## Hosted by the Department of Sociology The Social Life of DNA: racial reconciliation and institutional morality

British Journal of Sociology Annual Lecture 2017

#### Professor Alondra Nelson

President, Social Science Research Council

#### **Professor Nigel Dodd**

Chair, LSE

Thursday 26 October, 6.30-8pm, OLD THEATRE, OLD BUILDING

No Ticket Required





# The Social Life of DNA: Racial Reconciliation and Institutional Morality

Alondra Nelson
Columbia University
Social Science Research Council

2017 British Journal of Sociology Lecture



## The New York Times

#### DNA Offers Link to Black History

By CAREY GOLDBERG AUG. 28, 2000

Add to the list of the wonders of DNA: the ability, in the not-so-distant future, to help African-Americans figure out where their ancestors probably came from before they were enslaved.

In Boston this fall, some 300 African-American schoolchildren are to be sent home with swabs to gather DNA samples from inside the mouths of their family members, part of a nascent project that a local molecular biologist hopes to extend to North Carolina and other sites with longstanding African-American populations.

At Howard University in Washington, a geneticist announced this spring that he would offer DNA analysis, possibly as early as this summer, to African-Americans seeking their ancestors' homelands, at \$200 or \$300 per test. He has since withdrawn that price and moved back his starting date to next year.











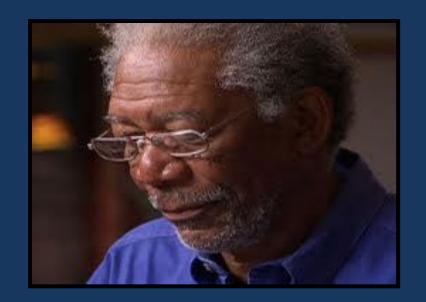
Photo: Harlem LDS



MOTHERLAND

A Genetic Journey

Photo: BBC TWO







**Keywords** ethnicity, genealogical aspiration, genealogical disorientation, genealogy, genetics, race, self-fashioning

#### Bio Science:

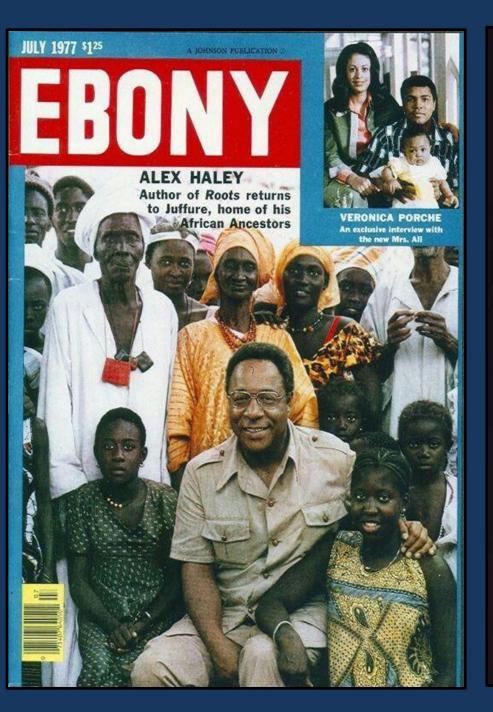
#### Genetic Genealogy Testing and the Pursuit of African Ancestry

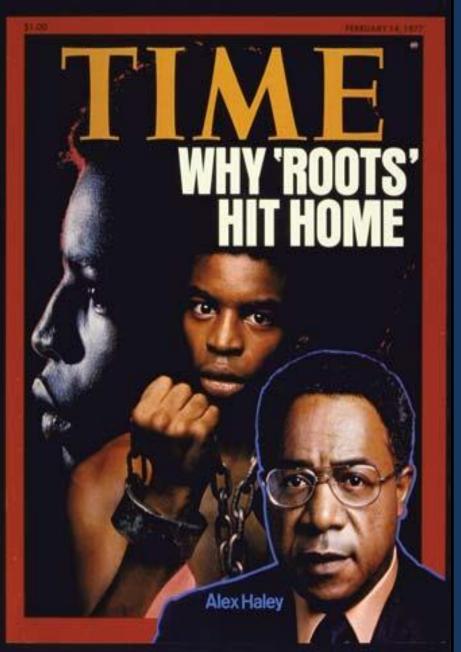
#### Alondra Nelson

[O]ur biographies are written, at least in part, in terms of structural chemistry. (Lock, 2005<sup>1</sup>)

The decoding of the human genome precipitated a change of paradigms in genetics research, from an emphasis on what then president Bill Clinton, in his announcement of this scientific achievement, described as 'our common humanity' (White House, 2000) to a concern with molecular-level differences among individuals and groups. This shift in research focus from lumping to splitting spurred ongoing disagreements among scholars in the

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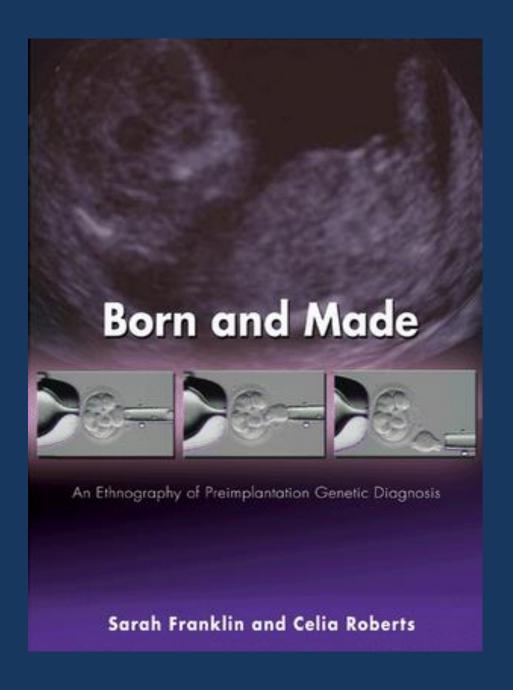
## the social life of things Appadurai 1988

## The social life of things

Commodities in cultural perspective

Edited by Arjun Appadurai

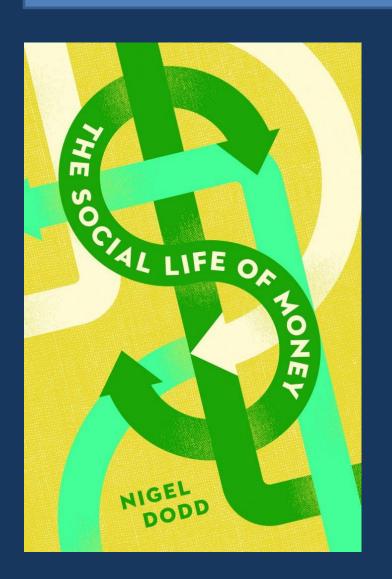
it is by following "the social life of things," "things-in-motion" that we are able to "illuminate their human and social context"



## the social life of PGD Franklin and Roberts 2006

"account for the social dimensions of new biomedical technologies" through thick description and "following around"

# the social life of money Dodd 2014

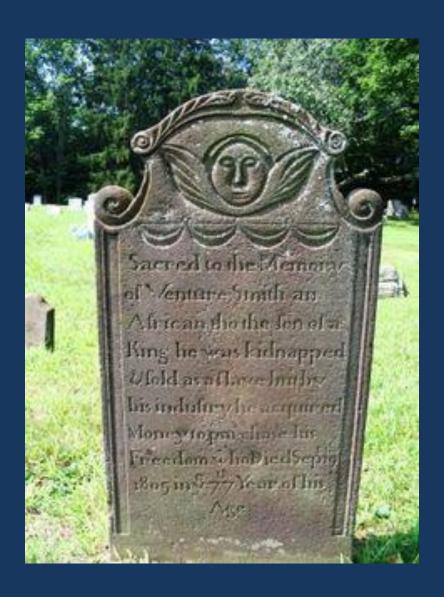


a process, not a thing...value derives from the dynamic, ever-changing, and often contested social relations that sustain its circulation

### the social life of DNA

- "spillover" between sites of genetic analysis, from genealogical uses to other domains (e.g., forensic or medical) and back again
- multiple uses to which one type of genetic analysis is put (e.g., genetic ancestry testing)





# Venture Smith (1729-1805)

NARRATVE

Conara

OF THE

### LIFE AND ADVENTURES

OF

VENTURE,

But resident above sixty years in the United States of
America.



## reconciliation projects

sites and practices in which genetic analysis is put to the task of resolving controversies or answering questions about the past (e.g. La Asociación Civil Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo)





Mary-Claire King; Grandmothers of the May Plaza (*La Asociación Civil Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo*)

## reconciliation projects

e.g., resolution of the injuries produced by racial slavery is sought through the employ of genetic analysis

## nature International weekly journal of science

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Nature 396, 27-28 (5 November 1998) | doi:10.1038/23835

#### Jefferson fathered slave's last child

Eugene A. Foster<sup>1</sup>, M. A. Jobling<sup>2</sup>, P. G. Taylor<sup>2</sup>, P. Donnelly<sup>3</sup>, P. de Kniiff<sup>4</sup>, Rene Mieremet4, T. Zerjal5 & C. Tyler-Smith5

There is a long-standing historical controversy over the question of US President Thomas Jefferson's paternity of the children of Sally Hemings, one of his slaves  $\frac{1}{2}$ . To throw some scientific light on the dispute, we have compared Y-chromosomal DNA haplotypes from male-line descendants of Field Jefferson, a paternal uncle of Thomas Jefferson, with those of male-line descendants of Thomas Woodson, Sally Hemings' putative first son, and of Eston Hemings Jefferson, her last son. The molecular findings fail to support the belief that Thomas Jefferson was Thomas Woodson's father, but provide evidence that he was the biological father of Eston Hemings Jefferson. Top

- 6 Gildersleeve Wood, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903, USA e-mail: Email: eafoster@aol.com
- 2. Department of Genetics, University of Leicester, Adrian Building, University Road, Leicester LE1 7RH, UK

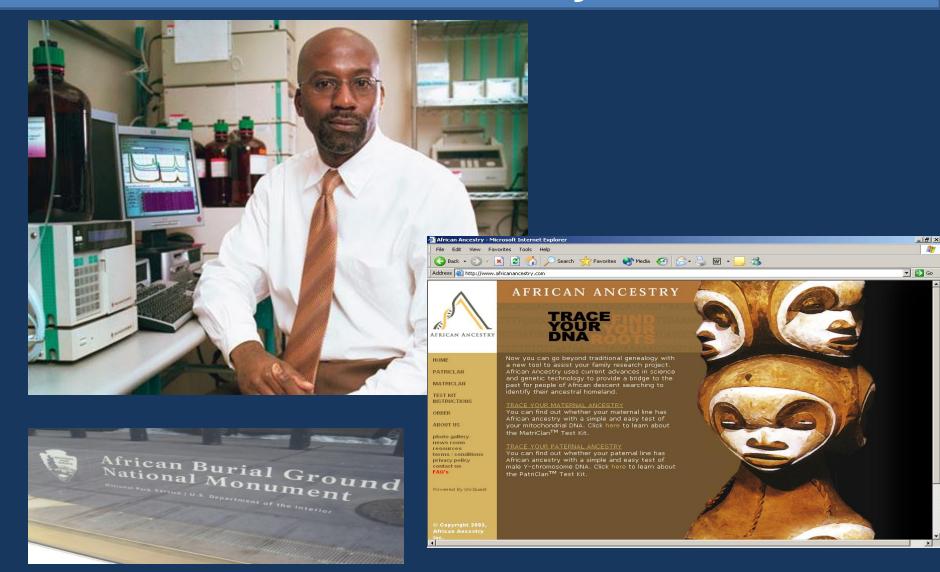


#### **ABSTRACT**

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# From the African Burial Ground Project African Ancestry, Inc.



## African Ancestry, Inc.



### **POLICY**FORUM

**GENETICS** 

## The Science and Business of Genetic Ancestry Testing

Deborah A. Bolnick,<sup>1\*</sup> Duana Fullwiley,<sup>2</sup> Troy Duster,<sup>3,4</sup> Richard S. Cooper,<sup>5</sup> Joan H. Fujimura,<sup>6</sup> Jonathan Kahn,<sup>7</sup> Jay S. Kaufman,<sup>8</sup> Jonathan Marks,<sup>9</sup> Ann Morning,<sup>3</sup> Alondra Nelson,<sup>10</sup> Pilar Ossorio,<sup>11</sup> Jenny Reardon,<sup>12</sup> Susan M. Reverby,<sup>13</sup> Kimberly TallBear<sup>14,15</sup>

t least two dozen companies now market "genetic ancestry tests" to help consumers reconstruct their family histories and determine the geographic origins of their ancestors. More than 460,000 people have purchased these tests over the past 6 years (1), and public interest is

still skyrocketing (1–4). Some scientists support this enterprise because it makes genetics accessible and relevant; others view it with indifference, seeing the tests as merely "recreational." However, both scientists

#### The Impact of "Recreational Genetics"

Although genetic ancestry testing is often described as "recreational genetics," many consumers do not take these tests lightly. Each test costs \$100 to \$900, and consumers often have deep personal reasons for purchasing these products. Many indi-

Commercially available tests of genetic ancestry have significant scientific limitations, but are serious matters for many test-takers.

African communities. Other Americans have taken the tests in hope of obtaining Native American tribal affiliation (and benefits like financial support, housing, education, health care, and affirmation of identity) or to challenge tribal membership decisions (7).

#### Limitations

It is important to understand what these tests can and cannot determine. Most tests fall into two categories. Mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) tests sequence the hypervariable region of the maternally inherited mitochondrial genome. Y-chromosome tests analyze short tandem repeats and/or single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) in the



Science



the "sara": a reconciliation project



TO BE SOLD on board the Ship Bance. Yland, on tuesday the 6th of May next, at Ashley-Ferry; a choice cargo of about 250 fine healthy

## NEGROES.

just arrived from the Windward & Rice Coast.

-The utmost care has

shall be continued, to keep them free from the least danger of being infected with the SMALL-POX, no boat having been on board, and all other communication with people from Charles-Town prevented.

Austin, Laurens, & Appleby.

N. B. Full one Half of the above Negroes have had the SMALL-POX in their own Country.

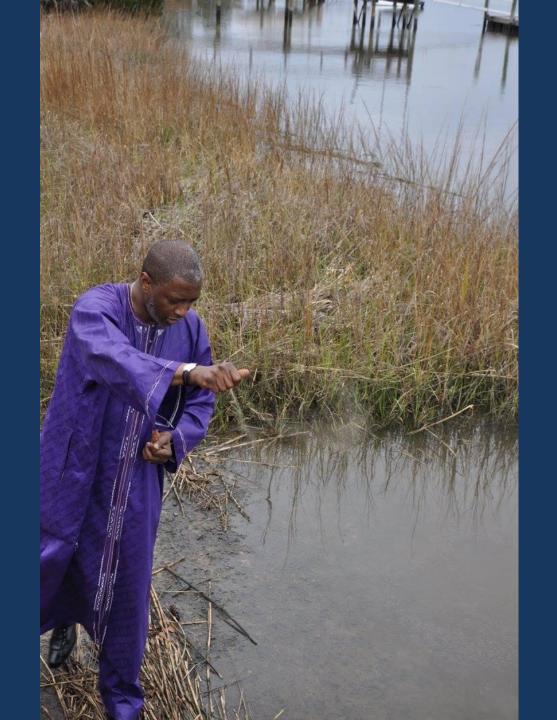




Photo: Jane Aldrich

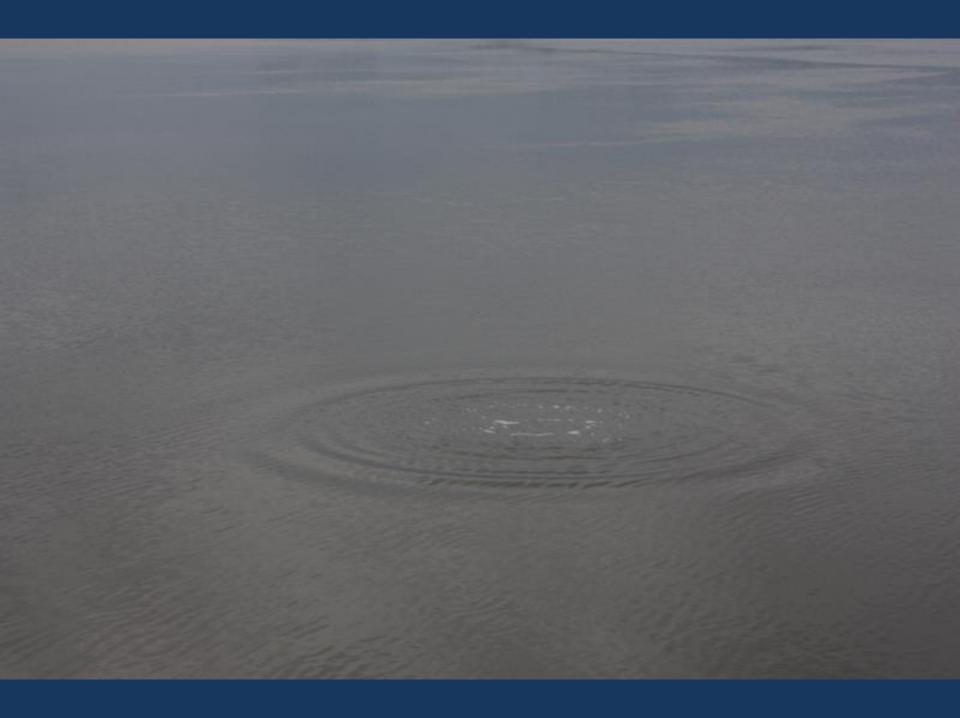
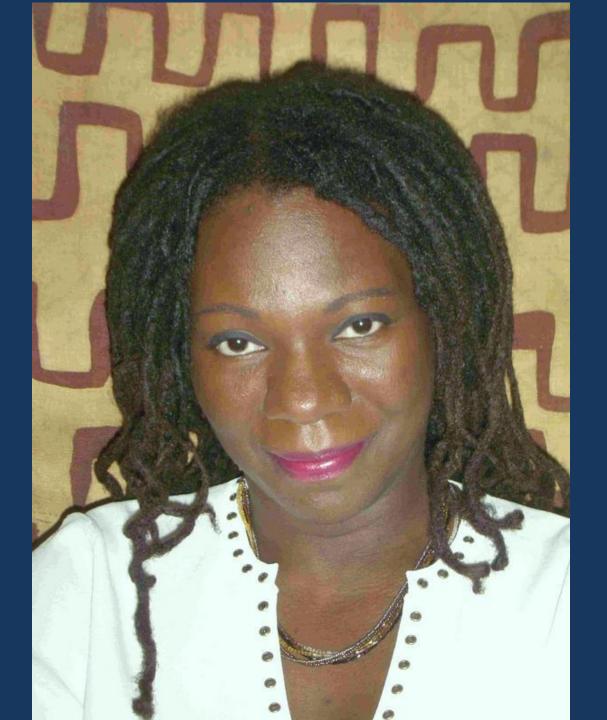




Photo: Jane Aldrich



Photo: Jane Aldrich



Deadria Farmer-Paellmann

# Farmer-Paellmann v. FleetBoston (2002)

#### UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT For The EASTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

DEADRIA FARMER-PAELLMANN,

On behalf of herself and all other persons similarly situated,

PLAINTIFF,

Vŝ.

CIVIL ACTION #

CLASS ACTION

: COMPLAINT : AND JURY TRIAL DEMAND

FLEETBOSTON FINANCIAL CORPORATION, AETNA: INC., CSX, and Their predecessors, successors and/or assigns, and CORPORATE DOES NOS. 1-1000,

DEFENDANT

Plaintiffs, on behalf of themselves and all other persons similarly situated, state, upon information and belief, as follows:

#### INTRODUCTION, JURISDICTION AND VENUE

#### Introduction

 Over 8,000,000 Africans and their descendants were enslaved in the United States from 1619 to 1865. The practice of slavery constituted an "immoral and inhumane deprivation of Africans' life, liberty, African citizenship rights, cultural heritage" and it further deprived them of the fruits of their own labor.

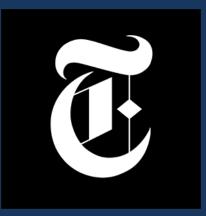
New York/ Class Action Complaint American Slavery Case - March 26, 2002 Page 1

# Companies Are Sued for Slave Reparations

By ROBERT F. WORTH MARCH 27, 2002

Citing the persisting legacy of slavery, a Manhattan woman yesterday filed what appears to be the first class-action lawsuit that seeks compensation from United States companies for allegedly profiting from the slave trade.

The suit was filed in federal court in Brooklyn in behalf of all living descendants of slaves in this country. It seeks unspecified damages from the FleetBoston Financial Corporation, Aetna Inc. and the CSX Corporation, stating that they or their predecessor companies profited from slave labor. Lawyers said the suit would be followed in coming weeks by similar ones against a number of other corporations in courts around the country, including one in New Jersey.



# National Briefing | Midwest: Illinois: Judge Dismisses Suit On Slavery Reparations

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS JAN. 27, 2004

A federal judge in Chicago dismissed a suit by descendants of slaves from across the country that sought reparations from corporations that they contend profited from slavery. The judge, Charles R. Norgle of Federal District Court, said the plaintiffs had shown no clear link between them and the companies. The suit combined smaller suits from courts around the country as part of a movement calling for millions of dollars in reparations for slavery from 18 companies, including railroads, banks and cigarette makers.



# January 2004 dismissal:

"[the Plaintiffs cannot establish a personal injury sufficient to confer standing by merely alleging some genealogical relationship to African-Americans held in slavery over one-hundred, two-hundred, or three-hundred years ago."





Outside the U.S. Court of Appeals (Chicago)

# Illinois: Court Rejects Slave Reparation Claims

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS DEC. 14, 2006

A federal appeals court rejected most claims by slave descendants that they deserve reparations from some of the nation's biggest insurers, banks and transportation companies. The panel affirmed a lower-court ruling that the plaintiffs had no standing to sue for reparations based on injustices suffered by their ancestors and that the statute of limitations ran out more than a century ago. But the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, in Chicago, kept alive a part of the suit that claims corporations may be guilty of consumer fraud if they hid past ties to slavery.



# March 2005 dismissal:

"Genetic mapping, or DNA testing, ...alone is insufficient to provide a decisive link to a homeland."

#### A REPORTER AT LANCE

## PECULIAR INSTITUTIONS

Breeze Distractly limb or the slave trealers in its post.

BY PRANCES PITZGERALD

On May 14, 1778, Solar Boson hall the franchiston street for Rheale bland College, on a full merbolding Providence and Namepower Bay Ac-Number of Gentlemen, Etterals to the Inclusion," attended the commons, and, or realiston has it. Brown reptod there to much. He and his beethers--Nicholas Joseph, and Moser-had norworked hast to enable his college, scale—fractures and fifty steroomlater lawsen as Bosses Listameter

formal education. They were Buynate—their great great presidence consultes bond a variety of labores. Chad Bown had been haptered by the different periods of time. A few Reger Williams noon after Brown's some lated at "Neger," At least those of united in Providence, in \$638-and, there, and perhaps four over doors. until their personales, Reptacs had or garded Biblical and clustered learning as no more than obstacles to the direct apperlence of God. The benefiters, like their foreboars, and like most people in their legely Baptiet norm, lad goes to work at around the upp of Incomes. Thrir fation, Captain James Bones. died in 1739, when Moses, the youngers, was less than a year old, and they spend their trials from their morthat unde, Obalish, Brought up on the whereas and most the street of Obadial/a meterareti casille secis. they morehied where more fuled. is the stally would of marking ends, whiley, privatering, and small streetfurniting, Ambridge, Societies, and skubbed the college's recoverage, 'She hadworking, the horizon were not in maly beloved by faralty, students, usly boilding a mensually enquire but and stuff at booth," he said, "and we stighten, she found her vacation as also noting Thorstone into a motor sraport, and, in the process, chillenging Newport's inconstruit and politiral superspacy in the mirror Nong. We not to explain what's pring through but could then rathe to indicate a filling Suppose Hopkins, a governor of the colony and Providence's political charepion, they believed that education was the key to the fathers.

ER. THE MAY YORKS, SPERMER E. SOCI.

neary for the ordings, and the firmly hou, Nicholas Boown & Compose took charge of constructing the Colingo Eddien, which is today University cooling to the Providence Greats, 's Hall, the main administrative building. The Edifice was followed after Names Hull, at Proportion University, whose the Revenue James Manning, a Bestire redukent who was the founder and the flur ponident of Elhode Island College, are to elebert that day All fear hal . had studied. Both its design and its suggest the ambitions that Manning. The Browns themselves had no and the Berores had for the college. Accouling to the records, the building

O's Namester 9, 2000, Barb J. Sommer was skeed the olghtoroth purchase of Boose Usesnow by its trustees. Assumening the decisins at a press conference, Berwe's changelier, Stophan Mohret, potonod out that the election made her the first African American to become nonsideor of as Dy League institution. "This is a biscode occasion," he said. Bober yeared Stromonic accomplishsociety as the president of Smith Colingo, where she had couldlobed an negionaring pergram, increased the artists than tempte French at the Unimember of necontry-students, leaseland venuty of New Orleans, whose she beseveral new building property, and have every reason to believe the will to analysis: administrates In 1983. be a star at Brown." Sinon-see thanked - she was blond to director of coales for the Chancellos and cod. To very hard one of Princeton's studential colleges. my mind and though my bout right - drives,"a former active my officer said next it would be impossible for you to understand, because you don't know my personal circumminute yet. But. Global intensituade." Two years late. whom I was mid I had been elected. the was brought iron council admir-The Brews brothers raised the Alia afternoon is product of Brows, intention in Noona Hall. The con-

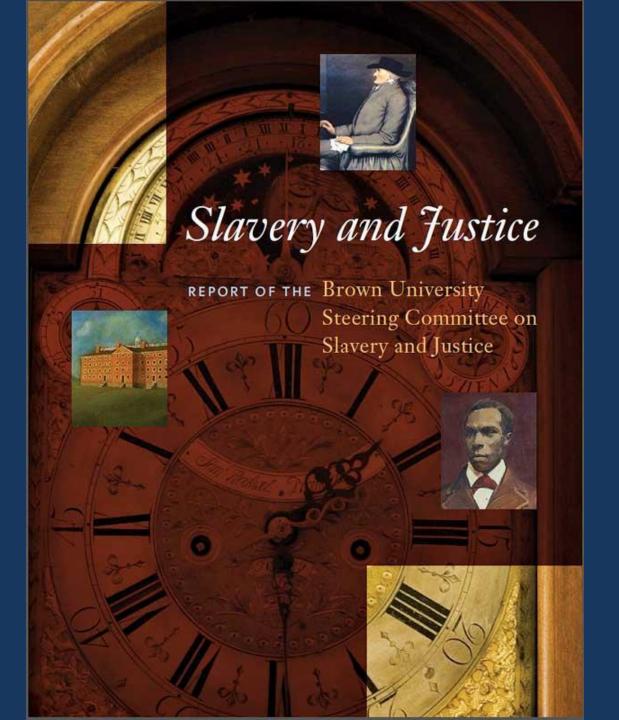
I said my assessors were unifine."

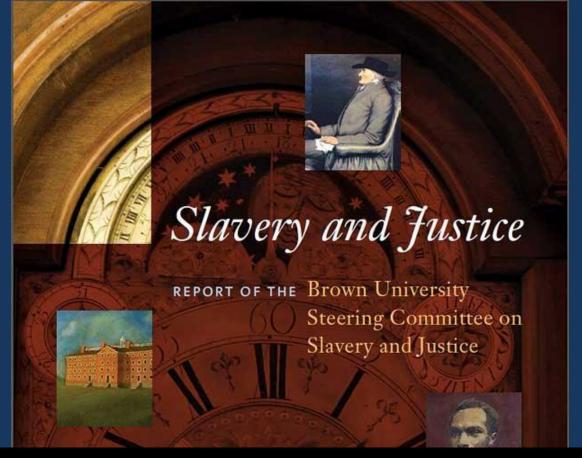
Sinomore often talks about her post. She was been to 1945, the real/th shild of sharesreppen on a fame term the times of Cospeland, in East Tona-During the prose confessors, she resalled that her first day of kindingaron was "margical," because "force was a place that was bright and orderly, and narriang northly bastomed them. I would have a pencil and paper. I could ages books to read." Warm shar were a links object the faculty mented to Mourton, whose her father financi week in a Surtorn and becomether cleaned because tie white families. They lived to the Fifth Ward, which she recombined as "s very impossed of Pinarton but in the chalue of the downwer. descripen" and "broady regregated." As a daid, the lower to one who had been to codings, but, with support from her family and her teachers, she were to Dilard, a biscolcally black univeralte in New Orleans.

Summer smally speaks about her budgeout in the context of him odycates on transfers the less of poor and missely children. After graduating somme care lands from Diffael, the west to Harvard and named a Ph.D. in Risconce languages and Stemmer. No. studied in France on a Pultright scholcome so unintest does of the College of Liberal Ares, Thore and at the University of Southern California, so the safe Trackly it was affectainty-action "There were hundreds of applicant and she get a second look. Then else



Bard Diemon; Heastweep) proader; Asonhal crissly of the Brein, Goody Institute. Photograph by Street Pyte





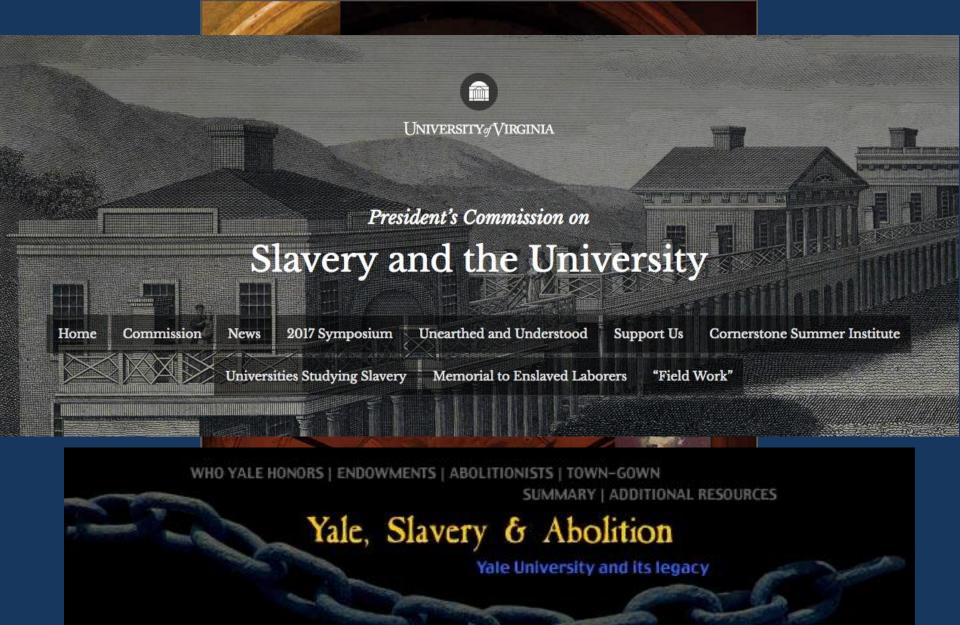
WHO YALE HONORS | ENDOWMENTS | ABOLITIONISTS | TOWN-GOWN
SUMMARY | ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

# Yale, Slavery & Abolition

Yale University and its legacy

The SUMMARY is a good place to start...

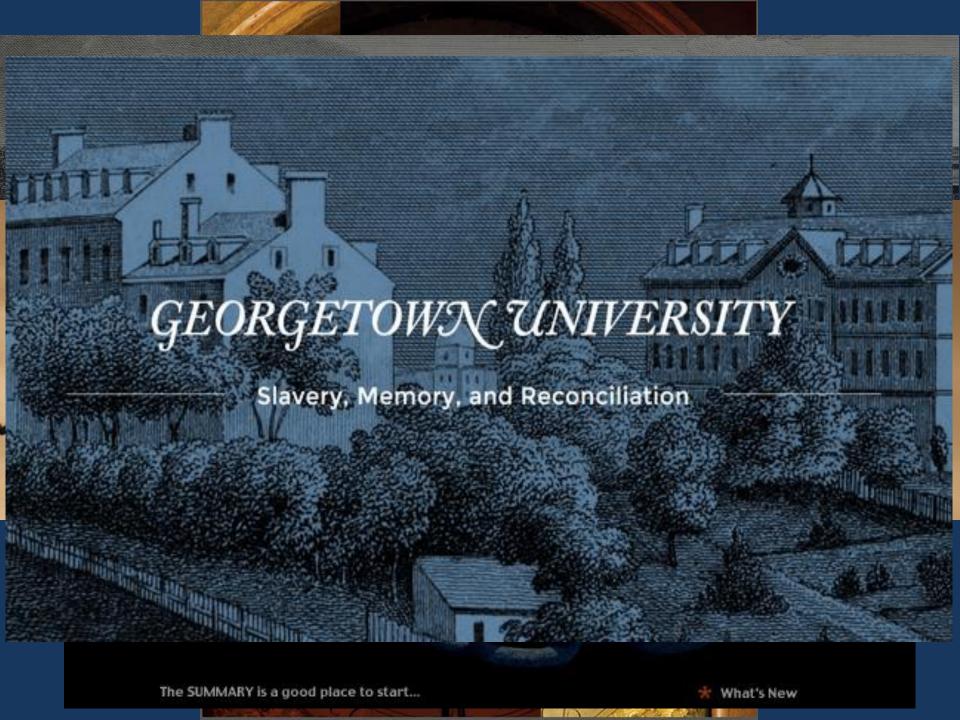




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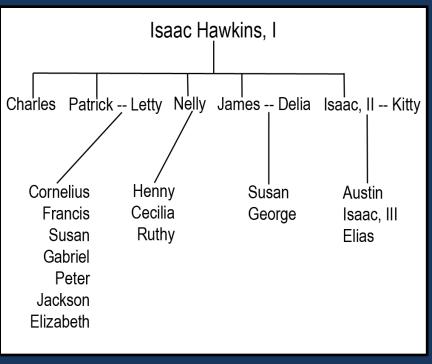


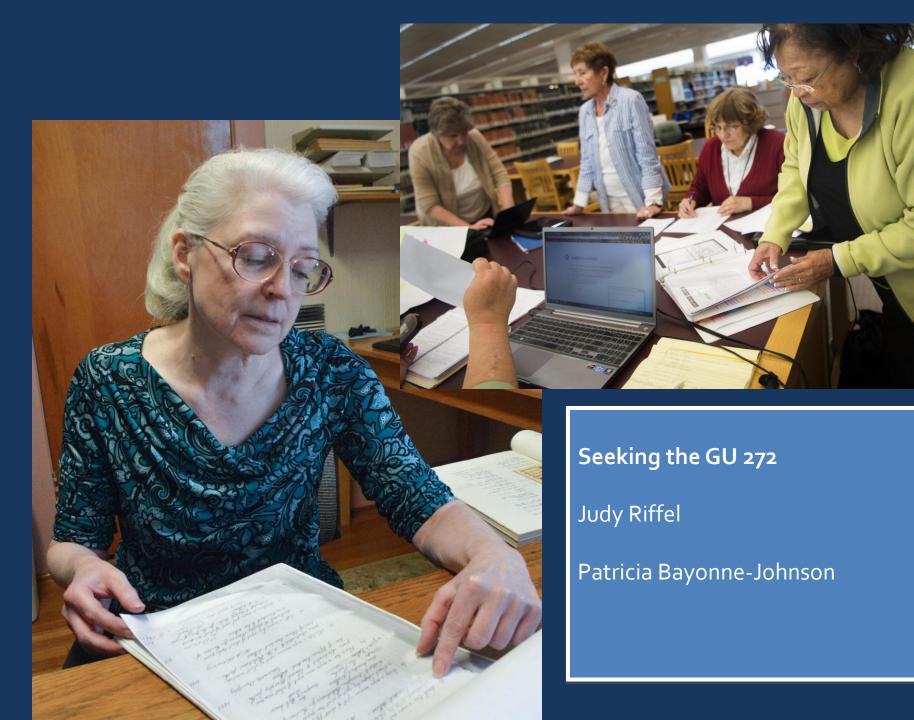


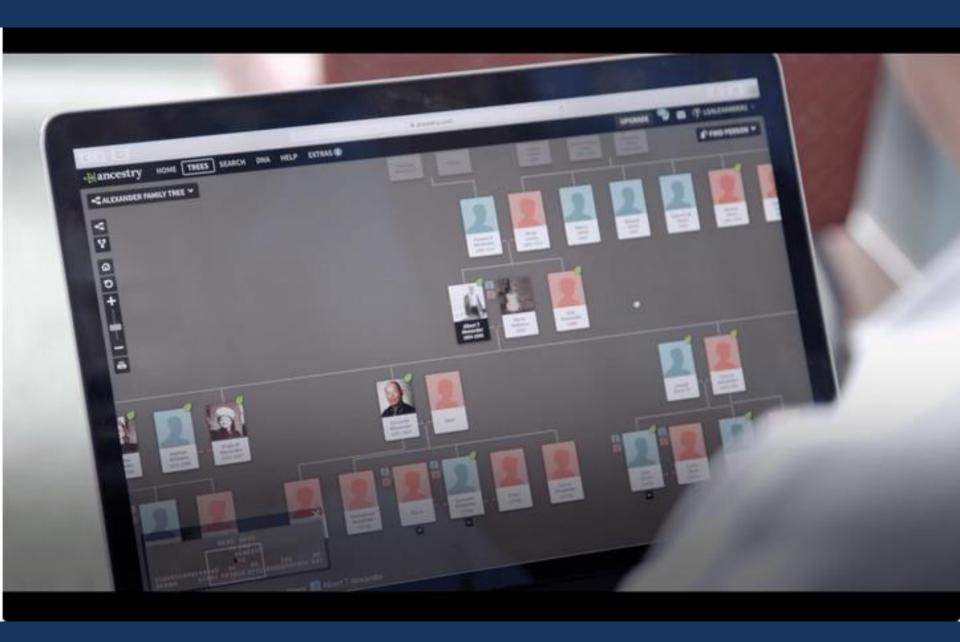




"This is not a disembodied group of people, who are nameless and faceless...These are real people with real names and real descendants." –Richard Cellini in *The New York Times* 















## Isaac Hawkins (1773 - aft. 1838)





## Isaac Hawkins

Born 1773 in Maryland ?

Son of [father unknown] and [mother unknown]

G+ Share 1

[sibling(s) unknown]

[spouse(s) unknown]

Father of Patrick Hawkins

DESCENDANTS

Died after 1838 in Louisiana, USA ?

Profile manager: <u>Denyse Baham</u> 

☐ (send private message)

Hawkins-6582 created 5 Nov 2016 | Last modified 2 May 2017

This page has been accessed 303 times.

G+

Categories: Georgetown University Slaves | Louisiana Slaves | Maryland Slaves | Louisiana Families.



Isaac Hawkins lived in Louisiana. Join: Louisiana Families Project

Discuss: Louisiana

## **Biography**

Isaac was born in 1773. Isaac Hawkins was sold by Georgetown University and shipped to Louisiana in 1838.

## Sources

People sold by Thomas Mulledy in 1838 Adapted from the Jesuit Plantation Project, Georgetown University From "List of slaves on each estate to be sold" in Box 40, Folder 10, Maryland Province Archives

2016 New York Times, "272 Slaves Were Sold to Save Georgetown."... http://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/17/us/georgetown-university-search-for-slave-descendants.html

### Search

Searching for someone else?

Scarcining for someone cisc.				
First:	Isaac	Last:	Hawkins	GO

#### DNA Connections

It may be possible to confirm family relationships with Isaac by comparing test results with other carriers of <a href="https://www.his.yc.com/his.yc.chomosome">his yc.chomosome</a> or his mother's mitochondrial DNA. However, there are no known yDNA or mtDNA test-takers in his direct paternal or maternal line. It is likely that these autosomal DNA test-takers will share DNA with Isaac:

- Stephanie (Arbuckle) White: 23andMe, GEDmatch M093772
- Angela (Arbuckle) Guy : AncestryDNA, GEDmatch A973388, Ancestry member AA

Have you taken a DNA test for genealogy? If so, login to add it. If not, see our friends at Family Tree DNA.

## Images: 1

## Georgetown University Slave List 1838





Earlene Campbell-Coleman, greatgreat-great grand-daughter of Frank Campbell

# Georgetown Will Offer An Edge In Admissions To Descendants Of Slaves

September 1, 2016 · 10:13 AM ET





Patricia Bayonne-Johnson holds a photo of her great-grandparents and their son. The retired science teacher discovered that some of her ancestors were sold by the Jesuits of the Maryland Province in 1838, to pay off Georgetown University's massive debt.



Liturgy of "remembrance, contrition and hope"

# moral institutions and institutional morality

Moral economies... are connected in the daily activities of institutions through the values and affects which crystallize around social issues and the responses that are given in concrete situations

-At the Heart of the State, Didier Fassin

