.

argument is being pushed too far,"⁸ because the harshness of the institution is underplayed. Wyatt-Brown ascribes the trend to a certain romanticism and "a mood of nostalgia."⁹ Both authors stress the need for a readjustment in scholarly research, one that would take into account both the institution of slavery and the oppressive framework under which slaves had to live.

Slavewomen and the Oral Narratives: A Conceptual Framework

Any study of the slavewomen's experience must account for the oppressive aspect of slavery. As Kolchin put it, "slavery was not only a brutal, but also a brutalizing experience."¹⁰ This feature took indeed a specific dimension for slavewomen in that they could be--and were--sexually abused by their owners. The question of interracial sexual relations has been little researched by scholars of slavery. In the light of Kolchin's analysis, one wonders whether such

⁸ Peter Kolchin, "American Historians and Antebellum Southern Slavery, 1959-1984," in A Master's Due: Essays in Honor of David Herbert Donald, eds. William J. Cooper, Jr., Michael F. Holt, and John McCardell (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1985), 92.

⁹ Bertram Wyatt-Brown, "The New Consensus," Commentary 63 (January 1977): 76.

¹⁰ Kolchin, "American Historians," 94.

reluctance might not be due to some sentimentalist attitude. According to Gerda Lerner, sexual abuse has been traditionally cast in a male perspective, i.e., as the loss of a woman's honor in connection to her husband's honor, or the men's honor in her family. In contemporary patriarchal societies, the loss of a girl's virginity outside wedlock is still considered an affront to the men of her family, in the same perspective. In the case of slavewomen, sexual abuse has also been considered for the impact it had on slavemen--psychologically it amounted to their symbolic castration--as a measure of white men's power and coercion.¹¹ The perspectives of white men and women have also been studied, but that of slavewomen only in passing. In that respect then, recent scholars of slavery have proved unwilling to devote careful attention to the question of interracial sexual relations because, according to their assumptions, such a topic would have by definition contradicted their main premises, i.e. their vision of slaves--male slaves--as independent subjects.

Interracial liaisons lie at the intersection of all the concerns cited above. Such liaisons concern slavewomen and can uncover an aspect of their experience overlooked in

¹¹ Gerda Lerner, The Creation of Patriarchy (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 80. For elaborations of this point, see below, pp. 61-2.

scholarly research. Moreover, this topic challenges traditional theoretical and interpretive frameworks, as anthropologist Michelle Z. Rosaldo suggested. She stated that in order to get new answers, one has to ask new types of questions.¹²

Here one comes up against the problems of interpretation of sources and the necessity for interdisciplinary research. Frances Smith Foster, a literary scholar, stresses that the erroneous--and trivializing--image of slavewomen conveyed until now is due to a male-biased perspective. As a result, women are seen through the written narratives of slavemen as victims "but neither respected nor emulated."¹³ Yet, written narratives by Sojourner Truth or Harriet Jacob give a totally different perception of their experience. This awareness of the differences between male and female perceptions has been underlined by anthropologists such as the one mentioned above, and by historians such as Gerda Lerner. In order to devise a new conceptual framework, Lerner stresses the concept of gender, i.e. "the cultural definition of behavior

¹² As Rosaldo succinctly put it: "What is needed is not so much data as questions." Michelle Z. Rosaldo, "The Use and Abuse of Anthropology: Reflections on Feminism and Cross-Cultural Understanding," Signs 5 (Spring 1980): 390.

¹³ Frances Smith Foster, "'In Respect To Females' . . . Differences in the Portrayals of Women by Male and Female Narrators," Black American Literature Forum 15 (Summer 1981): 66.

defined as appropriate to the sexes,"¹⁴ as a way to understand social forms and modes of thought.

Such an approach relies on the oral slave narratives because they are one of the rare primary sources by slavewomen themselves. The topic of interracial liaisons does emphasize the violence and physical brutality of slavery, and shows how slaves' and masters' worlds were inextricably linked. The narratives studied in this light demonstrate patterns of resistance and the agency slavewomen could exercise in their lives. That type of analysis thus rejoins a feminist perspective by going beyond the traditional image of women as oppressed and passive objects. Moreover, the topic of interracial sexual liaisons demonstrates the possibility of using the slave narratives to get the slavewomen's own perceptions, and, at the same time, the necessity of a conceptual framework to analyze and use those first-hand testimonies. The slavewomen's narratives thus need to be deciphered in a female-oriented perspective. In order to account for the biases inherent to the interviewing situation, the narratives will be studied in respect with the race of the interviewers and the cultural background of the 1930s.

¹⁴ Lerner, Creation, 238.

Selection of Materials

Susan Hamlin's interviews provide a reference point throughout this thesis, but other sets of interviews by two fieldworkers, black and white, in two states are also studied. For a comparative analysis of interviews I have chosen the Virginia and South Carolina narratives. The Virginia narratives are indispensable because most interviews were conducted by black fieldworkers. Moreover, a majority of the informants were female ex-slaves--despite C. Vann Woodward's assertion that male slaves were overrepresented in the national collection.¹⁵ South Carolina was chosen from among the other states because, in contrast to Virginia, most interviewers were white,¹⁶ and the number of slavewomen interviewed in South Carolina was close to that in Virginia.

In Virginia, 94 of 157 informants (60 percent) were women. Six black female fieldworkers interviewed 37 of them (5 interviews of these were conducted together with a black male fieldworker). Five black male fieldworkers interviewed

¹⁵ Cited in Perdue, Weevils, XLII. Moreover, little research has been conducted on slavery in Virginia, yet one of the largest slaveholding states in the antebellum South.

¹⁶ Only three interviewers were blacks. George Rawick notes two interviewers only as blacks, but internal evidence demonstrates that Augustus Ladson was also a black fieldworker. For more details on this point, see below, pp. 29-30.

25 informants. Four white female fieldworkers interviewed 4 informants. No white male fieldworker, as far as we know, conducted any interview with female ex-slaves--the interviewers are unknown for 33 interviews. In South Carolina, 123 of 285 informants (43 percent) were women. There was only one black female interviewer (according to George Rawick), but she did not interview any female informant. As we have seen, a black man interviewed Susan Hamlin, and she was also interviewed by a white female fieldworker. Six white female fieldworkers interviewed 41 informants, while six white male interviewers conducted interviews with 47 informants. For 35 interviews the race of the interviewers is unknown.

Within the states, my choice of interviewers was based on their gender, race, and the number of interviews they recorded, as well as on the number of informants who referred to interracial sexual relations. Susie R. C. Byrd, a female black fieldworker in Virginia, interviewed twenty-one former slave women, six of whom mentioned black-white liaisons. In South Carolina, W. W. Dixon was a white male fieldworker who conducted interviews with twenty-one informants, four of whom told him about this topic. A comparison can thus be drawn between the study of Susan Hamlin's interviews and those by Susie R. C. Byrd and W. W. Dixon.

This study will look first at the impacts that the race

of the interviewers (in particular) and the context of Southern race relations (in general) had on the type of information yielded by the informants. In order to assess the validity of this analytical framework, it is necessary to implement it with a single topic. Interracial sexual relations illustrates these different concerns particularly well. It was a delicate subject between the races in the segregated South of the 1930s. Moreover, such a topic requires a feminist perspective to get the slavewomen's own perspective on this important aspect of their experience as slaves. A historiographical survey of the literature in that respect will show how historians have addressed the question. Finally, the slavewomen's oral narratives will be analyzed in the light of interracial liaisons to implement this new conceptual framework.

CHAPTER ONE

HOW TO READ THE SLAVE NARRATIVES: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Conceptualization

Reliability of the Slave Narratives: An Appreciation

Since the appearance of the first volumes of the Slave Narrative Collection in 1972, many historians have underlined problems posed by the oral slave narratives. And yet, no major work on slavery since has failed to refer to the testimony of the ex-slaves.¹ The major concerns voiced by scholars of slavery can be divided into two categories: first those addressing the actors themselves, informants and interviewers separately; second those pertaining to the nature of the interviews. Actually, a third set of questions--the key questions--should be raised also, namely the interactive process between the two persons taking part in the interview, caught in a certain space and time, and

¹ Norman R. Yetman, "Ex-Slave Interviews and the Historiography of Slavery," American Quarterly 36 (Summer 1984): 181.

creating an historical document, the narrative.²

In the first category, the actors, the problem of the age of the informants has been the one most frequently addressed. The narratives were compiled in 1936-38. Thus the ex-slaves--most of them over eighty years old--were recalling events that had taken place more than seventy years before. A common argument has been that older people's memories are not reliable.³ By relying on psychological studies, Paul D. Escott has argued that age did not impair memory.⁴ For David Thomas Bailey, the age of the informants meant that, since they were children, they had not fully experienced slavery. Their very age testified of a favored treatment as slaves, and thus could not be representative of the slave population.⁵ Actually, the question of the age and individual memory of the informants is not relevant here. The narratives abound with stories told the former slaves by their parents or grandparents. Susie R. C. Byrd reported that "old friends [had] been meeting for years--their common

² The problem of the editing of the narratives is not forgotten. But what the historian is confronted with here is the historical document that has been left.

³ David P. Henige, Oral Historiography (New York: Longman Group Limited, 1982), 117.

⁴ Paul D. Escott, Slavery Remembered: A Record of Twentieth-Century Slave Narratives (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979), 7.

⁵ Bailey, "Divided Prism," 403, 385.

interest, 'dem ole slave days,'" in the words of Mrs. Brown, one of her informants in Virginia.⁶ The former slaves must thus be seen as the repository of an oral tradition. What is important then is not the age, but rather the transmission of lived experiences and culture--or the "folklore of slavery," as Benjamin A. Botkin put it.⁷

The other group of actors were the fieldworkers. The main critique concerning their role has been their amateurism. Their interviewing methods were unscientific, and few were conscious of the biases inherent in the interviewing situation, especially the race bias. John W. Blassingame noted that the race bias prevented white interviewers from getting reliable information from their informants.⁸ The strained racial relations in the segregated South must definitely be taken into consideration for an analysis of the narratives. But the value of the narratives as slave testimony cannot be dismissed so readily. In fact, an assessment of the variables at play at the time of the interviews permits an evaluation of the biases inherent to

⁶ Perdue, Weevils, 386.

⁷ Benjamin A. Botkin, Lay My Burden Down: A Folk History of Slavery (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1945), XIV.

⁸ John W. Blassingame, ed., Slave Testimony: Two Centuries of Letters, Speeches, Interviews, and Autobiographies (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1977), XLVI-XLVII.

the narratives, and thus enables the use of these sources to check other references in slavery studies.

The nature of the interviews has also led to debates. Norman R. Yetman has stressed the high degree of representativeness and inclusiveness of the slave population in the Slave Narrative Collection.⁹ Although agreeing with David Henige¹⁰ that the Collection does not represent a random sample, he maintains that it still "provides a more heterogeneous and diverse pool of informants than any other set of slave testimonies."¹¹ Moreover, about half of the informants were women, according to David Thomas Bailey,¹² a significant feature for any study of slavewomen.

The Interviewing Situation: Creation of a Historical Document

We now need to address the study of the narratives in the light of the interviewing process itself, and the

⁹ Yetman, "Ex-Slave Interviews," 181-2.

¹⁰ Henige charges that the house servant population, who had been better treated, was overrepresented. Henige, Oral Historiography, 116.

¹¹ Yetman, "Ex-Slave Interviews," 181-2.

¹² Bailey, "Divided Prism," 386.

circumstances that governed its elaboration. An interview by definition involves the meeting of at least two persons face to face. The physical proximity affects both the type of answers given and the nature of the questions asked. What needs to be done is to define all the elements involved at the time of the interview. The stories compiled were not only the result of individuals' memories, but rather they expressed the combination of memory, an adaptation to someone else's perceptions, in a specific cultural background. It is thus necessary to study not only each element per se, but then also, and chiefly, their interaction. That interaction produced the historical document that historians study.

In order to evaluate the bearing of the interviewers on the interviewing situation, it is useful to know their race and gender, age, position and role in their community (fieldworkers often lived in the area where they conducted the interviews). Such information can sometimes be gathered from the narratives. We know for instance that W. W. Dixon, an older white male fieldworker in South Carolina,¹³ conducted all his interviews in Winnsboro, where his family had been living for generations. Some of his informants recalled him as a child, and had known his family under slavery (his mother was a member of a slaveowning family).

¹³ Manda Walker noted: "Old and solemn as you is . . ."
S.C. IV, 171.

Susie R. C. Byrd, a black female fieldworker in Virginia, lived in Petersburg, where she conducted most of her interviews. She had been the customer of an ex-slave for years, and when she was hired by the Federal Writers' Project, she naturally went to him and asked him about his experience as a slave. He and his wife subsequently helped Byrd organize large meetings of former slaves. She met most of her informants at these meetings.

Detailed information on the interviewers is not readily available, and yet a textual analysis of the narratives provides some insights into their general perceptions and attitudes. The interviewers did not record their questions, but this obstacle can be circumvented. Some questions have been transcribed in the text, or the informant repeats them.¹⁴ The subject of the narrative might also change abruptly, disclosing the interviewer's intervention. For example, Savilla Burrell was telling W. W. Dixon about her mother's grief when the latter's child was sold away, and was interrupted by a question: "She [her mother] grieve and cry at night 'bout it. Clothes? Yes Sir, . . ." ¹⁵ All these

¹⁴ Part of Millie Barber's interview by W. W. Dixon reads like this: "Did I ever get a whippin'? Dat I did. How many times? More than I can count on fingers and toes. What I git a whippin' for? Oh, just one thing, then another." Further down, Barber answered Dixon: "Yes, Sir, I had two brothers . . ." S.C. I, 39-40.

¹⁵ S.C. I, 150.

elements give indications not only of the relationship between informant and interviewer, but also of the type of information the ex-slavewoman was willing to provide her interviewer.

Susan Hamlin's case illustrates this proposition. She was interviewed by two different fieldworkers at two different times.¹⁶ Differences between the two interviews show that a narrative is not only the product of memory, but of the process of interaction between the two actors, or, to use Ronald J. Grele's expression, a "conversational narrative."¹⁷ As we saw in the Prologue, Hamlin's two sets of recollections differ dramatically. The analysis of the texts provides information on the interviewers' assumptions, their attitudes towards their informant during the interviewing process, and the different ways Hamlin perceived herself in front of them. Susan Hamlin's case will be

¹⁶ Interestingly enough, there is another case of a double interview by the same fieldworkers, Jessie A. Butler and Augustus Ladson, with Henry Brown. S.C. I, 118-121 and 122-126.

¹⁷ "Given the active participation of the historian-interviewer, . . . the interview can only be described as a conversational narrative: conversational because of the relationship of interviewer and interviewee, and narrative because of the form of exposition--the telling of a tale." Ronald J. Grele, "Movement Without Aim: Methodological and Theoretical Problems in Oral History," in Envelopes of Sound: The Art of Oral History, ed. Ronald J. Grele (Chicago: Precedent Publishing, Inc., 1975), 135.

Ariadne's thread throughout this study to decipher the slave narratives, throwing some light on the biases inherent in their compilation and recording.

Another significant element in the interviewing process is the cultural background in which the "conversational narrative" took place. Most fieldworkers interviewing former slaves in the segregated South were whites, and it was the determinant variable in the compilation of the slave narratives.

Race Relations: Black and White Perspectives

Two main sources will be used to analyze the web of relationship between black/slave/former slave and white/master/dominant white in the 1930s. In 1929, Robert Russa Moton, a black writer who graduated from Tuskegee Institute, published an essay aimed at analyzing the discriminations to which blacks were subjected at the time, and their reactions.¹⁸ Bertram Wilbur Doyle, a white sociologist, presented a scholarly study of what he termed the "etiquette of race relations."¹⁹

¹⁸ Robert Russa Moton, What the Negro Thinks (New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co., 1929).

¹⁹ Bertram Wilbur Doyle, The Etiquette of Race Relations in

Bertram Doyle made a distinction between mores and law that accounted to him for the prevalence of a code of etiquette in the South between blacks and whites.²⁰ Almost three quarters of a century after the abolition of slavery, distinct rituals controlled the social relationships of the two races. These rituals demonstrated that the status of blacks had not changed dramatically since the days of slavery, in the eyes of either blacks or whites. Forms of address are revealing in this respect. Blacks were expected to use a reverent "Sir" or "Mrs./Ma'am" with whites. The reverse was not true. Rather, blacks would be commonly referred to by their Christian names or appellations such as "Uncle" or "Aunt."

Robert Moton's study provides a black perspective on this issue of social and racial relations in the segregated South, in the place where, and time when, the oral slave narratives were compiled by the Federal Writers' Project. He exposes various forms of segregation and derogatory appellations reminiscent of the status of slaves, and the consequent feelings of humiliation and inferiority experienced by blacks.

Moreover, Moton notes that many blacks still carried

the South: A Study in Social Control (Port Washington: Kennikat Press, 1968. First edition 1937).

²⁰ Doyle, Etiquette, 11.

suspicion and fear of whites from slavery days. In fact, racial hatred accounted for the climate of violence that swept through the South, as well as the large Northern cities, in the years following World War I. Henry Brown, a former slave in South Carolina, expressed his anxiety over the Scottsboro case: Augustus Ladson noted that his informant was "much concerned" about the trial.²¹ Jennie Patterson, a former slave woman in Virginia, also testified of her fears when she confided in Susie R. C. Byrd: "I don' tole you I was feared to tell all I done seen in my lifetime, an' I ain' tellin' white folks but so much even now in dis new day an' time."²² The social climate of the 1930s was thus a major factor that needs to be taken into consideration in an analysis of the slave narratives.

One of the most relevant features of Robert Moton's study for this analysis is his linguistic approach, i.e. the appellations used by whites to refer to or address blacks. Likewise, his examination of blacks' reactions is important. According to Moton, the word "nigger" was the most resented,²³ followed by terms such as "darker" and "coon."

²¹ S.C. I, 126.

²² Perdue, Weevils, 219-20.

²³ "All Negroes everywhere resent being called 'nigger' by any white person under any circumstances." Moton, What the Negro Thinks, 186.

The word "Negro" he deemed acceptable depending on the spelling--acceptable if written with a capital "N," otherwise it was considered as contemptuous. He strongly rejected the word "negress," a term reminiscent of slavery days when slaves' status was associated with chattel.

As for terms of direct address, Moton stressed that appellations such as "Aunt" and "Uncle," even though they might have expressed some respect from whites under slavery, were resented by blacks by the first decades of the twentieth century. They connoted both a familiarity and a lack of respect from whites. Similarly, Moton found blacks resentful at whites' unwillingness to use formal forms of address such as "Mr." or "Mrs." Throughout the Slave Narrative Collection, elderly persons are referred to or called by their Christian name (preceded sometimes by "Aunt" or "Uncle") by white interviewers, an offensive practice according to Moton. The etiquette used under slavery still prevailed in the 1930s.

These sources suggest that the race of the interviewers was a major factor in the interviewing process and its final product, the narrative, and that analysis of forms of address and tone can reveal interaction. Susan Hamlin's interviewers must be identified as a preliminary step to the analysis of the interviews. This perspective will also provide a model

for the analysis of other slave narratives.

In his study of the Slave Narrative Collection, Paul D. Escott provided a list of the interviewers by race.²⁴ George P. Rawick criticized this list,²⁵ and I have rechecked Escott's findings against internal evidence. Like Escott, I found that Jessie A. Butler was a white female fieldworker, and, contrary to Rawick's statement, that Augustus Ladson was a black male fieldworker.²⁶ An analysis of Susan Hamlin's interview by Ladson helps identify both fieldworkers race. Hamlin addressed Ladson as "son,"²⁷ a form of address an ex-slave would not have been likely to use towards a white man under the strained Southern racial relations of the 1930s. Ladson in turn referred to her as "Mrs. Susan Hamilton." Whites would be unlikely to use such terminology with blacks. Moreover, some of Hamlin's statements show a distinct dislike of whites: "De white race is so brazen," and further down, quoting a slavewoman insulting her

²⁴ Escott, Slavery Remembered, 188.

²⁵ George P. Rawick, "Slavery Remembered," American Historical Review 85 (August 80): 466.

²⁶ In his General Introduction to the Supplement to The American Slave, Rawick listed only two interviewers (out of twenty) in South Carolina as blacks, without any mention of Augustus Ladson. Rawick, The American Slave, Supplement, Series 1, vol. 6., (1977), li.

²⁷ S.C. II, 233.

mistress: "dat damn white, pale-face bastard."²⁸ It is difficult to believe Hamlin would have expressed such negative feelings had Ladson been a white man.²⁹

The race and gender of the two other interviewers selected for this study do not present problems. In the case of W. W. Dixon, the South Carolinian fieldworker, internal evidence abounds to ascertain his race and gender. Five informants addressed him as "white folks."³⁰ We also learn that he was a man because eleven informants called him "sir," "sirree," or "mister." As for Susie R. C. Byrd, she was identified by Charles L. Perdue as one of the black female fieldworkers of the Virginia Writers' Project.³¹ Perdue's information is corroborated by internal evidence.

²⁸ S.C. II, 235, 236.

²⁹ James West Davidson and Mark Hamilton Lytle noticed Susan Hamlin's case through their reading of the South Carolina narratives, and have reached the same conclusions as far as Augustus Ladson's race is concerned. Davidson and Hamilton, After the Fact: The Art of Historical Detection (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1982), 193. I came upon their book at the writing stage of this study.

³⁰ Millie Barber, Dinah Cunningham, Eliza Hasty, Adeline Johnson, and Charity Moore.

³¹ Perdue, Weevils, Appendix 4, 356.

A Textual Analysis

The first step in a literary analysis is to study the form of a text--first or third person narrative, introductory paragraphs, notes on sources, possible comments by the writer (in this case the interviewers who present the narratives). The forms of address used by informants and interviewers will be given special attention because of the insights they provide on the relationship between the two actors of the conversational narrative. The last step addresses then the tone of the text by relying on the previous analysis. Susan Hamlin's interviews will be considered first.

Formal Analysis

Chronologically, Susan Hamlin was interviewed first by Augustus Ladson, a black male fieldworker.³² Ladson gave three headings to the narrative, embodying what were to him essential elements in Hamlin's story. He noted the advanced age of the former slave woman, and the fact that she had "never shaken hands since 1863."³³ Ladson was struck by

³² S.C. II, 233-6.

³³ Hamlin said she refused doing so after Lincoln was shot by the man with whom he had shaken hands. S.C. II, 233.

Hamlin's decision and determination following Lincoln's assassination, as well as by her political awareness of Lincoln's impact for Black Americans. The third piece of information given in the title evokes Susan Hamlin scrubbing a floor on her knees when "Freedom Gun Fired," a striking image of the laboring slavewoman in the humblest position with, in the background, the explosion of gunfire announcing freedom.

Augustus Ladson provided some information on his informant in a source note. He wrote down her address and her age, and he emphasized her excellent physical condition. He also mentioned a piece of information not present in the body of text itself, namely the fact that she could not keep the wages she was paid as a hired out worker: "She was hired out . . . for seven dollars a month which had to be given her master."³⁴ His use of a verb of obligation implies that he deemed the situation unfair.

The titles and the source note are the only indications of Augustus Ladson's participation in the interview. The body of interview is in the first person throughout, without any questions or commentaries by Ladson listed. Susan Hamlin is quoted as referring to him only once in the opening sentence, as seen above. And yet, these short annotations

³⁴ S.C. II, 236.

by Ladson are indicative of his supportive and sympathetic listening to his informant's tale.

Jessie A. Butler's interviews of Susan Hamlin also comprise titles and source notes.³⁵ Both titles briefly indicate that the fieldworker was interviewing an ex-slave. The note on sources at the end of the interviews gives some indication on the informant's civil status as mentioned above. It also reveals the fieldworker's perception of her own importance in the interviewing process. Butler's comments on Hamlin's age are in the first person, as opposed to Ladson's, who reported Hamlin's own statement. Moreover, her choice of vocabulary is symbolic of what will be her standpoint throughout the interviews: she "judges" Hamlin's age along with other pieces of information that she will question in the text.³⁶

The narrative itself starts with an introductory paragraph by Butler, mentioning how she met Hamlin, and how their conversation started. Hamlin is then quoted as she narrates her experience as a slave, and she is interrupted here and there by Butler's questions or comments. The interviewer asks leading questions, the phrasing of which implies the type of answer she wishes to hear. At the

³⁵ S.C. II, 223-32.

³⁶ S.C. II, 232.

beginning of the interview for instance, Hamlin recalled her master keeping her wages when she was hired out. Butler cut in at that point to ask if this should not have been expected since the slaveowner fed and clothed the slavewoman. Such a question connotes Butler's own point of view, and Hamlin hastened to concur with her.³⁷ Two other questions by Butler hinted at the mildness of slavery, and the benevolence of slaveowners.³⁸ The informant's answers were similarly mitigated. The very phrasing of questions did not put her at ease. She was not expected merely to relate her own tale, but to do so while suiting her white interviewer's expectations.

W. W. Dixon conducted twenty-one interviews with female ex-slaves in Winnsboro, South Carolina. None of his interviews gives any indication as to the date when these interviews were recorded. On a structural level, over half of the interviews start with an introductory paragraph in the third person. Dixon typically provides there the name of the

³⁷ "Don't you think that was fair? If you were fed and clothed by him, shouldn't he be paid for your work?" "Course it been fair," she answered, "I belong to him and he got to get something to take care of me." S.C. II, 227.

³⁸ "Were most of the masters kind?" "Did they take good care of the slaves when their babies were born?" S.C. II, 229, 231.

informant, her way and place of living, some physical description as well as an occasional judgment on her character. The narratives then proceed in the first person, apparently in the words of the informant, and their length averages three pages.

Susie R. C. Byrd interviewed twenty-one former slavewomen in Virginia. Most of the interviews in Charles L. Perdue's edition are titled with the informants' first and last names preceded by "Mrs." The narratives are in the first person. In only two cases Susie Byrd records remarks in parentheses at the beginning of the narrative. Only once is she quoted as asking a question, but the narratives make clear that she interacted actively with her informants.

Forms of Address

The forms of address or reference an interviewer used towards her/his informant, and vice versa, provide an insight on the relationship between the two persons engaged in the interviewing process. The way interviewers addressed their informants will first be depicted, since this is usually the type of information we get in a first reading of the texts.

Jessie A. Butler referred to her informant by using the

latter's first name in the first interview.³⁹ The second narrative starts with her meeting "old Susan Hamlin,"⁴⁰ but she will call her only by her Christian name throughout. As for Augustus Ladson, he referred to "Mrs. Susan Hamilton" in his note on sources,⁴¹ a polite form of address. The white female fieldworker used condescending forms of address towards a person she saw primarily as inferior on the social scale--a black woman as well as an ex-slave--thus creating a hierarchical relationship between them. Her phrasing also implies that she was criticizing Hamlin's surroundings. The black male fieldworker on the other hand used a form respectful of the age of his informant, as well as expressing politeness to a person he had just met.

Susan Hamlin's ways of addressing her interviewers present an analogous dichotomy. After Augustus Ladson stated the purpose of his visit, she was quoted addressing him in her first sentence recorded: "I'm a hund'ed an' one years old now, son."⁴² She was as laconic in that respect in her first interview by Jessie Butler--she addressed the latter directly only twice--but without the familiarity showed

³⁹ "Susan lives with a mulatto family of the better type."
S.C. II, 232.

⁴⁰ S.C. II, 223.

⁴¹ S.C. II, 236.

⁴² S.C. II, 233.

Ladson. She called Butler "Ma'am," the respectful phrase blacks were expected to use towards white women in the segregated South. The second time she met Butler, in an interview much shorter in length and definitely less detailed, she interrupted her answers four times with "Ma'am," and three times with "Missus," a term even more reminiscent of the plantation etiquette. Susan Hamlin's addresses to her interviewers thus reflect her perception of the stiff and strained relationship established between them. Their formal interaction is a first indication on the further development of the interviews.

W. W. Dixon, white male fieldworker in South Carolina, addressed his informants or referred to them in terms common in blacks' and whites' relationships at the time of the interviews. In his introductory paragraph to about half of his narratives, Dixon presented the informant by announcing her first and last names, and then referred to her by her Christian name only (this is the case for eight informants). He referred to Mary Raines as "the old darkey,"⁴³ and to Josephine Stewart as "a small, dark negress."⁴⁴ The word "Negro" is used several times in four narratives. Adeline

⁴³ S.C. IV, 2.

⁴⁴ S.C. IV, 151.

Johnson was to him the embodiment of the "old Negro 'Mauma'" of the plantation on which "dusky Negro laborers" toiled while singing Negro spirituals.⁴⁵ Only one of the informants, Anne Bell, was described as an "old lady," even "delightful."⁴⁶ None of the four informants he knew personally were referred to in those latter terms. As we have seen above with Robert Moton's perspective, terms such as "darkey" and "negress" denote contempt and a superior attitude from the white interviewer.

In his introductory paragraphs also, there is a striking difference in the way Dixon referred to his informant and the way he referred to white people, on whose estate the informant sometimes lived. "Adeline lives . . . on . . . a plantation owned by Mr. A. M. Owens of Winnsboro."⁴⁷ This presentation is characteristic of Dixon's dual approach. He shows a paternalistic attitude towards the former slave woman as opposed to a respectful attitude towards the plantation owner.

Similarly, it is meaningful to analyze the way the informants addressed their white fieldworker. Two of them called him "master" or "marse." Violet Guntharpe

⁴⁵ S.C. III, 35.

⁴⁶ S.C. I, 51.

⁴⁷ S.C. III, 35.

respectfully called him "master Wood," from the name of his mother, Sallie Woodward, but she also used an affectionate term, "honey." Anne Broome also shifted from a reverent appellation "boss" to the more familiar term "honey." In all, four informants used the word "boss," three used the word "honey", while five called Dixon "white folks," and eleven "mister," "sir," or "sirree." A global analysis of the ex-slaves' addresses show that they overwhelmingly used reverent appellations as opposed to more familiar, or even affectionate ones.⁴⁸ It also reflects the conclusions drawn from Susan Hamlin's interview by Jessie A. Butler, white female fieldworker. In their attitudes, former slavewomen interviewed by white fieldworkers showed restraint and an awareness of the social distance separating them from whites. As for the white interviewers, not only did they have the same awareness, they also displayed a paternalistic and condescending attitude towards their informants. The etiquette of race relations takes all its meaning here.

The interviews collected by Susie R. C. Byrd, black

⁴⁸ In the category "reverent appellations" I have included "white folks" (five occurrences), "boss" (four occurrences), "master/marse" (two occurrences), "sir/sirree/mister" (eleven occurrences), i.e. twenty-two occurrences. The category "familiar/affectionate" includes only "honey" that was mentioned by three informants.

female fieldworker in Virginia, rarely indicate the way Byrd addressed her informants. There are only three such occurrences in her twenty-one narratives. Byrd was so struck by one informant's description of her mother's work as a slave, as well as by her comments, that she evoked her image under slavery employing her first and last name: "Amelia Walker used to set on de fence . . ." ⁴⁹ She used the same type of reference to illustrate Sally Ashton's brief recollections. ⁵⁰ Drawing on a remark by Della Harris, Susie Byrd asked her informant's opinion on education, ⁵¹ and called her "Mrs. Harris," a form of address indicative of her respect.

If we do not have more examples of Susie Byrd's behavior towards her informants, we have at least another source of information on which to rely, namely her own notes. ⁵² Byrd explained there how she encountered some ex-slaves.

⁴⁹ Perdue, Weevils, 292. Amelia Walker stressed the similarity of treatment slavewomen and slavemen received as far as work was concerned: "Mama plowed wid three horses--ain't dat somp'n?" Slaveholders ignored gender differences when it came to work assignments, and both Amelia Walker and Susie Byrd recognized the endurance slavewomen demonstrated.

⁵⁰ Perdue, Weevils, 14.

⁵¹ "Do you think, Mrs. Harris, education has helped our race?" Perdue, Weevils, 131.

⁵² Charles L. Perdue has published Susie Byrd's "Notes on Interviewing Ex-Slaves." Perdue, Weevils, Appendix 8, 383-8.

Recognizing an aged blind man she knew, she had exclaimed: "Well, well, who is this gentleman?"⁵³ She subsequently called him "Brother John" (he was a Reverend), "Rev. Brown," "Mr. Brown," or "Sir"; she likewise referred to "Reverend John Brown," and "Mr. and Mrs. Brown."⁵⁴ She used the same type of courteous appellations for other ex-slaves throughout her notes.

The narratives compiled by Susie Byrd do provide information on her informants' ways of addressing their black female interviewer. Out of twenty-one informants, eleven are quoted as addressing Byrd. Only Lillian Clarke addressed her formally once as "Mam," but this expression was rather used emphatically to express a slaveowner's brutality: "Oh my, he was mighty mean to his slaves. Yas mam, dat he was."⁵⁵ She also called Byrd "honey" when both could empathize with each other on such a point: "Does you know honey, de way white folks use to treat us niggers."⁵⁶ Three informants addressed her in a polite form "Miss Sue," yet the diminutive form of the first name connotes a certain degree of familiarity. Moreover, those same informants also used more

⁵³ Perdue, Weevils, 383.

⁵⁴ Perdue, Weevils, 384.

⁵⁵ Perdue, Weevils, 72.

⁵⁶ Perdue, Weevils, 73.

familiar terms towards Byrd: "Baby," "Chile," "Gal," "Honey." Fannie Berry, for instance, the most prolific informant of the Virginia narratives,⁵⁷ and whose narrative surely is one of the longest of the whole Collection of ex-slave narratives compiled by the Federal Writers' Project, addressed Susie Byrd seven times as "Miss Sue," but she also preferentially called her "honey" (twelve occurrences), or "child/chile" (eight occurrences), as well as "baby" (five occurrences). Familiar and affectionate terms predominate when informants addressed Susie Byrd.⁵⁸

Informants addressed black and white interviewers in very different ways. The former slave women held a deferential attitude towards W. W. Dixon and Jessie A. Butler. They felt more comfortable with Susie Byrd or Augustus Ladson, and did not hesitate to use familiar expressions with them. We can now analyze the bearing of these findings on the contents of the interviews.

⁵⁷ Fanny Berry's narrative numbers over nineteen pages in Charles L. Perdue's edition. Perdue, Weevils, 30-50.

⁵⁸ Nine informants called Susie Byrd "honey" (thirty-three occurrences); seven called her "child/chile" (twenty-three occurrences); five called her "baby" (eleven occurrences); four called her "gal" (ten occurrences); three called her "Miss Sue" (fourteen occurrences); one called her "Susie/Sussie" (four occurrences).

Tone of the Narratives

The first step is an assessment of the informant's reaction to the stated purpose of the interviewer's visit. Augustus Ladson does not give us any indication in that respect, nor does the narrative. But Hamlin told Jessie A. Butler, her second interviewer, about a man "from de government [sent] to find out 'bout slavery" who [had] asked her "all kind of questions."⁵⁹ Ladson had thus used a straightforward approach with Susan Hamlin, and she answered his questions knowingly.

Even though Hamlin is not quoted as recounting the anecdote of her wages in Ladson's interview, we know nevertheless that she told him about it, and infer that she obtained a sympathetic reaction. She then told Ladson about slaveowners' brutality, the separation of families, and slaves' despair. But she also had tales of resistance embodied in her father's successful escape, or a slavewoman's refusal of her master's sexual demands. She confided her hatred of the white race to her black interviewer. The tone of the narrative is fluid and confident, with long sentences and paragraphs.

Jessie Butler on the other hand was not expecting

⁵⁹ S.C. II, 228.

genuine answers or interaction from a clearly stated request. She thus decided on a deceptive approach, leading Susan Hamlin to believe she came from the Welfare office.⁶⁰ Most of the ex-slaves interviewed for the Federal Writers' Project were destitute, and Susan Hamlin had previously benefited from the office. She would undoubtedly be willing to answer any questions that a representative from the relief agency would care to ask, so as to secure some financial help. Butler's assumptions were correct up to a certain point. The question is where Hamlin would decide to stop pleasing her interviewer, and state her personal feelings and opinions.

Susan Hamlin made a choice rapidly. She started by telling Jessie Butler how she was hired out by her master, and how he got her wages. She had received a positive feedback from her black interviewer on the same story, and seemed to be testing her white interviewer. Butler intervened, as we have seen, to underline that this practice not only was to be expected, but was fair. From then on, the tone of the narrative can be said to have been set. It definitely took a compliant turn. It had been established that Hamlin's owner had exhibited the proper behavior under those circumstances. Hamlin would afterwards underline

⁶⁰ "She assumed I was from the Welfare office . . . I did not correct this impression, and at no time did she suspect that the object of my visit was to get the story of her experience as a slave." S.C. II, 226.

Edward Fuller's benevolent attitude towards his slaves whose ownership was only an extension of his eagerness to provide happiness for everyone. She mentioned ten times that "Mr. Fuller was a good man."⁶¹

The content and tone of the narrative differ strikingly from the one with Augustus Ladson. Hamlin told Butler about the mild system of slavery under a patriarchal rule, and insisted on the benevolence of the masters. She mentioned the breakup of families without being explicit, relying rather on Butler's knowledge--"You know how dey carry on."⁶² She dwelt on the positive consequences of the slave trade, since American slaves were thus christianized. In her eyes Christianity accounted for the superiority of the whites over the other races, and she was eager to convince Butler how important religion was to her. The one and same informant thus adapted her recollections of slavery to the race of her interviewers.

It is clear from several interviews that W. W. Dixon was born in the area and that he was well known among the former slaves and the white aristocracy of former planters in the Winnsboro community in South Carolina. The narratives give

⁶¹ S.C. II, 226-32.

⁶² S.C. II, 231.

many details on the slaveowners's families and connections, sometimes at Dixon's direct request. Violet Guntharpe kept asking her interviewer whether he was acquainted with her former "young mistresses,"⁶³ and Louisa Davis expressed satisfaction that he should know her former slaveowners' family--"Well, well, well! You know my white folks . . . I's mighty glad of dat."⁶⁴

Four female informants were directly acquainted with Dixon. Mary Woodward remembered seeing him as a child at his aunt's house--"I knows you since 'bout dis high (indicating)."⁶⁵ Roxanna Mobley, Dixon's aunt, was a member of one of the most important planters' families in Winnsboro. Eliza Hasty's first husband, Solomon Dixon, belonged to the family of Dixon's aunt--"him b'long, in slavery time, to your Aunt Roxie's people,"⁶⁶ but W. W. Dixon did not remember the black Baptist preacher. Eliza Hasty's daughter was given the full name of Roxanna Dixon, and was currently living on the estate of the interviewer's grandfather--not an uncommon situation according to Hasty: "Nearly all de white folks leavin' de country dese days and de colored folks gits de

⁶³ S.C. II, 216.

⁶⁴ S.C. I, 299.

⁶⁵ S.C. IV, 257.

⁶⁶ S.C. II, 254.

fine country houses to live in."⁶⁷ Miemy Johnson had also seen W. W. Dixon as a child; she offered him boiled peanuts--"most white folks love them dat way"⁶⁸--and enjoined him to put the remainder in his pocket for him to eat on his way back.

W. W. Dixon was even more taken back to his childhood by Charity Moore: "Course you [remember] my pa, Isaiah Moore . . . He was de Uncle Remus of all de white chillun 'round dese parts . . . I seen him a settin' wid you, Marse Johnnie, . . . many a time."⁶⁹ Joel Chandler Harris' character could not be more accurate here. The embodiment of the reliable old slaveman told animal stories to white children, but he would tell other tales to black children.⁷⁰ Further down, Charity Moore contended: "White folks, my pa had Bible tales he never told de white chillun,"⁷¹ such as the tale about Adam and Eve: "He 'low dat de fust man, Adam, was a black

⁶⁷ S.C. II, 255.

⁶⁸ S.C. III, 59.

⁶⁹ S.C. III, 205.

⁷⁰ John Tumlin pointed out that Harris always remained "the white outsider," no matter how successful he was in getting black tales: "the Uncle Remus versions are those which would have been told to a white child." John Tumlin, ed., Uncle Remus: Tales by Joel Chandler Harris (Savannah: The Beehive Press, 1974), XXVI.

⁷¹ S.C. III, 205.

man. Eve was ginger cake color . . ."72 She related the tale for almost two pages until Adam became a white man, "but worse off than when he was a nigger. Dere was more to dat tale but I disremember it now."73 Strangely enough, Moore's memory failed her at this precise point whereas she had been able to provide so many details up to then. Obviously, she could not tell more to a white man.

As Martia Graham Goodson stated in the introduction to her index to the Slave Narrative Collection, the "familiarity of some of the FWP interviewers . . . with the ex-slaves" was an important factor in the compilation of information, and she concluded that it provided some grounds to believe in the veracity of "certain types of information."74 This certainly is a pertinent point. Some objective details could not be changed by informants who knew their interviewer, and moreover knew that s/he would be cognizant with certain facts. But if we push the reasoning further, it seems that this very familiarity might have provided an inhibiting factor in the former slavewomen's recollections of a

72 S.C. III, 206.

73 S.C. III, 207.

74 Martia Graham Goodson, "An Introductory Essay and Subject Index to Selected Interviews from the Slave Narrative Collection" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Union Graduate School, 1977), 23.

subjective character.

Susie R. C. Byrd organized several meetings with a large group of former slaves in Petersburg, Virginia. The meetings were quite a success. In her Notes, Byrd stressed the informants' keen interest in "Negro History," and their pleasure at having their experience recorded.⁷⁵ The interviewer herself confessed how much she enjoyed the project. The narratives reflect the informants' and the interviewer's common interest by the freedom of expression and the nature of the information shared. Several informants expressed their regret at not having had the opportunity of an education.⁷⁶ They evoked the brutality of slavery, but took pride in their tales of resistance, demonstrating the slaves' will and ability to act under an oppressive regime.

A comparison between the narratives compiled by Susie R. C. Byrd and W. W. Dixon shows a difference in the way former slave women talked about their owners. In general, Byrd's informants dwelt less on their owners' families than

⁷⁵ Perdue, Weevils, 384-6.

⁷⁶ Education is a recurrent theme throughout the Virginia narratives, and demonstrates the ex-slaves' concern and will to fight off the intellectual poverty they were subjected to under slavery. Some took pride in their intellectual achievements, like Mary Jone Wilson who learnt how to read after the Civil War, graduated from Hampton Institute, and opened her own school. Perdue, Weevils, 330-1.

Dixon's informants. When they did talk about them, they provided a slave perspective as opposed to the white perspective that Dixon obtained. All in all, a textual analysis illustrates the impact that the race as well as the expectations of the interviewers bore on the reported recollections of the former slave women.

An awareness of the social situation in the South when the interviews were gathered is then significant. Not only did state laws still prohibit intermarriage between blacks and whites in the 1930s, but, as Bertram Wilbur Doyle noted, "the mores supporting the law seem[ed] to be even more effective than the law," black as well as white mores.⁷⁷ If sexual relations between blacks and whites were taboo, it is then legitimate to consider that there might have been some reluctance on the part of former slaves to refer to interracial sexual relations, especially when interviewed by members of the dominant group in the segregated South.

Interracial liaisons are a topic particularly fitted to implement the analytical framework outlined above and check its validity. Before approaching the oral slave narratives in this light in order to assess the value of this framework, it is necessary to see how historians have tackled the question.

⁷⁷ Doyle, Etiquette, 152.

CHAPTER TWO

INTERRACIAL SEXUAL RELATIONS: A HISTORIOGRAPHICAL SURVEY

James Hugo Johnston: A Pioneering Study

To date the most comprehensive study of black-white sexual liaisons is James Hugo Johnston's dissertation. It was written in 1937--the time when the oral slave narratives were being compiled--but not published until 1970.¹ It is significant that it should be a black scholar who would deem the topic of black-white sexual relations important enough in the history of the two races' relations to devote a lengthy and detailed study to it, and that it was not published for more than thirty years. Johnston's study is an encompassing approach to the question, dealt with sensitively and "in [an] emotionally neutral key,"² as Winthrop D. Jordan put it. Considering that his dissertation

¹ James Hugo Johnston, Race Relations in Virginia and Miscegenation in the South, 1776-1860, Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Chicago, 1937. (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1970).

² Winthrop D. Jordan, Foreword to Race Relations in Virginia, p. V.

was completed in the 1930s, at a time when the importance and indeed the role of women in history were largely underestimated--not to say ignored--by the history profession, it is remarkable that Johnston should have devoted large sections of his study to the slavewomen's perceptions of interracial sexual relations.

James Johnston showed that interracial sexual relations had multiple facets, and that it is extremely difficult, sometimes impossible, to distinguish among sexual abuse, forced consent, passive consent, or genuine consent under a system that did not permit the individual much latitude. Black-white sexual relations often took the form of sexual abuse--a specific extension to women of the more general physical oppression of slavery--be it under isolated or recurrent aspects. In each aspect, there could be either benefits or problems for the women concerned. If there were benefits, they could be on a short- or long-term basis. Immediate benefits might include avoiding a punishment, whatever its forms, or obtaining a lighter load of work. Long-range benefits might mean favored treatment, maybe as a housekeeper or in open concubinage.

There could also be bonds of real affection between a black woman and a white man, affection that could sometimes secure freedom for the slavewoman and their offspring. Since manumission was forbidden in most Southern states, masters

might resort to sending their mulatto children, and sometimes the mother, to free states. In such cases, interracial sexual relations meant the possibility to escape slavery or, as Gerda Lerner put it, might "result in [their] upward mobility."³ One writer has related this mobility pattern to the more general trend in the American experience, thus stressing the slavewomen's share in the national experience.⁴

However, Johnston noted that not all slaveowners displayed such emotional attachment and commitment to either their children or their mistresses. Interracial sexual relations might not mean any improvement of slavewomen's lot, especially on plantations where breeding was practiced. Moreover, children, as well as their mother, could be sold away at the slaveowner's whim, or under the influence of his wife. When slavewomen resisted--again variations were numerous--retaliation took many forms: physical punishment, selling away, even death.

For all his sensitivity and his concern to put in light the slavewomen's perspective on interracial sexual relations, Johnston depicted this aspect of their experience so that

³ Lerner, Creation, 96.

⁴ "Here we have a slavery-induced contortion of typical American efforts to achieve upward mobility." Peter Wallenstein, "The Son of a Slave," unpublished manuscript, 1981, 11.

they are mainly seen as victims. Later historians have tended to treat slave women under that perspective, when they have considered them at all. This pattern of victimization stems from a male perspective. Actually, interracial sexual relations did not concern black women and white men only. Johnston does provide evidence of black men-white women liaisons from judicial records.⁵ But after him, historians have neglected this construct. As Orville Vernon Burton put it, "if historians have not greatly explored white male-slave female sexual relations, even less has been said about the other side of black-white sexual relationships."⁶

After James Hugo Johnston's pioneering study, slave women and the topic of interracial sexual relations have thus been neglected, due to the historians' male perspective. An analysis of further studies of the subject will enlarge our understanding of this process.

⁵ Johnston found evidence in the records of Virginia divorces that "the white woman in the slave period, in many cases, succumbed to the same human weaknesses, lusts, and temptations [as] white men." Johnston, Race Relations, 250. The Virginia narratives by slave women also provide examples of slave men coerced by their female owners into sexual relationships. Matilda Perry told Claude W. Anderson about her father's mulatto son "by a white 'oman!," and repeated twice: "it was slavery times and, and you had to do what the white man said or the white woman said." Perdue, Weevils, 224, 225.

⁶ Orville Vernon Burton, In My Father's House Are Many Mansions: Family and Community in Edgefield, South Carolina (Chapel Hill: University of South Carolina Press, 1985), 189.

Love Entanglements: A White Male Perspective

Only two studies were devoted to the topic of miscegenation after Johnston's. Four years after his work was published, Eugene D. Genovese produced the sequel to his study of the "world the slaveholders made" by publishing his monumental work on "the world the slaves made."⁷ The list of sources is impressive; Norman R. Yetman has counted "over six hundred footnote references" to the Slave Narrative Collection.⁸

Genovese's perception of white-black intimate contacts proceeds from his overall analysis and primary perspective of the plantation system: slaves' and masters' worlds were inextricably intertwined. Indeed, no other aspect of slavery and slave-master relations could possibly illustrate such a study so well. As for his treatment of the theme, Genovese takes into consideration the complexity of interracial sexual relations and recognizes the impact they had on Southern life.⁹ This is where there is a problem with his treatment

⁷ Eugene D. Genovese, Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made (New York: Vintage Books, 1974).

⁸ Norman R. Yetman, "Ex-Slave Interviews," 201. This number has to be qualified. David Bailey notes that only 27 percent of all the footnotes refer to black sources. Bailey, "Divided Prism," 383.

⁹ Genovese, Roll, Jordan, Roll, 415.

of "miscegenation": this subchapter deals mainly with the planter's perception of black-white liaisons, i.e. a white male perspective. All the citations in the text come from planters' diaries or other white sources. Moreover, Genovese's generalizations are not always substantiated by the sources cited, or at all. When he refers to the slave narratives, he admits that testimonies underline both sexual abuse and genuine bonds of affection between slavewomen and their masters, but the following text deals solely with the positive bonds.¹⁰ Genovese concludes with a statement that typifies his standpoint throughout this subchapter: "The tragedy of miscegenation lay, not in its collapse into lust and sexual exploitation, but in the terrible pressure to deny the delight, affection, and love that so often grew from tawdry beginnings."¹¹ In his Preface, Genovese asked "readers to be patient with . . . some . . . sections . . . that treat the masters and other white people much more fully than the slaves . . ."¹² It is difficult to agree with an analysis that presents interracial sexual relations primarily as romantic involvements, and hardly takes into consideration the perspective of the actors to whom the study was

¹⁰ Genovese, Roll, Jordan, Roll, 418.

¹¹ Genovese, Roll, Jordan, Roll, 419.

¹² Genovese, Roll, Jordan, Roll, XVII.

originally devoted.

The other study of miscegenation in its own right is a recent article published in the Dictionary of Afro-American Slavery.¹³ Laurence Glasco approaches the topic with a sentimentalist attitude and underplays the reality of interracial sexual relations. Caught in a white male perspective, he ignores the experience of slavewomen or sees them as passive objects.

There is no other study of miscegenation or interracial sexual relations. In the last twenty years slavery scholars have only mentioned the topic, if at all. It is thus necessary to try and uncover this aspect of the slavewomen's experience from a female point of view. A feminist framework proves helpful to provide new perspectives and analyze the oral slave narratives, one of the few primary sources by slavewomen.

Oppression and Sexual Abuse: A Feminist Perspective

The slave narratives emphasize one of the characteristic

¹³ Randall M. Miller and John David Smith, eds., Dictionary of Afro-American Slavery (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988).

features of slavery, i.e. the absolute power of the masters over the slaves, especially the physical form of oppression and abuse that this power took. It is generally recognized that subjection was an inclusive feature of slavery, a system under which individuals not only were coerced by other individuals to perform some tasks for the latter, but moreover found themselves absolutely powerless. There has been a debate as to the extent to which physical force had to be exercised to constrain slaves--the counterargument playing on the mildness of slavery under a patriarchal rule. In any case Southern society had devised a number of means, legally as well as practically, to keep slaves in narrow bounds. The slave was legally the property of the master, and virtually without rights. On a practical level, slaves' freedom of movement was restricted: passes were mandatory to circulate from one plantation to another, and patrollers kept a vigilant watch with the help of hounds trained for human searches. Any attempt at rebellion, whatever its form, was severely punished, leading sometimes to death. All these forms of repression that built the frame of interracial relations in the South were indicative of the oppressive nature of slavery.

Oppression assumed yet a further dimension for women because, to take up David M. Potter's terminology, slavery

had a "differential impact on the sexes."¹⁴ Women could be physically abused, as men were, but they could be also sexually abused, which was rarely the case for men.

This question of interracial sexual relations has been and still is a sensitive issue in Afro-American literature. The terminology and its use show some confusion on two levels. First "miscegenation" technically refers to intermarriage between races, but over the years it has taken the broader meaning of interracial sexual relations--with all the shades the term may cover. When used indiscriminately, it emphasizes a mild form of sexual relations between slaves and whites. There were affectionate bonds, but they should not be overemphasized. The institution of slavery was oppressive by definition and did not leave much latitude to those people, overwhelmingly women, subjected to such liaisons. Angela Y. Davis argues that the term is misleading, and opposes it to "sexual exploitation." She insists that "the issue of sexual abuse has been all but glossed over in the traditional literature on slavery."¹⁵ Orville Vernon Burton, a less radical scholar, strongly

¹⁴ David M. Potter, "American Women and the American Character," 283, in Don E. Fehrenbacher, ed. History and American Society: Essays of David M. Potter, 278-303 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973).

¹⁵ Angela Y. Davis, Women, Race and Class (New York: Vintage Books, 1983), 25.

supports her views, and states that little scholarly research has been conducted in the field of interracial sexual relations. He is the only recent scholar of slavery to treat the theme as an inclusive part of the slave family. He treats this topic in its broader aspects, i.e. not only as sexual abuse of which slavewomen would have been the passive victims, but as a more complex set of relationships which, though taking place within an oppressive framework, nevertheless permitted the slavewomen not only to act, but also to re-act to the best (within limits) of their interests.¹⁶

Second, "miscegenation" also implies the production of children of interracial liaisons. Joel Williamson defines the term as "a broad range of intimacy, from the most ephemeral interracial sexual contacts to marriage and children."¹⁷ His study is devoted to mulattoes, and not to the relationships between whites and blacks--women or men. A differentiation must be made when addressing the topic of interracial liaisons between the sexual relationships--and its numerous facets--and the children of these liaisons.

¹⁶ Burton, My Father's House, 185-9.

¹⁷ Joel Williamson, New People: Miscegenation and Mulattoes in the United States (New York: The Free Press, 1980), xii.

In The Creation of Patriarchy, Gerda Lerner showed how sexual abuse of slavewomen by slaveholders characterized all slave societies throughout the ages, and how it served a double purpose: "it dishonored women and by implication served a symbolic castration of their men."¹⁸

American writings on slavery--from abolitionists and slavemen to modern scholars--have displayed a deep sensitivity to both these issues. The abolitionist movement of the nineteenth century repeatedly stressed the pernicious effects of slavery on the morality of the slaves as well as of the masters. In a patriarchal society, the most degrading thing that could happen to a woman was the loss of her chastity, or the inability to preserve her "honor," in other words, to be "truthful" to her husband. The male slave narratives reflect this view, and the sense of shame and loss in status felt by black men unable to protect their wives, mothers, sisters, and daughters.

Scholars as well have dwelt at length on the traumatic effects that the use and abuse of slavewomen had on slavemen. John Blassingame, for example, in his study of the slave community--that largely ignores the slavewomen's perspective--is prone to underline the psychological devastation suffered by slavemen as a result. "Love is no

¹⁸ Lerner, Creation, 80.

small matter for any man; for a slave it represented one of the major crises in his life . . . [A slave man] did not want to . . . be forced to watch as [his wife] was beaten, insulted, raped, overworked, or starved without being able to protect her."¹⁹ Later he adds: "The most serious impediment to the man's acquisition of status in his family was his inability to protect his wife from the sexual advances of whites and the physical abuse of his master."²⁰ Stating a passive role for women (they were dishonored) versus an active role for men (they felt dishonored), he completely ignored the impact sexual abuse might have had on the very persons most concerned.

Indeed, until recently, sexual abuse and the powerlessness of slavewomen were probably the features of their experience the most stressed, with the result that they were categorized solely as victims. Frances Smith Foster joins Gerda Lerner in denouncing a binary "generic" categorization, in Gerda Lerner's terminology, that imprisons women as a group in a situation of oppressed versus oppressors. Such a categorization is conceptually fallacious, for even under slavery some women, namely the

¹⁹ Blassingame, Slave Community, 164.

²⁰ Blassingame, Slave Community, 172. For a more extended critique of Blassingame's male perspective on slavery, see Wallenstein, "Son of a Slave."

white slaveholding women, were oppressors--of their black slaves--as well as oppressed--as beings deprived of rights in a patriarchal society. Moreover, any such categorization deprives slavewomen of any agency on their life. A study of the testimony of slavewomen in that respect will provide a picture of their own perceptions on that particular topic in the 1930s.

The question of interracial sexual relations deserves more scholarly treatment. It directly relates to a major aspect of the slavewomen's experience, and consequently adds another perspective on the slave family and community, two of the most recent fields of concern and inquiry among scholars of slavery. The study of the slavewomen's narratives in the light of black-white sexual relations will enlighten this particular aspect of the institution of slavery from the black women's perspective.

CHAPTER THREE

INTERRACIAL SEXUAL RELATIONS AND THE SLAVE NARRATIVES: AN IMPLEMENTATION

The topic of interracial sexual relations crystallizes the different analyses that can help decipher the slave narratives. In the 1930s it was a potent and delicate subject to allude to black-white sexual relations in the segregated South. On a formal level, all the Southern states without exception forbade intermarriage between blacks and whites. The Southern racial etiquette was also sufficiently powerful to induce circumspection among former slaves in talking to whites about a taboo subject. But on an informal level, to take up the point of view of blacks, black-white liaisons might not have been a topic former slaves wished to speak about.

Susan Hamlin's different interviews again provide some striking information on this question. She readily told her black male interviewer of her mother giving birth to the slaveowner's son,¹ information she did not provide her white

¹ S.C. II, 233.

female interviewer. Yet she reminded Jessie A. Butler of her mixed ascendancy: "You know I is mix blood, my grandfather bin a white man and my grandmother a mulatto."² A textual analysis of the narratives mentioning interracial sexual relations in the light of the interviewers' race can provide information on their incidence and forms. It gives also an idea on what a former slave woman would decide to say depending on the race of her interviewer. A comparison between Hamlin's narratives focusing on black-white sexual relations can provide a model for the study of the other narratives mentioning this topic.

Susan Hamlin's Interviews

Susan Hamlin was first interviewed by Augustus Ladson. Her narrative is in the first person throughout, as we have seen above. In her own words then, Hamlin related that her mother had had a mulatto child by her master, who was not a planter but the president of a bank in Charleston. He owned nineteen slaves, most of whom he hired out. His mulatto child by Susan Hamlin's mother was a bricklayer, apparently

² S.C. II, 232.

also hired out.³ Susan Hamlin did not give any more details on this personal example of black-white relationships. We do not know whether Hamlin's mother was sexually abused, nor do we learn anything about her reaction to this event. Had this liaison been recurrent or casual? What impact did it have on her personal and family life? Unfortunately, Hamlin herself was noncommittal on these questions. And yet, the very fact that she should mention it to her black interviewer, and not to her white interviewer, has to be stressed.

Compare this with another narrative presenting similar features. Savilla Burrell was a South Carolinian ex-slave interviewed by a white male fieldworker. Her mother, like Hamlin's, bore her slaveowner's child, who was sold away. Burrell's statements mainly took the form of a white perspective; for instance, she underlined several times the grief of the slaveowner's wife at her husband's repeated adultery with their slavewomen. Susan Hamlin said nothing about the reaction or attitude of Edward Fuller's wife. Talking to a black interviewer, she did not have to please him and give him information on the feelings of her white owners.

³ S.C. II, 233.

Another difference between Hamlin's interview by Augustus Ladson and Burrell's interview concerns the fate of those mulatto children, a sensitive and controversial issue in the literature on slavery. Savilla Burrell stated that Tom Still sold his mulatto children away, but Susan Hamlin's half brother lived with the family and was apprenticed to a trade, as were other slaves; for instance, James, another brother of Susan Hamlin's, but the son of a slave, was a shoemaker. Hamlin mentioned that Edward Fuller hired out most of his slaves, and we can assume on the basis of his skills that this was also the case for William Fuller, the mulatto son.

From the testimony of these former slaves we thus get a different picture of the consequences that interracial sexual relations between master and slave woman had for the offspring of these relations. Ruthlessness prevailed in the case of Savilla Burrell's sibling. Edward Fuller's mulatto son was not separated from his family, but his situation did not differ either from the other slaves.

As for Hamlin's interviews with Jessie A. Butler, she did not tell her interviewer about her mulatto sibling fathered by her master. On the other hand, she volunteered some details on her grandparents--her grandfather had been white and her grandmother mulatto. She concluded: "I got

both blood, so how I going to quarrel wid either side?"⁴ She actually told Butler what the latter could not but notice anyway, namely the reason for her physical features. Butler did not ask further questions in that respect.

Susan Hamlin's interviews present different features on the topic of interracial sexual relations. Her interaction with her interviewers demonstrates how they all were aware, at least subconsciously, of the racial etiquette prevailing in the South, and adjusted their questions and responses accordingly. Hamlin mentioned a sensitive piece of information to her black interviewer. To her white interviewer, she underlined facts she could not withhold.

W. W. Dixon: A White Male Interviewer in South Carolina

In South Carolina, ten informants definitely mentioned interracial sexual relations to three white men, three white women, and one black man. One of the white male fieldworkers, W. W. Dixon, interviewed twenty-one former slavewomen, four of whom told of black-white liaisons.

For three of these informants, the topic meant that one of their parents or grandparents had been mulatto or white.

⁴ S.C. II, 232.

A common feature of these narratives is the lack of details on the subject. Early in her interview, Delia Thompson referred to her light complexion as one of the reasons that allowed her to be given as a wedding gift to her owner's daughter and to become a housemaid. Later, giving some information on her parents, she stated that her paternal grandfather had been a white man, and added: "[He was] no poor white trash neither."⁵ She was proud of her white connections--"I'se been no common nigger all my life; why, when a child I set up and rock my doll just lak white chillun. . . Then I 'sociate wid white folks all slavery time, marry a man of God"⁶--and boasted that her daughter and grandchildren belonged to the "colored aristocracy of de town," although they had a plain name--"its just Smith."⁷ It is curious that Delia Thompson should not disclose her grandfather's name despite her pride about her white ascendancy and her connections. She knew enough about him to depict her descendants as "colored aristocrats." Thompson does not give any details either on her paternal grandmother, nor on the circumstances under which interracial sexual relations occurred.

⁵ S.C. IV, 161.

⁶ S.C. IV, 161.

⁷ S.C. IV, 162.

Rosa Starke's testimony is of a sibylline nature and presents some interpretative difficulties. At the time of the interview, according to Dixon's introductory paragraph, she was living on a Mrs. Rebecca V. Woodward's plantation. The maiden name of Dixon's mother was Sally Woodward. Was Rebecca Woodward related to Dixon's family? This fact would have had a major impact on Starke. Towards the end of the interview, she told Dixon: "My pappy, you know, was a half white man."⁸ Was Rosa Starke reminding her interviewer of a fact he should have been aware of because he would have been acquainted with Starke's family, or is this expression merely a figure of speech? Interpretation here has to remain equivocal. In any case, Rosa Starke did not give any other information. We do not know which of her grandparents was black, and which white, nor do we learn anything about the circumstances. Dixon did not try to elicit further details from his informant. On the contrary, he apparently asked Starke if she still had something to tell him about slavery.

Sena Moore also mentioned black-white sexual liaisons to her white interviewer. Her grandfather was a free "blue-eyed nigger."⁹ The informant did not give any circumstantial evidence on interracial sexual relations, nor

⁸ S.C. IV, 150.

⁹ S.C. III, 210.

on the way her grandfather had become free--whether he had been born free, or if he had been manumitted, or if he had bought himself his freedom. Dixon lost a chance to learn more, for his next question pertained to money, a question repeated by Moore. Later, she mentioned yet another case of interracial relationships presenting another facet. A Union soldier had tried to talk her into accompanying him away. Moore refused, but he was more successful with another slave girl who followed him (and came back alone later on, pregnant).

A comparison of these three narratives by Delia Thompson, Rosa Starke, and Sena Moore shows striking resemblances in the information given to Dixon, as well as in the form in which it was given. As a formal analysis revealed, neither Rosa Starke nor Delia Thompson referred to her interviewer directly. Sena Moore on the other hand addressed him several times respectfully ("sir," "mister"). As for Dixon, he referred to Rosa Starke alone by her first name. Informant and interviewer thus interacted on a strained level. The information provided consists of mere statements without any details as to the circumstances of interracial sexual relations, the impact on the actors and their reactions, nor on the reactions of the informants themselves. The interviewer never asked for further information on some cryptic statements, and changed the

subject of conversation in two cases. Conversely, it should be noted that all informants volunteered their information on interracial sexual relations.

The fourth informant mentioning interracial sexual relations presented a different facet of the subject, and her testimony has to be analyzed step by step in order to understand what really happened. Savilla Burrell came to meet Dixon at his request, and Dixon gave a first-person account of the interview. Burrell was born in 1854 and could remember first-hand experiences during slavery. She gave a sarcastic description of her master's second wife who, as a widow, had managed to "captivate" Tom Still, but whose marriage did not prove a happy one. As Burrell stated, "her had her troubles with Marse Tom after her git him, I tell you, but maybe best not to tell dat right now anyways."¹⁰ Burrell chose not to disclose more to Dixon on that point. She then talked about her own parents' relationship, stating that her father was living on another plantation, and that he rarely could get a pass to visit them. She then described the log cabin she dwelt in and some general aspects of the plantation.

In the middle of the interview, Savilla Burrell mentioned her mother's grief when one of her children was

¹⁰ S.C. I, 149.

sold away and told how the slaveowner scolded her mother for crying. Her interviewer interrupted at this point to ask her about clothing.¹¹ Dixon apparently did not want to hear more about this topic. Subsequently, Burrell revealed what type of trouble her mistress had with her husband: "Old Marse was de daddy of some mulatto chillun. De 'lations wid de mothers of dese chillun is what give so much grief to Mistress."¹² We now understand the nature of the "trouble" met by Tom Still's wife, and only alluded to at the beginning of the interview. This aspect of the relationship in the slaveowners' couple must have been important to Savilla Burrell for her to come back to it. She added: "He [Tom Still] would sell all dem chillun away from dey mothers to a trader. My mistress would cry 'bout dat."¹³ Burrell gave pieces of information here and there, and we need to fit them together, like in a puzzle, to get finally a picture of the relationships between master-mistress and master-slavewoman.

That Savilla Burrell did not say that one of her siblings, but one of her mother's children, had been sold away, takes another dimension when we learn that the slaveowner had mulatto children whom he would sell away. It

¹¹ S.C. I, 150.

¹² S.C. I, 150.

¹³ S.C. I, 150.

seems fair to assume that that child was a mulatto son or daughter of the slaveowner. The two women, black and white, mistress and slave woman, who gave birth to children fathered by the same man also shared grief and helplessness. Savilla Burrell's mother was apparently not the only slave woman Tom Still had sexual relationships with. Burrell refers to the mothers (in the plural form) of mulatto children. Tom Still thus entertained sexual relationships with several slave women, had no qualms about selling his offspring away, and threatened Burrell's mother with a whipping to stop her from expressing her grief. In this case, interracial liaisons evidently took the form of recurrent sexual abuse. The evidence further suggests that the slaveowner did not experience positive feelings towards his slave mistresses or his mulatto children. As for the slave women, even if they had consented, these interracial sexual relations did not improve their lot either.

It is significant that Burrell did not state the point of view of slave women on the question. She did mention her mother's grief at the selling of her child, but she dwelt much more on the grief of her slaveowner's wife over her husband's sexual relationships with slave women. Nowhere did she give any hint as to the slave women's feelings on that particular subject, or hers for that matter. She was as noncommittal on the impact sexual abuse had on slave women's

personal experiences and their family life. On the contrary, she presented a white perspective on the issue. And yet, we get some insight on her feelings in the last paragraph of her interview when she recalled Exodus, verse 15, at Tom Still's deathbed. "I went to see him in his last days and I sat by him and kept de flies off while dere. I see the lines of sorrow had plowed on dat old face and I 'membered he'd been a captain on hoss back in dat war [the Civil War]. It come into my 'membrance de song of Moses; 'de Lord had triumphed glorily and de hoss and his rider have been throwed into de sea."¹⁴

Savilla Burrell's attitude reflects a general one throughout the Slave Narrative Collection, and more specifically throughout Dixon's interviews. Informants provided abundant descriptions and reminiscences about their slaveowners and their families, but only sparse information on their own families on a personal level. Their interviewer did not seem to show any interest, or sympathy, to his informants when they mentioned interracial liaisons, a taboo topic in the segregated South of the 1930s. The racial etiquette proved particularly powerful in that respect.

¹⁴ S.C. I, 151.

Susie R. C. Byrd: A Black Female Interviewer in Virginia

In Virginia, fifteen of sixty-one female informants mentioned interracial sexual relations. Five fieldworkers collected these interviews, and inversely to those compiled in South Carolina, only one of them was white. Margaret Jeffries was the only white fieldworker who interviewed a former slave woman, and the resulting narrative is reminiscent of those gathered by W. W. Dixon.

Margaret Jeffries interviewed Annie Wallace, and got information from her reluctant informant on interracial sexual relations only because Wallace's son intervened. On a structural level, the interview had been a pretext to an exercise in style by Jeffries. She had been definitely influenced by the naturalists of the late nineteenth century as evidenced in her lengthy description of the house and room Annie Wallace dwelt in (she devoted twenty-five lines to it, about one-sixth of the total interview). Annie Wallace was a sick person--she had been in bed for nine months when Jeffries visited her--and was reluctant at first to give any information to the fieldworker. She stated that she did not know her age, even though her son rather easily calculated it with her marriage certificate. She would not talk about her father, but told the interviewer her mother was part Indian. In fact, her son again told Jeffries that her father

was a white man, and that "she was ashamed to say so."¹⁵ Had it not been for her son, this important piece of information would not have been disclosed to the white interviewer. Margaret Jeffries also noted that Wallace had "a nervous habit of stroking at her chin,"¹⁶ possibly testimony to the informant's discomfort at having to answer the questions of her white interviewer. As in the narratives compiled by Dixon and treating of white ascendancy, there is a lack of details on the topic.

Susie R. C. Byrd was one of the black female fieldworkers in Virginia, and she interviewed the same number of ex-slavewomen as W. W. Dixon in South Carolina. Among the twenty-one informants she met, six mentioned interracial sexual relations. This set of interviews is particularly interesting because it presents different aspects of this type of relationship. Two informants mentioned resistance of slavewomen to sexual abuse, two were fathered by white men, and two related the selling away of slavewomen after having given birth to the children of their owner.

Fanny Berry and Minnie Folkes both volunteered information on sexual abuse, the form that interracial sexual

¹⁵ Perdue, Weevils, 293.

¹⁶ Perdue, Weevils, 293.

relations had taken in their experience. Fanny Berry told the story of Sukie, a strong-headed slave woman whom her owner kept trying to seduce. Exasperated, he ordered her one day to take off her dress to whip her, but "she tole him no."¹⁷ A short fight ensued: "Den dat black gal got mad. She took an' punch ole Massa an' made him break loose an' den she gave him a shove an' push his hindparts down in de hot pot o' soap . . . it burnt him near to death . . . Marsa never did bother slave girls no mo'."¹⁸

There are several telling details in this story. It is striking to see that some slave women expressed their refusal to play an active role in their own physical oppression. Sukie refused to become a participant and humiliate herself by stripping in front of her tormentor, which would have provided him with sexual and sadistic satisfaction. Fanny Berry's crisp and short expression, "She tole him no," embodies all the flat determination of the slave woman. Moreover, in some instances slave women could defend themselves against physical abuse. Sukie not only resisted her owner victoriously, she also humiliated him in her turn through the rather melodramatic episode of the boiling soap. On an individual level then, slave women could react in a

¹⁷ Perdue, Weevils, 48.

¹⁸ Perdue, Weevils, 48-9.

positive manner to threats of sexual abuse and avoid it. In Sukie's case, the lesson was so sharp for "ole Massa" that he never approached slavewomen again. But the consequences were also disastrous for Sukie since she was sold to a trader a few days afterwards; this usually meant being sold eventually to the Deep South, far from all family ties, and with a reputedly harsher slavery system.

Minnie Folkes did not "like to talk 'bout dem times 'cause [her] mother did suffer misery."¹⁹ Asked by Susie Byrd to recall slavery times, the images that came to her mind were the "whelps an' scars" on her mother's body that she had seen "for [her] own self wid dese heah two eyes."²⁰ Recalling the beatings her mother suffered, she became suffused with pain and anger, and interrupted the flow of her memories to express her hatred: "Lord, Lord, I hate white people and de flood waters gwine drown some mo'."²¹ Her mother refused to enter into a sexual relation with the white overseer, and was repeatedly and viciously beaten.

Fanny Berry's and Minnie Folkes's narratives present an unusual perspective on the experience of slavewomen. They testify of the courage, will, and strength of slavewomen who

¹⁹ Perdue, Weevils, 92.

²⁰ Perdue, Weevils, 93.

²¹ Perdue, Weevils, 93.

refused to comply with the demands of their owners whatever the consequences, and forced the admiration of their relatives and friends in such a way that their story was fixed in the memory of these women more than seventy years later. They are also striking examples of the endurance and capacity of slavewomen to make choices and to play an active role, even though limited. Whereas in much of the available literature, the image of slavewomen has been that of a passive creature, here are two examples from primary sources of formidable characters, worthy, as Frances Smith Foster might put it, to be respected and emulated.

Patience M. Avery and Octavia Featherstone had been fathered by a white man. Octavia Featherstone did not give many details to Susie Byrd about her father, but the few elements she disclosed seemed to hint at an unusual pattern in the antebellum South, namely intermarriage between a white man and a black/mulatto woman. Featherstone's grandmother had mixed ancestry--Indian, Irish, and presumably black as well. Featherstone stated she had never seen her father nor knew his name, but she was aware that he was white. She mentioned that her "mother had two sets o' children," and added: "I don' know de name of de first husban'. I've never seen my daddy to know him, but he was a white man."²²

²² Perdue, Weevils, 90.

Featherstone's mother seems to have married twice, her first husband being white and the informant's father. It is curious though that she should not know her father's name if her parents were married. This is a short interview that does not disclose many details of Featherstone's life or her remembrances of slavery life.

Patience Avery was more loquacious. Her interview is twice as long as Featherstone's, and she seems to have been at ease with her interviewer. Even though she was younger than Featherstone (she was born in 1863 and Featherstone in 1860), she was well acquainted with a life of slavery she had not experienced herself. Recounting the slave auction sales, she shuddered: "Chile, it gives you de creeps up yo' spine to think 'bout it."²³ Recollections from her mother or relatives and friends had created an oral culture that enabled her to pass it down as a link in the chain of the collective memory of Afro-Americans. She emphasized the meaning these memories had for her, and how essential it was that they should not be lost, by confiding in Susie Byrd: "God is wonderful to some us to spare us dis long, honey, to tell de tale."²⁴

Patience Avery had been fathered by the son of her

²³ Perdue, Weevils, 15.

²⁴ Perdue, Weevils, 15.

mother's owner. She did not give details on the circumstances of her conception, nor the relationship between her parents. Yet, she had a vivid memory of her first encounter with her father when he came to visit her mother, and meet his daughter. Patience Avery's emotion became apparent when she shifted from the past tense to the present tense in her narration: "Dis is what I hear 'em say now to him (my father). Dis is your little Patience."²⁵ Her reaction ("He no father o' mine! He white!") is symptomatic of the underlying mentality in the South as far as race relations were concerned. Conversely, the interest of the white father in visiting his mulatto daughter after the Civil War is worth noting.

Liza McCoy and Mary Wood shared a similar experience of interracial sexual relations. Both had relatives who bore their masters' children, and were ultimately sold away. Liza McCoy's narration was short, and yet she did not mention right away that her aunt had been sold away from her infant child, a "white baby by her young master. Dats why de sold her South."²⁶ Fanny, the sister of Mary Wood's grandmother, was also sold down South. She had had three children by her

²⁵ Perdue, Weevils, 15.

²⁶ Perdue, Weevils, 201.

owner who, according to Wood, "thought . . . much of her."²⁷ When Betty Snead, the owner's wife, surprised both of them in a barn, she "rared and charged so the next week they sold Fanny."²⁸ It would seem surprising that Betty Snead should have taken so long to realize that Fanny's "three white chillun" might be her husband's. On the other hand, one must bear in mind the often cited remark by Mary Boykin Chestnut: "Any [white] lady is ready to tell you who is the father of all the mulatto children in everybody's household but her own. Those, she seems to think, drop from the clouds."²⁹ Betty Snead ignored some disturbing facts until some event, or too long a submission, impelled her to react. In this case, the jealous wife succeeded in having Fanny sold away (Mary Wood does not mention the fate of the children; apparently, they were not sold together). As for the relationship between the slave woman and her master, it had been continuous at least for a few years. Fanny had had some advantages from her position--she would not be whipped, and may have hoped for a betterment of her children's status. But such a position was very insecure; actually her fate did worsen since she was sold away and separated from her

²⁷ Perdue, Weevils, 332.

²⁸ Perdue, Weevils, 332.

²⁹ Mary Boykin Chestnut, Diarie from Dixie, cited in Genovese, Roll, Jordan, Roll, 426.

children.

A comparison of Susie R. C. Byrd's and W. W. Dixon's interviews shows how the race of their fieldworker influenced the type of information former slave women were willing to disclose about interracial sexual relations in the strained racial relations of the 1930s. Susie Byrd's interviews provide several instances of black-white liaisons of different types. Her informants did not hesitate to confide details in her, in contrast with the type of information W. W. Dixon received. Three of the informants who mentioned interracial sexual liaisons to him had had mulatto or white parents, like Susan Hamlin. In other words, they stated a physical fact that could not escape their interviewer's attention, without providing details. The race of the interviewers thus played a significant role in eliciting information on interracial liaisons.

This discrepancy between two sets of interviews by a black and a white fieldworkers is reflected on a general level. In South Carolina, where most of the interviewers were white, 9 out of 88 informants mentioned this topic, i.e. 10 percent. In Virginia, where, inversely, most of the fieldworkers were black, 15 out of 61 informants, i.e. 25 percent, talked to their interviewers about interracial sexual relations.

The discrepancy in information on a specific topic displayed by the study of interracial sexual liaisons in the oral slave narratives emphasizes one of the basic methodological problems posed to historians. The very process by which a fact is recorded is subjective and liable to biases. The task of the historian is thus to question the materials at hand and the conditions of their recording, and confront several sources in order to get as extensive a picture of what happened as possible. Different perspectives help provide that type of approach. The analysis of the oral slave narratives with the help of the analytical framework outlined in this study exemplifies this concern. The narratives emphasize the necessity of analytical tools to approach any source or problem in history. The biases inherent in these sources merely reflect the type of biases that might not be as obvious in other sources, and that could thus pass undetected. The oral narratives are not more unreliable than the written narratives, or white sources for that matter. They are an indispensable reference for any study of slavery in general, and of slavewomen in particular, especially when a feminist perspective is applied. Slavewomen appear then in a new light, as agents in their lives, and endowed with the power of reflection on their own destiny.

CONCLUSION

For more than twenty years, the new social history has focused on those minority groups such as blacks, ethnic groups, women, neglected in traditional accounts of American history. Slavery studies have benefited from this new approach in that emphasis has been placed on the experience of slaves as opposed to the masters' perceptions. And yet, studies of the slave family have explored slavemen's experience and left slavewomen aside. Similarly, women's history has rediscovered the history of white women and forgotten black women. Black women have thus been denied recognition both because of their race and gender.

In recent years, a few historians have given attention to the experience of black women, recognizing that a history of slavery in general, and of the slave family in particular, is not only incomplete but inaccurate if it obliterates the experience of slavewomen. Deborah G. White and Jacqueline Jones, for instance, have devoted entire studies to slave and black women, demonstrating their role in the family and community, as well as in the economic sphere. These studies are both compensatory and comparative, in that they apply the same categories of inquiry used by historians with a white perspective to stress the strength and role of slavewomen in

spheres traditionally considered as pertaining to men only. They also compare the experience of black women to that of black men and white women. Such studies have been significant in filling the void created by the absence of slavewomen or black women in American studies. In order to round out the picture of the slavewomen's experience, we need to learn more about some features that have not been examined in depth, such as the impact of interracial sexual relations on them, or their role in and perception of resistance. Both topics need more encompassing study.

Interracial sexual relations were an important aspect of the slavewomen's experience, embodying for them the brutality of the system. Not only had they suffered physically, they had also psychologically endured a devastating experience. They had to adjust to the consequences for themselves, their family, and especially the offspring of interracial liaisons. But the danger here is to see slavewomen solely as helpless victims of sexual oppression. They were objects only of sexual abuse. Within an oppressive framework that threatened them with physical violence, selling away, even death, they demonstrated courage and resilience, the ability to re-act and take decisions for themselves.

The slave narratives are one of the few primary sources by slave women that can give some insight on their experience and perception of the institution of slavery. As such, they cannot simply be discarded because of problems of reliability. Any historical source is biased and liable of distortions. Planters' diaries or plantation records are certainly biased sources, presenting a white male perspective of slavery by the class that profited most from it. And yet, historians have not hesitated over the years to dig repeatedly into them. Once the biases inherent to the oral slave narratives have been analyzed, then a mine of information available only in those narratives can be used. Some sources are not more "truthful" than others in history. One has to bring in as much information from as many different sources to get a better perspective on a topic. The slave narratives are thus an essential place to look to supplement other sources and round out our understanding of the slave women's experience.

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534-53.

APPENDIX A. INTERVIEWERS OF FEMALE INFORMANTS IN VIRGINIA

Code	Name	Gender	Race	Interviews
1	Claude W. Anderson	M	B	18
2	Susie R. C. Byrd	F	B	21
3	Thelma Dunston	F	B	5
4	Frances V. Green (a)	F	B	1
5	David Hoggard	M	B	2
6	Lucille B. Jayne	F	W	1
7	Margaret Jeffries	F	W	1
8	William T. Lee	M	B	2
9	Faith Morris (b)	F	B	4
10	Milton L. Randolph	M	B	2
11	Marietta Silver	F	B	3
12	Essie W. Smith	F	W	1
13	Mary S. Venable	F	W	1
14	Jessie Williams	M	B	1
15	Emmy Wilson (a)	F	B	3

- (a) with Claude W. Anderson
(b) 1 with Susie R. C. Byrd

APPENDIX B. FEMALE INFORMANTS IN VIRGINIA

Name	Interviewers	ISR
Armaci Adams	1,4	
Clara Allen	13	
Sally Ashton	2	
Patience M. Avery	2	X
Hannah Bailey	1	X
Fannie Berry	2	X
Mollie Booker	1	
Susan Broaddus	11	
Eunice Brown	8	
Fannie Brown	9	
Liza Brown	2	
Cornelia Carney	1	
Matilda Carter	1	
Lillian Clarke	2	
Anna E. Crawford	2	
Octavia Featherstone	2	X
Minnie Folkes	2	X
Julia Frazier	1	
Georgina Gibbs	3	
Candis Goodwin	1	X
Mildred Graves	9	
Mildred Graves	11	
Della Harris	2	
Sister Harrison	1	
Marriah Hines	5	
Caroline Hunter	3	
Susan Jackson	11	
Hannah Johnson	9	
Sarah Wooden Johnson	2	
Louise Jones	2	
Mary Jones	2	
Susan Kelly	6	
Matilda B. Laws	1	
Liza McCoy	2	X
Alice Marshall	1,15	X

Note: ISR = Interracial Sexual Relations

Name	Interviewers	ISR
Fannie Nicholson	3	
Jennie Patterson	2	
Matilda Henrietta Perry	1	X
Jane Pyatt	3	
Clara Robinson	1	
Eliza Robinson	2,9	
Martha Harper Robinson	10	
Sister Robinson	1	
Louise Bowes Rose	10	
May Satterfield	14	X
Sis Shackelford	1	X
Virginia Hayes Shepherd	1,15	X
Martha Showvely	8	
Marinda Jane Singleton	5	
Elizabeth Sparks	1	X
Eliza Ann Taylor	2	
Margaret Terry	2	
Amelia Walker	2	
Annie Wallace	7	X
Bird Walton	1	
Ella Williams	2	
Nancy Williams	1,15	
Mary Jane Wilson	3	
Mary Wood	2	X
Martha Zeigler	12	
Mary E. _wsey	2	

APPENDIX C. INTERVIEWERS OF FEMALE INFORMANTS IN SOUTH CAROLINA

Code	Name	Gender	Race	Interviews
1	Jessie A. Butler	F	W	3
2	Genevieve W. Chandler	F	W	4
3	Annie Ruth Davis	F	W	21
4	H. Gradis Davis (a)	M	W	1
5	W. W. Dixon	M	W	21
6	F. S. Dupre	M	W	9
7	Phoebe Faucette	F	W	9
8	Henry Grant	M	W	1
9	Augustus Ladson	M	B	1
10	Chlotilde R. Martin	F	W	1
11	Everett R. Pierce	F	W	3
12	Stiles M. Scruggs	M	W	4
13	Caldwell Sims	M	W	11

(a) with Lucile Young, race unknown

APPENDIX D. FEMALE INFORMANTS IN SOUTH CAROLINA

Name	Interviewers	ISR
Mary Adams	6	
Victoria Adams	11	
Josephine Bacchus	3	
Millie Barber	5	
Millie Bates	13	
Anne Bell	5	
Caroline Bevis	13	
Maggie Black	3	
Josephine Bristow	3	
Anne Broome	5	
Hagar Brown	2	X
Sara Brown	3	
Margaret Bryant	2	
Savilla Burrell	5	X
George Ann Butler	7	
Sylvia Cannon	3	
Sylvia Chisolm	7	
Louisa Collier	3	
Dinah Cunningham	5	
Lucy Daniels	7	
Heddie Davis	3	
Lizzie Davis	3	
Louisa Davis	5	
Alice Duke	13	
Sylva Durant	3	
Ryer Emmanuel	3	X
Ann Ferguson	7	
Charlotte Foster	6	
Janie Gallman	6	
Louisa Gause	3	
Gracie Gibson	5	
Ellen Godfrey	2	
Rebecca Jane Grant	7	
Adeline Green	7	
Fannie Griffin	11	

Note: ISR = Interracial Sexual Relations

Name	Interviewers	ISR
Violet Guntharpe	5	
Susan Hamlin	1,9	X
Eliza Hasty	5	
Liney Henderson	3	
Lavinia Heyward	12	
Lucretia Heyward	10	
Mariah Heywood	2	
Margaret Hughes	11	
Hester Hunter	3	
Adeline Jackson	5	
Cordelia Jackson	13	
Agnes James	3	
Emma Jeter	13	
Adeline Hall Johnson	5	
Anna Johnson	13	
Jane Johnson	8	
Miemy Johnson	5	
Sally Layton Keenan	13	
Ella Kelly	5	
Martha Kelly	3	
Easter Lockhart	13	
Emma Lowran	6	
Lucinda Miller	6	
Abbey Mishow	1	
Annie Lumpkin	12	
Charity Moore	5	
Sena Moore	5	X
Ann Palmer	13	
Sallie Paul	3	
Lina Anne Pendergrass	13	
Amy Perry	1	X
Victoria Perry	6	X
Sarah Poindexter	12	
Mary Raines	5	
Martha Richardson	12	X
Mamie Riley	7	
Eliza Scantling	7	
Mary Scott	4	
Nina Scott	6	
Jane Smith	6	

Name	Interviewers	ISR
Mary Smith	13	
Jessie Sparrow	3	
Rosa Starke	5	X
Josephine Stewart	5	
Delia Thompson	5	X
Manda Walker	5	
Nancy Washington	3	
Mary Williams	6	
Mary Woodward	5	
Genia Woodberry	3	
Julia Woodberry	3	
Pauline Worth	3	
Daphne Wright	7	

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