Rethinking representations of slave life a historical plantation museums: towards a commemorative museum pedagogy

Julia Anne Rose
Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, jrose4@lsu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_dissertations

Part of the Education Commons

Recommended Citation
https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_dissertations/1040
RETHINKING REPRESENTATIONS OF SLAVE LIFE AT HISTORICAL
PLANTATION MUSEUMS: TOWARDS A COMMEMORATIVE MUSEUM
PEDAGOGY

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of Curriculum and Instruction

by
Julia Anne Rose
B.A., State University of New York at Albany, 1980
M.A.T., The George Washington University, 1984
August, 2006
Dedication

In memory of my loving sister, Claudia J. Liban
Acknowledgments

I was a young mother with two little boys when I first entertained the idea of pursuing a doctor of philosophy degree in education. At that time, it seemed unrealistic and difficult to find a program where I could study and conduct research on museum learning. I have since learned that when I embrace life’s serendipitous connections I can learn and achieve big things.

I thank my husband Kenny Rose who encouraged me to pursue my education over the years and who helped me find my niche at Louisiana State University. Kenny was a mentor, counselor, reader, and editor while I attended graduate school and while I wrote my dissertation. Kenny’s support and guidance has helped me to think pragmatically about my studies and my priorities in life and continues to be my devoted friend.

I thank my three children, Ian, Jason and Diana who grew along with me while I was attending LSU. My children’s love, tenderness, surprises, and laughter continue to motivate me to ask more questions and to try new angles for living.

My advisory committee members generously shared their expertise and insights with me. I thank my major professor, Dr. Claudia Eppert, for her mentorship and for introducing me to the educational psychoanalytic literature. I sincerely appreciate her encouragement over the years and her close reading of my work. I thank Dr. Petra Hendry for including me in the Old South Baton Rouge projects as a graduate research assistant and for her enthusiastic interest in my research. Her support enabled me to take on the mammoth challenge to document the Magnolia Mound Plantation enslaved community. I thank Dr. Bill Doll for including me in provocative seminars and for
helping me make deeper connections between museum learning and curriculum studies. I thank Dr. Miles Richardson for helping me find poetry within the relationships between historical sites and the stories they stand to represent. His mentorship on ethnographic research was foundational to my design for this dissertation. I thank Dr. Thomas Durant for his encouragement to dig deeper into the socio-historical stories of Louisiana slave life. Dr. Durant’s comments on the new tour narrative in this dissertation were a boost to my analysis.

Several more professors gave me support in my studies and in my research at LSU. I thank Dr. Tiwanna Simpson, Dr. Sharon Weltman, Dr. Jay Edwards, Associate Dean Faye Phillips, Dr. Nina Asher, Dr. Michele Masse, and Dr. Bill Pinar.

I thank the museum workers at Magnolia Mound Plantation in Baton Rouge, Louisiana for their gracious and generous participation in my doctoral research. The museum workers opened to me their work places and their personal attachments to Louisiana history in their efforts to expand the representations of slave life at their historical plantation museum. I am forever grateful for their gifts of time, space, and collaboration.
Table of Contents

Dedication ........................................................................................................................... ii

Acknowledgments.............................................................................................................. iii

List of Tables .................................................................................................................... vii

List of Figures .................................................................................................................. viii

Abstract .............................................................................................................................. ix

Chapter One: Introduction ................................................................................................. 1
  Purpose and Rationale .................................................................................................... 1
  Research Questions ....................................................................................................... 9
  Outline of the Remaining Chapters ................................................................................ 9

Chapter Two: Context of Magnolia Mound Plantation .................................................... 12
  Personal Testimony ....................................................................................................... 12
  Magnolia Mound Plantation ......................................................................................... 13
  Interpreting Slave Life at MMP .................................................................................... 18
  Historical Baseline: Magnolia Mound Plantation ......................................................... 21

Chapter Three: Literature Review .................................................................................... 25
  Museums, Education, and Society ................................................................................ 27
  Curriculum Theory and Educational Psychoanalytic Theories on Loss in Learning ... 29
  Learning and Teaching About Trauma......................................................................... 39
  Interpretations of Slave Life at Historical Site Museums............................................. 53
  Interpreting the American South: Collective Memory and Collective Loss ............ 77
  Finishing Remarks ........................................................................................................ 85

Chapter Four: Methods ..................................................................................................... 88
  Rationale for an Action Research Design..................................................................... 89
  Potential Benefits and Outcomes of My Study............................................................. 92
  Getting Access to the Study Site................................................................................... 93
  Sample Selection .......................................................................................................... 95
  Research Protocol ......................................................................................................... 98
  Defining the Interpretation Target at MMP ................................................................. 100
  Data Collection .......................................................................................................... 102
  Action Research Data Collection ................................................................................ 103
  Archival Research Data Collection ............................................................................. 114
  Data Collection Summary ........................................................................................... 134

Chapter Five: Data Analysis ............................................................................................. 136
  Data Coding ............................................................................................................... 137
  Clustering ..................................................................................................................... 138
  Development of Propositional Statements .................................................................... 139
List of Tables

Table 1. Codes for organizing transcripts in notebooks………………………138

Table 2. Number of times slave life was mentioned during the eight tours I observed between May and July 2005, as part of establishing a baseline for the study………………………………………………………………………………147

Table 3. Six ways team members engaged with learning to live with loss……209
List of Figures

Figure 1. Layout of Magnolia Mound Plantation, Baton Rouge, Louisiana........16

Figure 2. Route of the regular tour at Magnolia Mound Plantation, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.................................................................17
Abstract

Historical plantation museums have been criticized for biased interpretation practices that marginalize the historical presence of enslaved African Americans. This is a curriculum question that is relevant to historical museums that are wrestling with impacting social change and developing equitable practices to serve increasingly broad and diverse audiences.

I conducted an action research study with five museum workers at Magnolia Mound Plantation (MMP) in south Louisiana to better understand the limits and possibilities of expanding slave life representations at this museum. I implemented the study using action research and archival research. Action research involved ethnographic methodologies including tour observations, interviews, focus group meetings, and feedback from outside reviewers. The archival research generated a report documenting this site’s enslaved community from 1786-1830.

Museum workers demonstrated that they were engaged in remembrance learning, a kind of learning to live with loss, when they were faced with revising the museum’s traditional planter-focused tour to an integrated tour that elevated the historical presence of the enslaved community. Looking through an educational psychoanalytic lens, I found that the newly introduced slave life histories disrupted museum workers’ understandings of MMP’s history, which incited feelings of loss for the iconic meanings of the historical site and for museum workers’ personal attachments to French Louisiana plantation heritage. Museum workers used expressions of mourning and melancholia to describe their engagement with the slave life histories.
Based on my results, I developed a commemorative museum pedagogy that is a sensitive approach for museum workers to consider as they expand slave life representations at their sites. This approach allows for the nonlinear and recursive nature of learning, which encourages remembrance learning to unfold through reception, resistance, repetition, reflection, and reconsideration. Commemorative museum pedagogy encourages museum workers to gradually work through the difficult knowledge slave life presents, bit by bit, going from one dimensional, objectified representations towards multidimensional representations of historical persons that more fully commemorate enslaved populations.

Formal and informal educators who pursue ways to recall slave life can consider this approach to recognize the internal disruptions that can compel learners to work through or foreclose on learning slave life histories.
Chapter One: Introduction

Purpose and Rationale

Historical plantation museums have been criticized for biased and exclusionary interpretation practices that marginalize or silence the historical presence of enslaved African Americans (e.g., Leon and Piatt, 1989; Gable, Handler, and Lawson 1992; Bankole, 1999; Rahier and Hawkins, 1999; Eichstedt and Small, 2002; McPherson, 2003; Shackel, 2003). Why are slave life representations marginalized at historical plantation museums? This is a curriculum question that demands investigation into how museum workers engage in interpreting slave life history for the public.

This central question is relevant to hundreds of workers at American history museums and historical sites who are presently wrestling with developing equitable practices to serve an increasingly broad and diverse audience. Since the second half of the 20th century, museum workers have increased their commitments to education, recognizing their role as stewards of culture and as the “social consciousness” of their supporting communities (Low, 1942; AAM, 1992). Likewise, visitors trust museums to provide them with authentic and accurate historical knowledge (Rosenzweig and Thelen, 1998).

In this light, my query is about how education in museums can impact social change. I chose to implement an action research study focused on understanding the learning processes museum workers take on when they are charged with revising an existing planter-focused tour to include expanded representations of slave life. My study used Magnolia Mound Plantation (MMP) in Baton Rouge, Louisiana as a case study.
towards developing, what I am calling, a workable commemorative museum pedagogy\textsuperscript{1} that would be available to other museums and historical sites as they increase their interpretations about slave-era plantation life. In an effort to reveal the personal and interpersonal dynamics of re-addressing slave life, I was eager to study how museum workers received new slave life information and how they went about using the information to revise the site’s traditional European American interpretation of plantation life. This resulting pedagogy aspires to be a responsible, sensitive, and just engagement with the past. Commemorative museum pedagogy is based on the results of MMP museum workers’ responses to the challenge to learn and interpret newly found slave life histories about their plantation site.

In my research design, I asked MMP workers to modify their regular tour of the plantation big house, which for over 30 years has recalled the memory of the French Creole planter family without representations of the historical enslaved population. A workable pedagogy implies that museum workers would be the agents for changing the site’s interpretation strategies for the regular tour to include expanded representations of slave life\textsuperscript{2}. I wanted to know what kinds of negotiations would unfold between museum workers’ personal attachments and loyalties to the current interpretation and to the newly

\textsuperscript{1} The evolution of the phrase I developed, “commemorative museum pedagogy” stems in part from the work of Roger I. Simon, Sharon Rosenberg, and Claudia Eppert (2002). These authors introduce the notion of “remembrance pedagogy” that is “an inherently pedagogical practice in that it is implicated in the formation and regulation of meanings, feelings, perceptions, identifications and the imaginative projection of human limits and possibilities. …In binding remembrance and pedagogy, we are suggesting that all formations of memory carry implicit and/or explicit assumptions about what is to be remembered, how, by whom, for whom, and with what potential effects…In this sense, remembrance/pedagogies are political, pragmatic, and performative attempts to prompt and engage people in the development of particular forms of historical consciousness” (p. 2).

\textsuperscript{2} In the museum community, the phrase, “interpretation strategies” refers to the means by which museums deliver content. The media and activities assembled to deliver museum content include exhibits, tours, Web sites, classes, school programs, and publications (AAM, 2004, p. F10).
documented historical record on the MMP enslaved community developed as part of my study. At stake was the loss of the iconic meanings of MMP to the museum workers, and potentially to the museum’s patron community.

Museum workers who are responsible for developing their site’s interpretations make choices as to which stories and which historical individuals will be represented in the tours. This is one way that developing museum interpretations are similar to developing curriculum for a formal educational setting. In museums, curriculum choices are made by collaborating museum workers who engage in the “interest laden acts of selection, interpretation and presentation” (Roberts, 1997, p. 79).

The mounting criticisms of historical plantation museums’ long-held tradition for white ethnocentric representations of plantation life (e.g., Van West and Hoffschwelle, 1984; Horton and Crew, 1989; Leon and Piatt, 1989; Kammen 1991; Gable, et al., 1992; Gable, 1996; Rahier and Hawkins, 1999; Eichstedt and Small, 2002; Rose 2004a, 2004b) have triggered a tepid response in many museums. Increasingly, museums are adding generic references of enslaved African Americans to their interpretations, but without re-addressing the European American privileges that these memories perpetuate. The museum literature shows that the museums’ interpretations of an honorable and genteel life style of the slaveholding planter class act to maintain presumed racial differences that continue to hurt the lives these stories touch. Jennifer L. Eichstedt and Stephen Small (2002) explain that if the stories told at historical plantation museums, work instep with the injustices that exist in the larger culture, then these sites work as agents of social injustice; that is they perpetuate domination and oppression, reinforcing the silences, stereotypes, and erasures in people’s minds that legitimate social inequities of the highest order. (p. 270)
White ethnocentric interpretations of historical plantations are at constant risk of perpetuating racist ideologies³.

I have found that in south Louisiana, traditionally European American historical plantations are expanding their landscapes to include slave dwellings and slave life stories (Rose, 2005). Since 1990, I count 27 museums that have added slave life representations to their exhibits⁴. This is an appreciable phenomenon that needs to be recognized as a reflection of the region’s transitioning approach to increasing slave life representations in south Louisiana’s historical sites.

In the past two decades, both publicly and privately held historical sites in south Louisiana increasingly have elected to interpret slave dwelling structures, slave labor, and the relationships among enslaved and free residents. For example, in 1992, Destrehan Plantation in St. Charles Parish salvaged two slave dwellings from a former sugar plantation and transported them to its site. The 1994 restoration of Laura: A Creole Plantation, located along the River Road between Baton Rouge and New Orleans,

³ For a discussion on ethnocentrism see George M. Fredrickson, 2002.

⁴ Twenty seven museums in south Louisiana that have added slave life representations to their exhibits and programs since 1990. These include:

| Oakley Plantation at Audubon State Historic Site | Port Hudson State Historic Site |
| Rosedown Plantation State Historic Site | Evergreen Plantation |
| Cottage Plantation | Myrtles Plantation |
| Destrehan Plantation | LSU Rural Life Museum |
| Southern University Museum of Art | Louisiana State Museum- New Orleans |
| Louisiana State Museum- Baton Rouge | Magnolia Mound Plantation |
| West Baton Rouge Museum | Shadows-on-the-Tech |
| Oak Alley Plantation, installed an historic marker for the slave quarter | Laura: A Creole Plantation |
| River Road African American Museum and Gallery | San Francisco Plantation |
| Longfellow-Evangeline State Historic Site | La Branche Plantation Dependency House |
| Nottoway Plantation | Pitot House |
| Whitney Plantation (Not presently open to the public) | |
included the site’s original slave quarter. In 1998, Magnolia Mound Plantation in East Baton Rouge Parish installed on their museum grounds an antebellum period slave cabin obtained from Pointe Coupee Parish. The deliberate additions of slave life history to historical sites mark a significant, albeit slow, change in the region from a segregated identity towards a multicultural regional identity.

The motivation for adding representations of slave life to historical plantations in Louisiana is strengthened by new museum projects around the United States, including the opening of the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Cincinnati, Ohio, the planned United States National Slavery Museum in Fredericksburg, Virginia, and the evolving National Museum of African American History in Washington, D.C. According to cultural critic Julia M. Klein (2004), history museums in the United States are rapidly changing, “The best of them directly confront challenges to their authority and purpose as they struggle to tell a wider range of stories to increasingly demanding and restless audiences” (p. B15).

My focus in this study is on the nature of the phenomenon of integrating the historical plantation landscapes, which has been proceeding slowly, to more fully elevating the representations of the enslaved population’s historical presence. The genealogies of the planter family at MMP, for example, are meticulously recounted in the regular tour. But the enslaved residents are generally depicted as benign and anonymous, not as victims, heroes, or historical individuals. Without names or filial or affective relationships, these individuals are denied a full human presence.

How do we fully remember lives lived? Museums and historical sites offer the public spaces for commemoration to honor the memories of lives lived. Commemorating the past suggests that we remember persons. Personhood can be described in ethical ways
with stories about relationships that describe the complexities of people’s lives, and their relationships to other beings and to a society (see Simon, Rosenberg, and Eppert, 2000). To commemorate historical individuals and to fully recognize their identities, therefore, I will argue that museum workers need stories that include multiple dimensions.

Without names, faces, or life histories, the enslaved residents’ presences at MMP are merely place-marked by the slave quarter exhibit on the MMP grounds. Ethical representations, what I call “multidimensional” representations, include stories about motherhood, fatherhood, childhood, and intimate relationships. In my view, the representations of the historical enslaved plantation residents need to address how slavery forced mothers to parent without the latitude to act fully, with little control over their children’s labor or day care, and how slavery necessitated persistent negotiations between the enslaved community and the planter family in the big house. W.E.B. Du Bois (1996) described the “double-consciousness” of those who struggled to maintain their individual integrity and their families in the face of slavery’s oppression. What stories tied the enslaved residents to each other and to the planter families? How did the enslaved families adapt and endure their enslavement? What skills and traditions did older generations teach younger generations? Demarcating the presence of slaves more fully with genealogies and lived experiences would offer visitors’ insights into human integrity that is otherwise diminished by simply using the term “slave” (Rose, 2004b).

I wondered what was happening that has resulted in the contradictory situation of museum workers’ declaring their want to increase slave life representations and yet the perpetuation of exclusively European American histories of the planter class at many historical plantations. The apparent ambivalence I was detecting between museums’ claims to wanting to represent slave life and the resounding absence of enslaved
characters’ historical presence suggests that slavery is a painful and disruptive history, a
history singled out for “social forgetting.” Social forgetting in popular culture and in
museums is a part of collective memory described by Iowna Irwin-Zarecka (1994) that
accounts for the omissions and absences of particular people and events in public
memory.

In the context of assessing slave life interpretations at historical plantation
museums, Eichstedt and Small explain:

Some people believe that ignoring the past or whitewashing it (literally) will
allow healing to occur; that we can get on with a just world by simply looking
forward from today; that there need be no account of the past, no dredging up of
old skeletons, no probing of old wounds. We fundamentally challenge this
assertion. We believe that without a full and open discussion of the past, its
relation to contemporary inequalities and oppressions, and considerations of how
to respond to these historical and contemporary inequalities, true healing cannot
take place. Sites that pride themselves as providing history to the masses have an
important role to play in this process – either as maintainers of oppressive patterns
or as teachers for a just future. (2002, p. 270)

How then do museum workers at historical plantations go about expanding slave
life representations to include fuller descriptions of humanity? What can we make of the
need to heal wounds and examine buried skeletons? What are the obstacles to interpreting
expanded representations of the historical enslaved individuals who have stories to tell
about how they impacted the history of Louisiana? Eichstedt and Small (2002)
acknowledge that their study did not explore whether any of the 122 historical plantation
museums that they visited had changed their interpretations over time. Eichstedt and
Small expressed hope that further research will help capture the transitions that sites have
gone through, as well as reveal how and why plantation museums made the decisions that
shape their tours (p. 21). The objective of my study was to probe into the workings of
museum interpretation development at MMP to examine workers’ engagements with
plantation history, and thus to uncover the limitations and possibilities for more fully describing the free and enslaved residents in interpretations at historical plantations.

While critics have recognized that ethnocentric practices and institutional ideologies perpetuate exclusionary interpretations, educational psychoanalytic theories have enabled me to look more closely at the omissions and exclusions of slave life histories at MMP on a more individual level. Deborah Britzman (1998) discusses education as “interference” in the learner’s internal world. I imagined the possibility that new slave life histories introduced to MMP museum workers might disrupt the museum workers’ individual attachments and loyalties to the traditional white ethnocentric meanings they have long attributed to MMP. A subgroup of theoretical scholarship within educational psychoanalytic theory addresses questions about how learners engage in reading historical narratives of mass violence and oppression. What happens when stories are too much for the learner to bear? Claudia Eppert (2000; 2002a; 2002b), Simon and Eppert (1997), Simon, et al., (2000), Ellsworth (1997) and others offer insights into this kind of difficult learning; theoretical insights that were critical in my analysis for exploring MMP museum workers’ responses to new slave life histories. I delved deeper into my query, and asked if museum workers found the new slave life histories dissonant to how they understood MMP plantation life, then how could they work through the disparities?

Key to understanding museum workers abilities to engage with the traumatic histories about slave life at MMP was Eppert’s (2000; 2002a) notions of loss in learning. I further explored the possibility that perhaps museum workers were dealing with losses inflicted by the interference of, what Britzman (1998) terms, “difficult knowledge” imposed on their internal worlds. My educational psychoanalytic explorations turned my
attention inward. I examined museum workers’ expressions of resistances and desires, as individual learners who were charged with the responsibility for shaping and teaching the history of plantation life in an expanded interpretation of an integrated plantation.

Research Questions

My three research questions were:

1. How have museum workers represented slave life?
2. What happens when museum workers grapple with difficult knowledge slave life representations present?
3. What pedagogical strategies can be developed to engage museum workers in developing responsible and sensitive interpretations about historical trauma of plantation enslavement?

Outline of the Remaining Chapters

Chapter Two: Context of Magnolia Mound Plantation provides the historical and social context of MMP. I describe how I came to study MMP, and I provide a brief description of the plantation museum’s layout, historic structures, and public programs. I provide a brief narrative about the history of MMP, from the time the plantation was established in 1786, through the colonial period and into the antebellum period, until 1830. The stories of enslaved and free people at MMP that I documented and presented to the MMP museum workers were for this time period.

Chapter Three: Literature Review is divided into four sections. The first section is a brief discussion on the significant role history museums play in the United States in producing and disseminating knowledge. I provide descriptions of particular museum terms and current museum education practices to ground later discussions of my study
findings. In the second section, I review literature from curriculum studies with a focus on educational psychoanalytic theories on loss in learning. I address concepts on learning and teaching traumatic histories and on mourning and melancholia in the context of education. The third section is a review of the museum literature that examines how museums have approached expanding their interpretations of American slave life. I highlight the pioneering interpretations at Colonial Williamsburg, and summarize the results of several broad assessments of interpretations of African American history at museums. I close this literature review chapter with a section on interpreting slave life in the American South, with an eye on the social forces that shape and maintain the collective memories about historical race relations.

In Chapter Four, I describe the action research study design I used with MMP workers as they added slave life interpretations to MMP’s regular tour. The study design included two major data-generating components: action research and archival research. I first describe the action research component that generated ethnographic data on the museum workers’ responses to the expansion of their museum’s interpretation of slave life. The action research component involved six phases: tour observations, post tour conversations, team meetings, outside scholar’s comments, informal interviews, and pilot tours. I then describe the archival research component that provided the information basis for modifying the regular tour, which was a key step in the action research component. As part of the description of the archival research, I include some short stories as examples so the reader can gain a sense of the depth and complexity of the enslaved community at MMP that I was able to document.

In Chapter Five, I explain how I used the constant comparative method to analyze the ethnographic data I collected in the action research component of the study. I describe
the coding scheme I used with the resulting transcripts, and outline the propositional statements I developed in order to look for patterns and clusters in the coded data. This chapter provides the framework for how I organized my findings.

In Chapter Six, I discuss the five overarching themes I found in the coded data to organize my findings. These five themes (reception, resistance, repetition, reflection, and reconsideration) helped me to describe the phenomenon of “remembrance learning” (Eppert, 2000), which is based on educational psychoanalytic theories on loss in learning (Eppert, 2000; Simon et al., 2000). I use excerpts from the many pages of transcripts I collected in the action research component to support my findings about how MMP museum workers engaged in the learning and used new slave life history to integrate the regular tour at MMP.

In Chapter Seven, I describe commemorative museum pedagogy as an approach for other museum workers to consider as they expand slave life representations at their historical sites. This pedagogy is based on my findings in this action research study, remembrance learning theories, and notions of a post-modern curriculum (Doll, 1993).

I conclude with some brief comments in Chapter Eight. I consider the implications of my study for MMP and what new questions this study has prompted. I close with a hope that other historical plantations will experiment with commemorative museum pedagogy, which I developed in this study with MMP museum workers, and I suggest further studies to explore the emerging integrated interpretations for historical plantation landscapes.
Chapter Two: Context of Magnolia Mound Plantation

Personal Testimony

In my work as a curator of education at regional history museums over the past 25 years, I have witnessed a dramatic rise in interest about slave life representations. While I was working in Tennessee in the early 1990s, two major traveling exhibits opened in Knoxville. The Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibit Service (SITES) exhibit, *Before Freedom Came: African American Life in the Antebellum South*, opened at the East Tennessee Historical Society, where I was curator of education. In the same year, the other exhibit, *Back of the Big House: The Cultural Landscape of Plantation Slavery*, which was on loan from the Library of Congress, opened at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville. These two exhibits received tremendous visitation, especially from school groups. Why now, I wondered, were museums positioned to fill the demands for educational programming on slave life and African American history?

Although I had witnessed an increase in slave life representations in museums, at the same time, I was reading critics reports and finding on my own museum visits an inconsistent pattern of slave life representations at historical plantations. I found that these historical sites overwhelmingly privileged the memory of the white planter families, while representing a generic recollection of the enslaved populations. Consequently, I was left asking, how do museums teach the traumatic history of plantation slave life? One director at a south Louisiana history museum explained to me that the history of slavery is “a difficult story to tell.” I considered that the difficulties in telling slave life stories were made visible by the ambivalent, impersonal and at times dehumanizing
interpretations of African American enslavement presently included in the guided tours of many historical plantation museums.

When my family moved to Baton Rouge in 1998, I started working at Magnolia Mound Plantation (MMP) as curator of education. Among my duties there, I was asked to develop an education program for the newly installed slave cabin exhibit. This project became central to my work and to my relationship to my new home community in south Louisiana. It also prompted many reflections on my job responsibilities and on the means for me to engage visitors in learning about an integrated plantation history.

Magnolia Mound Plantation

For over 30 years, working and professional class Americans have volunteered and supported the restoration and interpretation of MMP. From its grass roots beginnings, MMP has evolved as a cultural icon for French Louisiana descendents and was saved from the wrecking ball in 1969 by a group of influential Baton Rouge citizens. The big house was restored with the aim of preserving and interpreting contemporary cultural connections to historical Baton Rougeans and to its distinguishable French Creole architecture and heritage.

Eichstedt and Small (2002) note that plantation museums in Louisiana, in particular those along the River Road (which includes MMP), were once homes to some of the wealthiest families in 19th century United States. The researchers also observed that museums along the River Road focused their historical site interpretations on 18th and 19th century plantation life and on the cultural characteristics among Creoles of

---

5 In the context of Louisiana plantation history, “Creole” means one born in the colony of immigrant parents who were most commonly from Europe, the Caribbean, or Africa.
French origin (p. 6). The River Road region plantations were more often established during Louisiana’s colonial era, while more northern and western historical plantations were mostly started after statehood in 1812. MMP was primarily a French Creole plantation held by the same family from the Spanish colonial era through statehood.

MMP is owned by the city of Baton Rouge. The museum was originally opened in 1975 as a plantation big house museum. MMP is accredited by the American Association of Museums for having maintained professional museum standards and MMP uses the following mission statement to guide their work:

[The mission for MMP is ] to preserve, collect and interpret the historic house and site as a demonstration of early plantation life in south Louisiana, for the education and enjoyment of present and future generations. This will be done through interpreting MMP’s architecture, collections and education that represent the experience of family life and social history of the culture of 19th century Baton Rouge and the larger community. (MMP, 2001)

MMP is operated by the Baton Rouge Parks and Recreation Commission (BREC) and is located on the Mississippi River on what was once a part of the historic River Road. MMP is set in an urban area between downtown Baton Rouge and Louisiana State University. The immediate surrounding area is primarily a working class African American neighborhood called Old South Baton Rouge. Three additional museums are located in Old South Baton Rouge and they commemorate 19th and 20th century African American history.

MMP is set on 16-acres that include the original late 18th century French Creole big house; the original 1870s overseer’s house that was re-installed in the 1970s; a reproduction open hearth kitchen that was installed in the 1980s; a mid-1800s slave cabin; an early 19th century pigeonnaire; a cash crop garden alive with sugar cane and cotton plants; a kitchen garden filled with vegetables, fruits, and herbs; two outbuildings
equipped with 19th century carpentry tools; and a weaving room with an antebellum period loom on display. The museum includes a Visitor Center that houses exhibit space, a gift shop, and the orientation space where tours begin. Also out on the grounds is a relatively new open-air pavilion that is built with cypress timbers to resemble a barn. Figure 1 shows the layout of the MMP grounds.

The museum is open seven days a week and serves an average of 24,000 visitors a year. Tours are given hourly between 10:00am and 3:00pm for about $8.00 per adult visitor. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, museum workers dressed in period-style clothes demonstrate open hearth cooking for visitors. Commercial bus and boat tours, school tours and summer camp tours crowd the site year round.

The museum employs approximately 14 staff members, five of whom hold professional positions. The professional staff includes a director, director of volunteers, a curator of education, a registrar and exhibits coordinator. The museum uses approximately 25 volunteers, who are docents, demonstration cooks, and clerical helpers. Tours are given by paid tour guides and volunteer docents who are required to dress in colonial era garb.

The regular tour takes visitors on 11 stops through elaborately furnished rooms in the big house and in the kitchen building (Figure 2). The tour narrative describes plantation life in Baton Rouge over the course of 44 years (1786-1830) focusing on decorative arts and architecture, the genealogy and lifestyle of a slaveholding family, household management, foodways, colonial Louisiana politics, religion, and slavery in the context of labor to support the planter’s family. Today, the regular tour focuses on the Duplantier family from 1802-1827, the years marking the arrival and death of planter Armand Duplantier at MMP. After the 45 to 60-minute guided tour, visitors are invited to
walk the grounds to view the outbuildings, including the slave cabin located at the rear of the property.

Figure 1. Layout of Magnolia Mound Plantation, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.
Figure 2. Route of the regular tour at Magnolia Mound Plantation, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The tour includes the big house and the kitchen.
Interpreting Slave Life at MMP

Over the past 10 years, MMP has re-addressed their slave life interpretations. Specific events were the installation of the slave cabin, the development of the special tour entitled *Beyond the Big House*, and the development of school tours including *In the Quarter* and *Day in the Life of a Slave*. Also, each February, MMP offers a lecture or special event to commemorate Black History month. MMP has periodically employed African American tour guides and volunteers to lead tours and to present programs.

The slave cabin is a two-room structure built of native cypress. The room on the left in the cabin represents the household of three or four enslaved individuals. The furnishings include bedding, seating, a table, cooking implements, and cotton carders. The room on the right in the cabin displays an exhibit, which chronicles 19th century West African Diaspora and describes the work life of enslaved Africans and African Americans in Louisiana sugar cane fields. There are no labels, brochures, or guides available to describe the historical people who lived in the MMP slave quarter.

In coordination with the opening of the slave cabin exhibit in 1998, the museum scripted a one-hour tour entitled *Beyond the Big House*. The tour led visitors from the slave cabin to the outbuildings and ended with a tour in the big house from the view of an enslaved domestic worker. However, within two years, only one museum worker was trained to give the tour and the tour was not strongly promoted seriously to the public. To date, one museum worker is prepared to give this tour and visitors are required to schedule the tour several days in advance.
In 1999, MMP offered a school program, *In the Quarter*, which engaged students in working with archival and archeologically-found materials to discuss how historians work to describe what life might have been like for an enslaved family at MMP. Students toured the furnished slave cabin and visited an exhibit describing West African Diaspora. More recently, MMP offers a school program, *A Day in the Life of a Slave*. Students perform tasks including grinding corn, scrubbing clothes on a washboard, and planting seeds. Students view the slave cabin exhibit that depicts a one room household. The school program is available to supplement the regular tour of the big house.

The social history movement was in full bloom among the ranks of museum practitioners in the late 1980s and the 1990s. MMP had been actively affiliated with the American Association of Museums, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the American Association for State and Local History. In recent conversations with me, MMP workers said that they attended workshops, subscribed to the periodicals, and read publications offered by these professional museum associations and by Colonial Williamsburg (CW), who urged historical sites to expand their interpretations to include women, minorities, and common people. MMP museum workers responded to the social historical movement and installed the slave cabin exhibit and revised the regular tour of the big house to include representations of the domestic responsibilities of the free white women in the planter family, including their power to direct “house slaves.” MMP workers said they had referred to such literature as Catherine Clinton’s (1982) *The Plantation Mistress: Woman’s World in the Old South*, and implemented archeological research on the museum grounds to recover the kitchen building site.

In the 1980s, the museum reconstructed the kitchen building and interpreted the new structure with docents who portrayed enslaved female cooks. The installed slave
cabin exhibit, the revised tour emphasizing the plantation mistress’s domestic responsibilities, and the open hearth cooking presentations have survived intact to the present. The museum added, and continues to maintain, a kitchen garden and a cash-crop garden that indicate the presence of enslaved field workers. The overseer’s house on display also suggests the presence of enslaved laborers.

In the early 1990s, MMP hosted the same exhibit I saw in Knoxville, Tennessee, *Back of the Big House* organized by the Library of Congress. A retired MMP director explained to me (personal communication in 2002) that this exhibit inspired her to pursue the acquisition of the slave cabin that was later installed at MMP in 1998. I found that the addition of the slave cabin, however, did not radically alter the site’s overall interpretation focus on the life style of the slaveholding planter family.

The retired MMP director explained that her project to add a slave cabin included interpreting the historic slave dwelling as the household of an enslaved family. To that end, the retired director worked with an exhibit team to collect period furnishings that included a rope bed and a mattress. The retired director described how the team developed the interpretation for the slave dwelling; her description indicated that the team was still ambivalent about recalling plantation life. For example, the retired director said she worried about “flack” from the public and from BREC who might contest the presence of a slave cabin on city owned grounds as “too unpleasant of a memory.” An indication that the team was grounded in the planter’s view of slave life was when the exhibit team decided it was too harsh for visitors to view the more historically accurate moss-filled pallets used by slaves to sleep on the cabin floor. Rather, the exhibit team chose to use a period wood-framed bed and mattress in the exhibit. These examples suggest that these museum workers were torn in how to represent the enslaved family in
the slave cabin exhibit. Should enslaved household members be described as well provided for? Or should they be described as oppressed by the restrictions slavery imposed on their household in the cabin?

I sensed risk and fear in the retired MMP director’s recollection of the exhibit team who worked on the, then new, slave cabin exhibit. I sensed that museum workers faced a conundrum in trying to address their desire to expand slave life representations and their fear of the debates that these representations could trigger. Cultural critics, Karp and Lavine (1991), explain that museum workers “who respond to these [multicultural and intercultural] concerns find themselves in difficult territory, fearful of the passion of the debates and often insufficiently aware of the unconscious assumptions that underlie their own exhibitions” (p. 2). I recognized that part of the context for my study was the museum workers’ expressed tension surrounding the responsibility of interpreting the traumatic history of plantation slave life.

Historical Baseline: Magnolia Mound Plantation

Magnolia Mound Plantation was established in 1786 with a Spanish land grant to Scotsman James Hillin. Hillin, his wife Jane Stanley Hillin, their five children, and six enslaved Africans (Thomas, John, Lucia, Catherine, Jenny, and Anna) started a plantation on roughly 950 acres on the east bank of the Mississippi River in Baton Rouge. The newly formed plantation community cleared the land and cultivated corn, tobacco, cotton and indigo.

Around 1791, Hillin sold the plantation, without the enslaved individuals, to John Joyce, an Irish immigrant who settled in Mobile, Alabama. Joyce brought enslaved

---

6 The following abbreviated historical baseline for MMP is from my history report. See Appendix A for historical documentation.
families and individuals, roughly 50 enslaved people, to MMP to cultivate indigo, cotton, tobacco and corn. Many of these individuals were in young families that included multiple children. John Joyce, his wife Constance, and their two young children lived in Mobile.

Joyce was a business partner with John Turnbull, a Scotsman, and together they traded slaves, cattle, and land, and were commercial builders. By 1798, both men had died, leaving their business and property to be divided between their widows, Constance Rochon Joyce and Catherine Rucker Turnbull. MMP, including the 54 enslaved men, women and children, were claimed by Constance and her two children in 1800.

In 1802, Constance married Armand Duplantier, a French man who served under General Lafayette in the American Revolutionary War. Armand had become a cotton planter and had settled in Pointe Coupee Parish, Louisiana. Armand was a widower with four children when he married Constance Joyce. Around 1803, Armand and Constance began aggressively selling MMP-held slaves, severing enslaved families. The Duplantiers wanted to move to France to join Armand’s family. Due to the war in France and to poor financial outcomes in Louisiana, the Duplantiers remained in Louisiana.

Armand Duplantier’s enslaved workers cultivated cotton at MMP and at other plantations individually owned by Armand and Constance. Armand Duplantier was involved in local Baton Rouge military affairs and socialized with the well-to-do in New Orleans, Natchez, and Baton Rouge. Armand invested in business ventures, including real estate and the slave trade.

MMP remained the summer country home for the Duplantiers who lived in New Orleans until at least 1809. Armand and Constance had four children together. Around 1812, the Duplantiers remodeled the MMP big house, expanding the four room cottage
into a more formal seven or eight room house. The current MMP museum displays the big house to reflect the renovations and furnishings of this time period.

The political and economic climate in Baton Rouge was unstable due to constant threats to the Spanish colonial regime and a constant shortage of currency. Baton Rouge was ruled by Spain from 1779 until 1810, when the East Baton Rouge Parish was included in a battle to form the Republic of West Florida. Shortly after, East Baton Rouge became a U.S. territory and was included in Louisiana at the time of statehood in 1812.

The French government originally established the colonial town of Baton Rouge in 1717 and established Le Code Noir (the Black Code) in 1724, which was a collection of 80 laws that legalized and controlled slavery in the colony of Louisiana. Le Code Noir was the precedent for maintaining slavery in Baton Rouge for the colonial and territorial regimes (Britain, Spain and America) that followed until statehood was granted.

In 1814, Armand faced bankruptcy, putting the MMP enslaved community in crisis, again. Many more slaves were sold and 17 slaves were sold to Armand’s eldest son in Baton Rouge in what appears to have been a successful effort to keep the planter family’s favored slaves. Constance and Armand Duplantier re-settled permanently at Magnolia Mound Plantation around 1816. At that time, Armand’s creditors tried to sell the remaining slaves owned by Armand in the New Orleans slave market. Those individuals who were not sold were likely brought to live and labor at MMP with the 17 slaves Duplantier’s son was holding in Baton Rouge.

The enslaved community at MMP had undergone a series of major disruptions that were the direct result of the Duplantiers’ financial troubles. Once the Duplantier family settled at MMP, the newly formed enslaved community stabilized and established their own crop gardens and formed households. Likely, the slave quarter at MMP had
about 16 cabins. Constance purchased at least ten more enslaved individuals from the New Orleans slave market, mothers with children, who were joined with the MMP enslaved community to cultivate cotton and sugar. The enslaved community most often ranged from 50 to 65 residents. Throughout the years the Duplantier family owned MMP (1804 – 1849), the ratio of enslaved residents to free residents was roughly five to one.

South Louisiana plantations were transitioning their cash crop from cotton to sugar in the 1810s. By 1824, the Duplantiers had expanded the cash crops at MMP to include sugar cane. Around that time, MMP included a sugar mill for processing raw sugar cane into granulated sugar for market. For example, in 1820, MMP held 27 enslaved agricultural workers, both men and women, who likely cultivated, processed, and packaged cotton and sugar for riverboat transport to New Orleans. The remaining 23 enslaved individuals were children and elderly adults. Armand died in 1827, but his death did not appear to disrupt the established social fabric of the enslaved community. The enslaved community at MMP had stabilized, and included multiple generations of families living together at MMP until at least the time of Constance Duplantier’s death in 1841. Some of the original enslaved MMP community continued to be held at MMP through multiple owners until the end of the Civil War.

The complicated historical twists and changes in legal ownership of MMP, and the major movements of groups of slaves among MMP and other plantations owned by relatives of the Duplantiers in Louisiana, suggest that many of the enslaved individuals and free individuals affiliated with MMP had long-term relationships over multiple generations. In Chapter Four, I discuss in more detail the socio-historical context of 18th and 19th century south Louisiana plantation slave life.
Chapter Three: Literature Review

In this chapter, I review four areas that provide relevant information to better understand how museum workers incorporate multidimensional representations of slave life into their interpretations. These four areas are: museums and their educational role, educational psychoanalytic scholarship related to mourning and melancholia, past and ongoing interpretations of slave life at museums, and collective memory and loss in interpreting the American South.

The first section is a brief discussion of the educational role played by museums. According to the American Association of Museums (2005), American museums average approximately 865 million visitors per year, which is about 2.3 million visits per day. History museums are places dedicated to three major activities: collecting, preserving, and interpreting history. Museums are places where the power of knowledge production that comes from the guardianship of collections gives museum workers authority to delineate knowledge. The pedagogical impact of historical site museums is far reaching.

The second section is a literature review that views the curriculum questions raised by the demands to expand slave life representations at traditionally European American historical sites through an educational psychoanalytic lens. I was interested in the curriculum theory literature that would shed light on possible approaches to studying how the addition of slave life information impacted museum workers’ relationships to the sites’ interpretations. In particular, I review educational psychoanalytic scholarship on trauma studies focused on mourning and melancholia (Felman, 1987; Felman and Laub, 1992: Britzman, 1991, 1998; Eppert, 2000, 2002a, 2002b; Morris, 2001).
In the third section, I explore the tensions and resistances to changes to slave life representations that have occurred at museums when tied with their traditionally European American meanings and interpretations. I describe how one of the nation’s premiere historical site museums, Colonial Williamsburg (CW) in Virginia, responded to additional slave life interpretations, and I discuss two other museums (The Maryland Historical Society and The Museum of African American History) as examples of museum workers’ responses to the rise of museum interest in multicultural discourse and exhibitions. I then summarize several broad assessments of museums that criticize current museum interpretations of slave life, and conclude with a summary of the current challenges facing museums as they increase their interpretations of slave life at their sites.

As part of the third section, I briefly document the rise of social history since the 1960s in museums, and the subsequent movement to expand historical site interpretations to include representations of the “the common man,” namely minorities and women. This literature helps to describe the premise upon which MMP museum workers endeavored to integrate their site’s interpretation in south Louisiana and the commonalities MMP has with other historical institutions in their responses to adding slave life representations to the historical landscape.

The fourth section is a short review on collective memory and New South memory work to help situate the inherited interpretation traditions of the historical plantations and their workers, such as CW and MMP. I first describe collective memory and loss in general terms, and then discuss their specific application to the issue of collective memory of American slavery.

Taken together, my reviews of these four areas provide the background, context, and theoretical framework for my action research study and analysis of how workers at
MMP responded to the expansion of their regular tour to include more multidimensional representations of slave life.

Museums, Education, and Society

Museums are conceived and supported by particular nations, regions, and communities and museums reciprocally help to demarcate and articulate national, communal, and individual identities. Museum educator Elaine Gurian explains museums are “connected to the soul of civic life” (1999, p. 164). Eilean Hooper-Greenhill (2002), director of the department of museum studies at the University of Leicester, England, argues against the claim that museums are for all people, insisting that “museums are not experienced equally by all,” rather museums “contribute to specific interpretive communities” (p. 13). Museums, when called upon to validate, contest, entertain, or educate us, are important to us like carefully shelved reference books and new novels or movies that offer different views of who we are.

Museums are institutions peopled with individuals committed to advocating particular cultural markers, and with audiences that are often individuals committed to drawing meanings from contrived assemblages of such markers. Museums are institutions constituted, in part, by museum workers committed to a particular mission statement who make “public curriculum” (see Vallance, 1995) decisions that first suit themselves and then the extant communities. Simultaneously, visitors are individuals who actively select and voluntarily engage in museum exhibits visually, corporally, and intellectually, as they synthesize and decipher the fragments of knowledge. This pedagogical dynamic in museums frames the construction of meanings for Magnolia
Historical site museums are non-profit institutions set in select places that are primarily engaged in the preservation, collection, and interpretation of landscapes, buildings, forts, plantations, or communities that describe events or persons of particular historical interest. Rosenzweig and Thelen (1998) found in their national survey that Americans put more trust in history museums and historic sites for exploring the past than any other source (p. 105). For cultural critic Ludimilla Jordanova (2002), museums clearly constitute one of the main ways in which visions of the past are communicated to the general public (p. 255).

Historically, a plantation was distinguished from a farm by the number of enslaved laborers held to cultivate the land. In the scholarly literature and at historical plantation museums, the term “plantation” usually is applied to an agricultural enterprise with twenty or more enslaved individuals. The rationale for this distinction, one that has been used for centuries, was that a farmer who could afford to command the labor of twenty or more enslaved laborers would be able to cease laboring in the fields himself and rise up to join the planter class as a planter who managed the workings of the plantation (Vlach, 1991).

A museum manager at a south Louisiana historical plantation explained to me that adding slave life representations to his site’s interpretations was like “healing old wounds” (personal communication, Oakley Plantation Audubon State Historic Site, November, 2002). Curriculum theorist William F. Pinar (2004) explained in his analysis of North and South regionalism in American public education that, “Despite the discomfort, some southern white students will commit themselves to work through… the
residues of 300 years of southern history” (p. 247). The mournful language expressed by these two individuals suggests that some educators in the South recognize how healing has prompted learning. The ongoing “healing” is learning to live with loss, a mournful kind of learning (e.g., Eppert, 2000) that is central to my ethnographic analysis of how museum workers at MMP engaged with new information on slave life history.

Curriculum Theory and Educational Psychoanalytic Theories on Loss in Learning

Curriculum theory is a discipline committed to theorizing how knowledge is constructed and disseminated to the nation’s learners. Curriculum theory, according to Joseph Schwab (1969), is concerned with choice and action. Museum educators are charged with choosing and implementing educational programs. Elizabeth Vallance (1995) asserts that educators in museums attend to shaping a “public curriculum” that is accessible to broad and unpredictable audiences (p. 12). Vallance’s concept of museum interpretation as “public curriculum” further opened my study to analysis through a psychoanalytic lens with theories from curriculum theory.

Museum interpretation is an act of explanation and public curriculum is built upon negotiations among social, technological, and scholarly sources that museum workers draw on to construct museum representations. Museum workers select a focus and embellish pertinent materials to articulate what they perceive is significant and meaningful. Curriculum development demands deliberation and analysis about ethics, accessibility, accountability, and power within curricula designs. Why have museum workers selected and rejected particular representations?

The expertise and disposition of museum workers are critical components in constructing interpretations for exhibits. The museum worker’s knowledge and position
in society guides him or her in selecting artifacts and interpretative materials. The corroborative powers of the materials and texts he or she uses to interpret an exhibit create a context for artifacts to enrich the museum’s argument. However, Leon and Rosenzweig (1989) argue, “It is a mistake…to assume that the ‘correct’ historical interpretation will make a good museum” (p. xviii).

Curriculum theorist William E. Doll (1993) describes a post-modern curriculum that allows for multiple ways of knowing about the world. A post-modern curriculum includes a pedagogical framework that encourages educators to question the “grand narrative” and, through recursive reflection, encourages learners to make increasingly more connections to new knowledge. A post-modern curriculum is open-ended to allow for multiple interpretations and alternative patterns to emerge as the basis for teachers and learners to construct new meanings.

Museum educator Lisa Roberts (1997) contends that when museum educators “argue for alternative meanings for exhibits that speak to diverse perspectives, they are bucking traditional ways of knowing and presenting objects” (p. 55). I wanted to consider how museum workers, especially museum educators, are “bucking traditional ways of knowing” what life was like on antebellum plantations for the free and enslaved residents. I was interested in learning more about the social forces and museum-practice trends in expanding the historical representations of enslaved African Americans that might have influenced MMP to alter the site’s interpretation of plantation life. Rahier and Hawkins (1999) and Eichstedt and Small (2002) have documented the slowness of the changes at historical plantations. Why are these changes occurring so slowly? This is a curriculum question that demands investigation into how museum workers as learners
and curriculum designers (in this sense) engage with the new social history that includes slave life.

Aspects of curriculum theory provide a basis for uncovering the psychological and social complexities museum workers might experience when faced with changing the traditional interpretations of a historical plantation. Slave life historiography (e.g., Taylor, 1963; Blassingame, 1972; Genovese, 1972; Gutman, 1976; Berlin, 1998) demonstrates that south Louisiana plantation slave life was a long, oppressive and traumatic part of America’s history. Learning about slave life for museum workers can be difficult on at least two levels. First, the history of slave life recalls a traumatic past. Second, learning the traumatic history of slave life might “interfere” (see Britzman, 1998) with the museum workers’ current understandings of history at their site.

Psychoanalysis has attained a significant role among curriculum theorists as an analytic methodology dedicated to understanding how new information such as traumatic histories of violence or group aggression is known, that which is knowable and that which is unknowable, and the dynamics of grieving implicated through the rhetorical expressions and actions of educators and learners (Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, and Taubman, 1995). Museum workers are faced with a curriculum problem by asking which knowledge is important for which social subjects? (see Pinar et al., 1995). Psychoanalytic curriculum theories attempt to search within and behind pedagogies, traditions, movements, and words to better understand socially repressed motives, fears, and desires that shape teaching practices and learning environments (Pinar et al., 1995; Pinar, 2000; Pinar, 2004).

How can museum workers address their commitment to democratic accessibility (AAM, 1992) in their attempts to interpret the traumatic history of American slavery
when such interpretations may put learners’ identities at risk? Britzman (1998) explains in the context of teaching histories of oppression and group violence, “This exploration needs to do more than confront the difficulties of learning from another’s painful encounter with victimization, aggression, and the desire to live on one’s own terms. It also must be willing to risk approaching the internal conflicts which the learner brings to the learning” (p. 117).

My review in this section, focuses on the work of educational psychoanalytic theorists (e.g., Felman, 1987; Ellsworth, 1997; Britzman, 1998; Eppert, 2000, 2002a; Morris, 2001) and social theorists (e.g., Caruth, 1996; LaCapra, 2001) whose scholarship can be largely referred to as “trauma studies.” Trauma studies offer a theoretical approach to investigating teaching and learning about traumatic histories, especially looking at notions of loss. These selected educational theorists base much of their analyses on loss using Sigmund Freud’s theories and Melanie Klien’s theories on mourning and melancholia. Mourning and melancholia address how individuals contend with loss, and how traumatic losses of loved ones or ideas can be encrypted and transferred over multiple generations.

Freud’s Mourning and Melancholia

In Freud’s seminal work on the psychological processes of human grieving, “Mourning and Melancholia” (1971a), he observes:

[Mourning] is regularly the reaction to the loss of a loved person, or to the loss of some abstraction which has taken the place of one, such as one’s country, liberty, an ideal, and so on. In some people the same influences produce melancholia instead of mourning and we consequently suspect them of a pathological disposition...We rely on [loss] being overcome after a certain lapse of time, and we look upon any interference with it as useless or even harmful. (p. 243-244)
Freud observed that in the healthy, though painful, process of mourning, the bereaved person labors at retrieving psychic energy from each important memory and association connected to the lost person or object. Freud calls this labor in mourning, “working through.” As mourning progresses, the reality of the loss is “worked through” and the pain diminishes; when mourning is complete the person is revived, having energy available to connect with the outside world to invest in other relationships (Kahn, 2002, p. 171). Working through loss is a psychic process that transpires within the internal negotiations of the ego, memory by memory, to find an internal balance among love for one-self, the effects of losing a love-object, and one’s changed relationship to the outside world. We invest (cathexis) psychic energy (libido) into the people or objects we love, and into the relationships, memories, and associations connected to those relationships.

Freud describes the work of mourning in this way:

Reality-testing has shown that the loved object no longer exists, and it proceeds to demand that all libido shall be withdrawn from its attachments to that object. This demand arouses understandable opposition – it is a matter of general observation that people never willingly abandon a libidinal position, not even, indeed, when a substitute is already beckoning to them. This opposition can be so intense that a turning away from reality takes place and a clinging to the object through the medium of a hallucinatory wishful psychosis. Normally, respect for reality gains the day. Nevertheless, its orders cannot be obeyed at once. They are carried out bit by bit at great expense of time and cathetic energy, and in the meantime the existence of the lost object is psychically prolonged. Each single one of the memories and expectations in which the libido is bound to the object is brought up and hyper-cathected, and detachment of the libido is accomplished in respect of it....The fact is, however, that when the work of mourning is completed the ego becomes free and uninhibited again. (1971a, p. 244-245)

Key to Freud’s description of working through is the slow repetitive process of reality testing\(^7\), bit by bit, until the subject can let go of her losses.

\(^7\) Reality testing, according to LaPlanche and Pontalis (1973), is a process postulated by Freud, which allows the subject to distinguish stimuli originating in the outside world from internal ones, and to forestall potential confusion between what he perceives and what he only imagines (p. 382).
The melancholic suffers the symptoms of mourning and suffers from an impoverished ego. Freud explains, “In mourning it is the world which has become poor and empty; in melancholia it is the ego itself” (p. 246). Melancholia, as described by Freud, involves the inability to mourn, when the libido can not move onto another attachment. Freud explains:

But the free libido was not displaced on to another object; it was withdrawn into the ego. There however, it was not employed in any unspecified way, but served to establish an *identification* of the ego with the abandoned object. Thus the shadow of the object fell upon the ego, and the latter could henceforth be judged by a special agency as though it were an object, the forsaken object. In this way an object-loss was transformed into an ego-loss and the conflict between the ego and the loved person into a cleavage between the critical activity of the ego and the ego as altered by identification. (p. 249)

The melancholic no longer distinguishes himself or herself from the lost object; the bereaved introjects the image of the lost object into the image of himself or herself. The conflated ego sets itself over and against the lost object. In this context, introjection means the melancholic person unconsciously believes that the lost object is actually now a part of him or her (Freud, 1971a, p. 249). In successful mourning, the bereaved accomplishes some benign internal image of the lost object. These images allow the formation of new relationships in the present. Freud distinguishes mourning from melancholia,

The melancholic displays...an extraordinary diminution in his self-regard, an impoverishment of his ego on a grand scale. In mourning it is the world which has become poor and empty; in melancholia it is the ego itself ... [However, the melancholic] is not of the opinion that a change has taken place in him, but he extends his self criticism back over the past. (p. 246)

Julie Salverson (2000) offers a succinct and apt summary of the Freudian concepts of mourning and melancholia,

In “Mourning and Melancholia,” Freud (1917/1915) distinguishes between mourning, as a psychic response to loss that maintains the integrity of the other,
and melancholia, as a narcissistic response that subsumes the lost other into the self. Whereas in mourning the lost object is distinct from the self and eventually becomes replaced by something else out in the world, melancholia proceeds through identifications with what has been lost. What is lost is internalized and becomes the focus of one’s own psychic pain. In a sense, the melancholic replaces the lost object with the experience of loss itself. The person lives continually with an indefinable and interminable yearning for something for which no substitute is possible. (p. 63)

Key to Freud’s (1971a) theories on mourning and melancholia is Freud’s concept of defense mechanisms. The mind possesses several defense mechanisms that attempt to manage internal psychic conflicts and preserve the self. Briefly, these include repression (the mental process of pushing conflicts back into the unconscious); sublimation (the process of channeling the psychic energies into socially acceptable goals such as the production of art or science); projection (the ego fills the object with some of its own ambivalence); introjection (an extreme identification with the object taking into the ego what he or she perceived or experienced of the lost object); and splitting (the ego splits into one part that takes account of reality and another that detaches the ego from reality) (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1973, p. 428). Drawing on Melanie Klein’s work, Mitchell (1986) describes splitting of the ego as stopping the bad part from contaminating the good part of the ego by disowning part of itself (p. 20).

Repetition is another Freudian concept that helps illuminate the processes of mourning and melancholia. Unpleasant dreams, for example, are often repeated (Freud, 1920). The process of repeating a painful event symbolically allows the person to consider again the difficulty in the process of working through loss (p. 14-16). Mourners can repeat a story again and again, or ask the same questions, or read a text multiple times, all as part of working through loss.
Melanie Klein and Loss

Melanie Klein’s (1882-1960) work in psychoanalysis is based in a Freudian framework. Klein focuses on object relations in investigating the earliest infantile conflicts and with deciphering psychotic mechanisms (Mitchell, 1986). Klein’s object relations theoretical corpus is framed upon two Freudian tenets (Mitchell, 1986): unconscious thoughts are attached to language through observable activities such as play, art, talking, and dreams giving access to particular meanings of symbols and wishes; and the formative importance of infantile sexuality.

Freud first introduced the idea of object choice, which referred to a child’s earliest relationships with his or her caretakers (Freud, 1971b, p. 87). The child’s caretaker or parent was an object of her needs and desires. The child’s relationship with his or her object became internalized mental representations, or “imago.” Klein stresses the importance of interpersonal relationships and, unlike Freud, Klein emphasizes the primacy of the mother-child relationship (Klein, 1986b, p. 69).

According to Mitchell (1986), loss and managing psychic loss in Klein’s theory of the child’s ego development is central to the child’s development from infancy through adulthood. Klein utilizes Freud’s notions of defense mechanisms (repression, sublimation, projection, introjection, and splitting the ego) that enable the ego to negotiate new relationships and new knowledge. In addition, Klein discovered the defense mechanism, projective identification, which enables “the ego to project its feelings into the object which it then identifies with, becoming like the object which the ego has already imaginatively filled with itself” (Mitchell, 1986, p. 20-21; see also Hinshelwood, 1991). New knowledge and new relationships always raise anxiety from the threat of loss due to the changing dynamics of the ego’s protective attachments to her
objects (Britzman, 2003, p. 42-44). Defense mechanisms are enacted by the ego to cope with anxious tensions from the constant interchange between his or her internal and external worlds, as in the introduction of new knowledge.

In her 1940 paper, “Mourning and Its Relation to Manic Depressive States,” Klein links mourning to loss occurring at any age with the “depressive position.” Klein describes the depressive position as a process of early reality testing and argues that this is the precedent for what will become the process of mourning later in life. Klein explains, “The most important of the methods by which the child overcomes his states of mourning, is, in my view, the testing of reality; this process, however, as Freud stresses, is part of the work of mourning” (1986a, p. 147).

According to Klein, the infantile origins of the depressive position are the child’s earliest active relations to reality and to the outside world. The first object the child mourns is the mother’s breast and all the plentitude, the good it has come to stand for in the infant’s mind. When the good object is felt to be lost, when the breast frustrates the infant, the loss is felt as a result of his uncontrollable greed and destructive phantasies and impulses against the breast (1986, p. 156).

The disruption to the subject’s inner world is a key concept to curriculum theory in analyzing the learner’s engagement with new and potentially disruptive knowledge. Klein’s object relations theory relates to notions of learning and engaging with the world. Klein’s theory suggests that subjects, as learners, work through loss by way of reality testing in acquiring knowledge; each new piece of experience has to be fit into his or her internal psychic reality. This ongoing rebuilding of the subject’s inner world characterizes the successful work of mourning (Klein, 1986a, p. 167).
Unresolved Loss: Traumatic Histories and “Phantoms”

Slave life stories are tough stories (American Association of State and Local History workshops, Nashville, Tennessee, 2005, 2006); they are traumatic stories that implicate us in the present. Cathy Caruth (1996) examines the complex ways “knowing and not knowing” are entangled in the language of trauma and in narratives associated with trauma (p. 3-4). The Greek word trauma, meaning wound as in a bodily injury, is used by Freud to describe a wound inflicted upon the mind. According to Laplanche and Pontalis (1973), the term trauma adopted in psychoanalysis describes three ideas, “the idea of a violent shock, the idea of a wound and the idea of consequences affecting the whole organisation [sic]” (p. 466). The Freudian concept of traumatic memories are those buried deep into the subject’s unconscious and are too painful to bring into his or her conscious realm. Traumatic memories are knowledge the subject does not recognize he or she keeps.

Nicolas Abraham’s description of the “phantom” is a possible mechanism that sees to the transmission of an earlier generation’s melancholic stasis and unresolved traumatic repressed memories. Abraham explains:

[T]he phantom [objectifies]…the gap produced in us by the concealment of some part of a love object’s life. The phantom… [are] the gaps left within us by the secrets of others. ….The phantom is a formation of the unconscious that has never been conscious. …It passes…from the parent’s unconscious into the child’s…[In the case of clinical analysis] the patient’s horror at violating a parent’s or a family’s guarded secret, even though the secret’s text and content are inscribed within the patient’s own unconscious. The horror of transgression… is compounded by the risk of undermining the fictitious yet necessary integrity of the parental figure in question…The presence of the phantom indicates the effects, on the descendants, of something that had inflicted narcissistic injury or even catastrophe on the parents. (1994, p. 171-174)
Caruth explains the psychoanalyst’s account of inherited grief, “What returns to haunt the victim, these stories tell us, is not only the reality of the violent event but also the reality of the way that its violence has not yet been fully known” (p. 6).

Learning and Teaching About Trauma

How do museum workers engage in the traumatic history of slave life? To address this further, I look to literature on educational psychoanalytic theories on learning and teaching traumatic histories. In the context of my study, museum workers are positioned as learners who confront traumatic slave life stories as new knowledge. Newly acquired knowledge can challenge the ego’s contained good objects that then threaten the ego and can trigger defense mechanisms against painful knowledge. The work of mourning, or the refusal to mourn, are fundamental psychoanalytic concepts used by education theorists, such as Britzman (1998), Felman (1987, 1992), Ellsworth (1997), Morris (2001), and Eppert (2000, 2002a, 2002b, 2003).

Learning, Trauma, and “Difficult Knowledge”

Key to understanding how learners engage in newly introduced traumatic histories is Deborah P. Britzman’s (1998) concept of “difficult knowledge.” Britzman explains that the learning from difficult knowledge recognizes the discontinuities between the new information and the learner’s status quo. Learning from difficult knowledge asks something intimate of the learner, and it requires the learner to recognize how she might be implicated in the new knowledge and to recognize her attachments that organize self identity. Resisting difficult knowledge is, in large part, a learner’s reaction to self preservation. Difficult knowledge disrupts the status quo of the learner’s internal world and disrupts how the learner understands the external world. In the context of museum
workers expanding slave life representations, newly introduced slave life history could be perceived by museum workers as difficult knowledge.

A traumatic event may be too intense for the learner to consciously assimilate into memory. Britzman (1998) describes her students’ painful reception of difficult knowledge in reading about the history of the Holocaust (p. 117) that required “an exploration of the vicissitudes of loss and attachment and the woeful insufficiency of the belated response” (p. 134). Painful traumatic memory is repressed into the unconscious and remains un-worked through and un-comprehended; the emotional energy of the loss or pain is contained in memory. Repressed memories are held in the unconscious to protect the ego from painful disruptions of the individual’s ego-ideal (Strachey, 1971a; Freud, 1974; Klein, 1986b; Winnicott, 1989a; Thurschwell, 2000). The effects of self-preservation render the trauma unknowable because it is held in unconscious memory (Freud, 1922; Caruth, 1996; Britzman, 1998, Thurschwell, 2000).

Influenced by the work of Sigmund Freud and child psychoanalyst Anna Freud, Britzman (1998; 2002; 2003) has developed a body of scholarship that frames the demands that education puts on the learner as “interference” in the learner’s internal world. According to Britzman (1998), the notion of education as “all types of interference” (p. 1) proposes that education asks learners to unlearn how they presently view the world. I considered the criticisms aimed at historical plantations for marginalizing slave life history (e.g., Eichstedt and Small, 2002; Rahier and Hawkins, 1999) and imagined the additions of slave life stories to these sites might be viewed as “interference” for the museum workers.

Britzman draws from psychoanalysis in the context of teaching historical accounts of trauma, specifically the Holocaust and the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Britzman (1998)
argues that learning is painful in the way it jeopardizes the learner’s psychic balance and thereby creates real scenarios of loss, which require the learner to work through difficult knowledge (p. 117). Shoshana Felman (1987) and Britzman (1991), followed by Elizabeth Ellsworth (1997), recognize the foundations of education as psychical processes of learning and unlearning. Britzman contends, “What attaches the psychical to the social and the social to the psychical are matters of love and hate...[That is an] interminable ‘inside/outside’ encounter, an encounter here named ‘education’” (1998, p. 5).

I am especially interested in the conflicts within the learner, when the learner can not bear to know and may refuse new knowledge. In this light, curriculum theorist Alice Pitt (1997) approaches learning from a Freudian view that learning is not so much an accumulation of knowledge but a means for the learner to alter herself and as tensions emerge, “transformatory gestures” are implicated in the learner’s repressed resistances, resentments, and accusations (p. 4-7).

The learner’s resistance to difficult knowledge can also indicate challenges to empathize with the historical victims, to consider what the learner’s relationship is to the traumatic event and those who were immediately affected (see Eppert, 2002b). Limits of the learner’s imagination might be thought of as a lack of empathy or its censorship may be within the realm of melancholia. For empathy to unfold, the learner is challenged to, in some way, confront and work through the learning moment. Megan Boler (1999) explains that empathy might inspire action in particular lived contexts; however, empathy might not necessarily lead to changes (p. 156-157).

According to Britzman, (2000), in the context of bearing witness to Holocaust testimony, psychoanalyst Dori Laub argues that “the gift of testimony and its reception is
an act of intersubjectivity, where the listener becomes willing to witness the painful inauguration of the testifier becoming an ethical subject” (p. 38). The point of breakdown is where, Britzman continues, receiving testimony is “belated, too late to prevent the trauma, too fragile to ensure that the trauma itself will not be repeated” (p. 38).

Britzman (1998) concludes that reading *Diary of Anne Frank* (see Anne Frank, 1995) can be a work of mourning and can provide a space for exploring loss and to exceed the learner’s melancholic disposition. The learner “must move from the desolation of the survivor to the position of analyzing her own attachments in and to the world” (p. 132). The act of learning that addresses the learner’s ego defenses requires that the learner re-build or re-organize his or her self identity with each piece of new knowledge.

The learner who can work through her internal disruptions, bit by bit, can let go of the painful objects she holds to be herself and can be moved to action. Learners who are mourning, or have mourned, are more likely to empathize and respond to the specific historical events of the other’s trauma. Boler (1999) describes how an active meaningful empathy might arise from this mournful position that could inspire change, which might productively address the meanings of the historical trauma in the present. New knowledge in the form of testimonies, literature, or museum exhibits “must be received as a provocation of this urge and hence as a restoration of the capacity for subjectivity to be rebuilt from the ruins of destruction” (Britzman, p. 38). In this framework, museum workers and educators may attempt to express the subjectivity of historical characters to develop more multidimensional representations for museum exhibits and for historical landscapes, which could then generate responsive communities to promote social justice education.
Learning Crises, Passion for Ignorance, and Belated Responses

Shoshana Felman’s (1987, 1992) contributions to the literature that are especially pertinent to my study are that she recognizes the value of crisis and the centrality of the unconscious in learning. Felman (1987) said that the radical discovery of “Freudian unconscious” is that the unconscious speaks (p. 57). Freudian unconscious is not simply opposed to consciousness but speaks as something other from within the speech of consciousness, which it subverts (p. 57). Coming to terms with loss or resisting mourning entails individual responses to loss that move in and out of the conscious and unconscious realms. Dominick LaCapra observes that Freud’s work on the intrapsychic and the social, and on the personal and the cultural, are continuous (in Homans, 2000, p. 13). What does this suggest for education that attempts to teach traumatic histories?

Psychoanalysis, Felman explains, is “a process that gives access to new knowledge previously denied to consciousness, it affords what might be called a lesson in cognition (and in miscognition), an epistemological instruction” (p. 76). Knowing and not knowing are implied by the discoveries of the unconscious. Felman encourages teachers to attend to the silences and the missed and belated responses, in order to begin to understand students’ learning crises. Learners’ expressions of crises (e.g., denials, refusals, silences) can reveal when the new knowledge is too difficult to bear.

Felman (1992) investigated the process of teaching traumatic history to students. Felman asked students to read traumatic historical accounts, including Holocaust testimonies. She was interested in revealing the qualities of estrangement inherent in the texts (p. 7). Felman observed her students who endured “learning crises” from reading the difficult knowledge presented in the testimonies. Students struggled to find words to
express their own individual traumatic encounters with the testimonies. Felman finds that teaching takes place precisely through crisis,

if teaching does not hit upon some sort of crisis, if it does not encounter either the vulnerability or explosiveness of a (explicit or implicit) critical and unpredictable dimension, it has perhaps not truly taught: it has perhaps passed on some facts,… that no one could therefore truly learn, read or put to use…my job as teacher,… was that of creating in the class the highest state of crises that it could withstand, without…compromising the students’ bounds. (p. 53)

Felman’s insights are grounded in Lacanian notions of the interminable nature of knowing, the influence of the self-reflexive and self-questioning processes in acquiring knowledge and the interplay of learners’ “passions for ignorance.”

Another key concept Felman brings to educational theory is the “passion for ignorance.” Felman (1987) asserts that ignorance is not simply opposed to knowledge; rather ignorance is an integral part of the structure of knowledge. “Ignorance, in other words, is not a passive state of absence, a simple lack of information: it is an active dynamic of negation, an active refusal of information” (1987, p. 78-79).

Felman’s notion of the learner’s passion for ignorance reminds me of Britzman’s (2000) question, “What can be learned from disclaimed history?” (p. 39). Britzman explains that feeling pain, or refusing to recognize the pain of others, may approximate trauma for the learner, and thereby thwart the possibilities for the learner to develop relationships to the historical others by not acknowledging the incommensurability of their pain. The learner’s ego is at risk in this scenario, wounding his or her own “ego boundaries that serve as defense against pain” (Britzman, 2000, p. 39). How great of a risk is it to ask the learner to face her ghosts? Felman (1992) asserts that learning from traumatic narratives necessitates crisis raised in the learning setting.
Ellsworth on Mode of Address and Indeterminable Learning

Elizabeth Ellsworth (1997) offers particular insights into how educators can make use of the unpredictable and uncontrollable interactions between the educator’s and the learner’s unconscious resistances to knowledge, which inevitably prompt multiple discontinuities and the impossibility of full understanding (p. 124). Ellsworth frames learning with what she terms, “mode of address” (p. 23). The concept of mode of address is built on the following contention: “In order for a film to work for an audience, in order for it to simply make sense to a viewer, or make her laugh, root for a character, suspend her disbelief, cry, scream, feel satisfied at the end – the viewer must enter into a particular relationship with the film’s story and image system” (p. 23).

Ellsworth goes on to explain that the unconscious in learners and educators can “derail” intentions set forth in a text. The relationship the learner might form with the stories in a history report, for instance, is made unpredictable by the unknowable memories repressed in the learner’s unconscious. This insight suggests that museum workers who undertake revising their site’s interpretation can anticipate unknowable unconscious forces that might derail the museum workers’ expressed intentions for learning and interpreting slave life, “you could say that teaching is impossible because the unconscious constantly derails the best intentions of pedagogies” (p. 72). Ellsworth contends that we need to recognize the major role the unconscious plays in complicating learning, especially, histories of social violence. Addressing students as if mutual and full understanding are indeed achievable when they are not, Ellsworth explains, sets up an impossible situation between teachers and students (p. 72).

In this light, there will always be something else that escapes our conscious grasp even when the repressed returns. “There’s always more going on than we know or
remember, for example, ‘teaching against racism’ in classrooms” (Ellsworth, p. 65). Ellsworth explains, that a teacher can open a book and begin to read aloud from it to students, but he or she can never know or control the sense that students will make of it (p. 67). For museum workers reading a history report, it is necessary to ask them what sense they made of it, and what “spoke to them” and what did not. Here dialogue plays important parts in learning because through dialogue learners are encouraged to recursively reflect and work through their relationship to the new knowledge.

Ellsworth’s notion of mode of address suggests museum workers need to go beyond mirroring or repeating traces of inaccessible knowledge, which only hold the forgettings and misrecognitions in place that continue to contain the learner’s internal structures (p. 68). The places and times of our denials and refusals become useful information to educators (p. 65). Educators should recognize that refusals, passions for ignorance, and forgettings are intact until learners make attempts at taking a different voice or view of the histories. If museum workers recall a compliant enslaved household staff of female servants, the project to learn new historical stories for that site require dialogue that disrupts this understanding. Ellsworth asks, “Where does a text…precisely make no sense, that it resists interpretation?” and “What is the structural dynamic, the mode of address that teaches – or sets the [learner] in motion – by returning a difference?” (p. 68-69). In this way, Ellsworth is suggesting that educators approach learning psychoanalytically by attending to learners’ resistances, refusals, denials and silences.
Approaches to Address Risks of Passive Learning

Curriculum theorist Marla Morris (2001), in her psychoanalytic study on teaching Holocaust texts, raises the issues of memory and representations of the Holocaust in novels and testimonies that are relevant to my study. In particular, Morris’s notions of a “dystopic curriculum” and her call to never domesticate traumatic histories of the Holocaust inform my analysis of museum workers’ responses to slave life histories.

Morris combs through the tensions among collective memory, historiography, and curricula interpretations of World War II Jewish genocide. Morris recognizes the safe historiographies, those representations that have become iconographic standards and self-affirming narratives, that enable psychic hauntings to remain undisturbed. These stories enable educators to tell histories of the Holocaust that do not disrupt the learners’ status quo. Morris argues:

We must be cautious never to domesticate the memory of the Holocaust by making it more comfortable. This memory is difficult and unbearable, too difficult to take in psychologically at times. We must never assimilate the memory into our own life world but perhaps live alongside it: to remain a stranger to it. We must never make the strange familiar. (p. 101)

Morris examines the rhetorical representations of Holocaust memory through Kleinian object relations theory and Freudian psychoanalysis. She teases out hidden or unspoken meanings that instigate painful and, at times, melancholic events for present day learners. Morris (2001) finds that the disruptions that Holocaust narratives impose on the learner’s ego-ideal have been otherwise maintained by historiography and collective memories.

Britzman (1998) and Morris (2001) acknowledge, however, that classroom learning most often depends on the urge to make familiar what is accepted as outside the range of understanding. This approach to domesticate the “strangeness” or the horror
experienced by historical others in order to invoke understanding and to curtail learners’
crises only maintains stasis, preserving the pain of loss. The learner’s identification is
sustained, rather than encouraged, to take the opportunities to enlarge his or her ego
boundaries. Britzman (2000) cautions us that familiarity can lead to forgetting (p. 44).

Morris (2001) rightly asks, “How can we remember an event that is so hideous as
to seem beyond representation, beyond thinkability, beyond understanding?” (p. 88).
Morris’s question underscores the scholarship of Roger I. Simon (e.g., 1992), Felman and
Laub (1992), Simon and Eppert (1997), Britzman (1998), and Eppert (2000; 2002a;
2002b; 2003), and others who study trauma and pedagogy. Learners and educators might
feel loss and might be able to reckon with loss, bit by bit, although we can never purport
to fully understand it.

Historians and authors operate out of their own memories and from their own
psychological relationships to those events determining ways in which writers reconstruct
the past. Morris (2001) theorizes that when educators attempt to grapple with competing
representations of the Holocaust, educators might do so with what Morris calls “the sign
of a dystopic curriculum.” Morris explains:

A dystopic curriculum is one that brings into awareness the ways in which
transference relations with texts influence what it is that historians and novelists
write about, as well as influence researchers’ responses to what I call difficult
memory texts such as the Holocaust. Understanding the Holocaust is therefore
ambivalent and must remain open to tentative interpretations. (1999, p. 868)

The concept of a dystopic curriculum includes a pedagogical attitude that might
encourage learners’ working through the stories in traumatic texts. Through the
hermeneutical processes of the understanding of understandings, Morris suggests

---
8 I understand from Morris that interpretation is a process of understanding understandings, necessarily an
infinite process. Hutton (1993) explains that knowledges are always in a state of flux. According to Felman
learners are acquiring knowledge that is self-transforming and transforms his or her relationship to the text.

Remembrance Learning

Simon, Rosenberg, and Eppert (2000) address some of the pedagogical challenges posed by memory work when we confront historical trauma. These education theorists who engage, often psychoanalytically, with the ensuing crises of representing trauma describe a remembrance pedagogy. Remembrance pedagogy involves what Simon et al., (2000) refer to as an “ethical learning” (p. 2-3) that asks learners to attempt to engage in a critical and risk laden learning that seeks to accomplish a shift of one’s ego boundaries (p. 8). In this context, Simon et al., explain:

Remembrance is, then, a means for ethical learning that impels us into a confrontation and ‘reckoning’ not only with stories of the past but also with ‘ourselves’ as we ‘are’ (historically, existentially, ethically) in the present. Remembrance thus is a reckoning that beckons us to the possibilities of the future, showing the possibilities of our own learning. (p. 8)

Historical representations ethically need to go beyond functionalism, beyond marking a time, place and shape of a traumatic event. Remembrance pedagogy (Simon et al., 2000) is a pedagogical approach educational theorist Claudia Eppert (2000, 2002a; 2002b) has expanded as “remembrance learning,” as a kind of learning to live with loss. Remembrance learning is a process of engaging in commemorative texts and productions where learners find themselves faced with the tensions of empathic unsettlement and where the meanings of the representations are not expected to be fully apparent.

(1992), “… [A] subject constantly bears witness to a truth that nonetheless continues to escape him, a truth that is, essentially, not available to its own speaker” (emphasis in the original, p. 15). The traumatic memory is not fully comprehended and the painful knowledge is lodged in the speaker’s unconscious.
Eppert comes to questions of historical trauma and pedagogy through narratives of historical witness, primarily through literary and testimonial publications. Eppert considers the psycho-social dynamics of learners’ responses to historical Others (2000; 2002a; 2002b; 2003). She discusses what might encompass a “responsible/responsive” engagement with texts of historical trauma, based on her view that historical events and texts call or challenge us to be answerable to them. Eppert contends, “the claim of address put forth by literature calls upon readers not to read indifferently but to themselves become answerable to literature and to its historical referents” (2000, p. 213).

The concept of “ethical learning” is directly related to Eppert and Simon’s (1997) concept of the learner’s responsibility to respond to the Other’s testimony. Simon and Eppert work from the philosophies of Emanuel Lévinas (e.g. Lévinas, 1985) to explain that the necessary components for receiving testimony are a priori responsibility and respect towards the Other. The learner who is positioned to receive testimony is “under the obligation of response to an embodied singular experience not recognizable as one’s own” (Eppert and Simon, 1997, p. 176; see also Eppert, 2000). With this theoretical underpinning, Eppert explores contemporary encounters with historical narratives as events of loss for the learner in the present and how they alter the learner’s relationships to past events and current social interactions. Eppert focuses on the possibilities of emerging responses as “ethical relationships,” as responsibilities to the Other (understood as the alterity of a person or event).

How, in this psychological mix, can the ego of the learner place its narcissistic objects along side those that threaten her identity and her knowing the world? How can active empathetic engagement and productive ethical responses emerge when likely, learners are stunned, in denial, or indifferent to historical narratives of oppression? Eppert
explains (2000) that “feelings cannot exist without narrative conventions” that enable our engagement with others (p. 227). According to Eppert, some Holocaust testimonies do not provide readers opportunities for easy resolution. Reading in passive terms allows learners to keep their identities intact and without feelings of crisis. Without crisis, according to Felman (1992, p. 47-56), the student is not learning from the text.

When learners refute full engagement with the text they ask “Why does the text not comfort me?” and “Why does it not rescue me?” (Eppert, 2002a, p. 57). The learner is unable to distinguish herself from the Other. The reading of the trauma of loss provokes a melancholic response. Eppert explains:

The ‘reading trauma’ that encompasses the encounter with Holocaust testimony is the experience of the failure of normative investments to be sustained in and through the transactional relationship between text and reader. Ideological continuities between text and reader, past and present, world and self, are breached and confronted with our own impoverishment, our subsequent grievance is for the love object that is ourselves. (p. 58)

Why do educators ask learners to engage with traumatic narratives if they threaten the learners’ ego boundaries? The learner’s crisis is now a teaching moment made available through her refusal to respond to the Other. By moving beyond passively reading Holocaust testimonies that work to contain learner’s narcissistic identities, Eppert encourages a “just mourning” by supporting learners “to take responsibility for our own response and our own learning” (2002a, p. 59). The psychic disruptions instigated by the learner’s reading-trauma are an opportunity to increase her own capacity to take responsibility for her response to the Other.

Learners’ unmediated self-identification, one in denial or who refuses engagement with difficult knowledge or a traumatic text, is bound up in the act of secondary witnessing (Eppert, 2000; Britzman, 1998). Key to secondary witnessing is Dominick
LaCapra’s (2001) notion of “empathic unsettlement,” in that it entails the learner as witness to distinguish himself or herself from the one who suffers. LaCapra writes:

[I]t involves a kind of virtual experience through which one puts oneself in the other’s position while recognizing the difference of that position and hence not taking the other’s place. Opening oneself to empathic unsettlement is … a desirable affective dimension of inquiry which complements and supplements empirical research and analysis. (2001, p. 78)

According to Eppert, self-reflexive conversations and reflective moments enable learners to take on responsibility to separate self from the Other in order to respond to the Other. In beginning to respond, the learner-in-crisis is challenged to come out of feelings of isolation. According to Caruth:

The final import of the psychoanalytic and historical analysis of trauma is to suggest that the inherent departure, within trauma, from the moment of its first occurrence, is also a means of passing out of the isolation imposed by the event: that the history of a trauma, in its inherent belatedness, can only take place through the listening of another. (1995, p. 10-11)

Responsibility unfolds from the learner’s emerging responsiveness to the alterity of the text. Hence, the work of mourning here is identifying one’s limits to the text and learning to take on responsibility towards the text. According to Eppert, the learner needs to work through a “just mourning” by going beyond her immediate identification with the text. The learner must be able to distinguish her self in order to bring justice to those whose lives she has imagined (2002a, p. 60).

These internal shifts and external responses to the Other’s stories involve a kind of learning to live with loss. These are key features of remembrance learning. Eppert (2000) explains remembrance learning involves

a resolute working through of traumatic experience, initiating a marked transformation in [learners’] complex lives… to learn from his or her engagements with a traumatic history in ways that not only inform us about events in the past and their psychological legacy but fundamentally alter our relationship with past events and modes of social interaction. (p. 216)
When students in the classroom are asked to read World War II Holocaust literature, for example the *Diary of Anne Frank* (see Anne Frank, 1995), or the testimonials from Holocaust survivors, today’s students are expected to bear witness to traumas, horrors, and racial oppression. Education scholars explain students often have a learning crisis when they find the readings too difficult to understand, too horrible to accept, and students can be encouraged to work through the traumatic history bit by bit to make sense of it, and for some learners to get beyond saying “That is unbelievable.”

**Interpretations of Slave Life at Historical Site Museums**

Museum visitors are eager to find out about past communities and are interested in finding out about social change (Carson, 1981; Schlereth, 1980; Rosenzweig and Thelen, 1989; Conn, 1998). Cary Carson, curator and historian at Colonial Williamsburg, contends that the responsibility of teaching about social change is central to historical site museum work and it is the business of history museums to prepare people to cope with change (1981, p. 23). Carson’s contention helps to validate my research objectives to address ways historical plantation museums teach the history of slave life. Teaching and interpreting the history of slave life at museums is a means to begin to understand the traumatic and radical social changes generations of Americans have endured up to the present.

In 2002, when I spoke with the park manager at Oakley Plantation, a historical site in St. Francisville, Louisiana, he credited the emergence of “new social history” for increasing public interest in representations of historical enslaved African Americans at his site. He explained that bringing marginalized historical persons into interpretive focus elevates the “common man’s history,” and broadens interpretations of historical
plantations to include slavery history. The rise of social history legitimates the Other’s historical presence and contributions to those landscapes, chiseling away at the Eurocentric canon by “taking up objects of study that were unrepresentable in the dominant discourses of the Western canon” (Giroux, 1991, p. 24).

Since the mid-1960s, new social history, often referred to as the common man’s history, has been a force in helping to re-shape interpretation at American historical site museums (Leon and Rosenzweig, 1989). By the late 1980s and early 1990s, Spencer R. Crew and James E. Sims (1991) contend that as more sources for social history information come to light, it is important that museum exhibitions parallel the progress made by academic historians (p. 168). Carson (1981) noted over twenty years ago at Colonial Williamsburg that, “Researchers are gaining a new perspective on America’s past and present by tracing the lives, shared experiences, and perceptions of ordinary people” (1981, p. 22). These re-created settings are installed to represent basic life experiences that serve as focal points for the new social history (e.g., birth, education, work, marriage, death, diet, disease, and the provision of clothing, housing, and material possessions).

Research has shown (AAM 1992; Falk and Dierking, 1995; IMS, 1996) that the growing inclusive vision of the past is often key to bringing broader audiences into museums. Lonnie Bunch (1989) called the rise of museum interest in black and minority subject matter a “renaissance of museum interest” that was sparked by the new social history and by the museum workers’ realization that their exhibit interpretations must reflect the diversity of their communities if they hope to broaden their audiences and attract public funding (p. 203). The nation’s professional museum community (AAM, 1984, 1992; IMS, 1996) upholds the position that museum content should reflect the
supporting communities. The historical interpretation for the publicly held MMP, for example, ideally would reflect the museum’s supporting community. Currently, 40% of Baton Rouge residents are African American and 55% are European American, 2% are Hispanic or Latino, and 2% are Asian Americans (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000).


Resistance to broader interpretations can be traced to the way house museums and plantation museums enter the public domain (Herbst, 1989). The beliefs and visions of the founding fathers and mothers of these local museums, whose efforts were the forces to preserve the historical sites, continue to shape policy even after the historical site has been turned into a working museum (Herbst, p. 100). Herbst found that efforts to save historical houses and plantation sites have most often been grassroots affairs, and that it is not surprising that the local residents who worked to save the historic structures wanted the sites to support community morale and commemorate their past. The challenge at MMP is to redress the founding vision for interpreting MMP as exclusively the home of a slaveholding family, by shedding the founders’ attachments to southern planter class ties by bringing in the tools of social history to revise and update the interpretation.

Jordonova (2000) argues historians have two overriding commitments. The first is to an understanding of the past that does it justice by taking historical characters and their lived experiences seriously, giving due weight to diverse evidence that may be inconsistent or conflict with other histories. Jordanova emphasizes, “Historians have
ethical responsibilities; they work to mobilize sufficient empathy to represent other forms of being as fully as possible in historical writings [and museum displays]” (p. 256). The second commitment is to fitting pieces of information together, to find patterns and tensions.

The grassroots historical preservationists may not necessarily be compelled by the standards of professional historians to give due weight to diverse evidence that may be conflicting or inconsistent with their understandings of who was affiliated with the saved historical site, or set on looking for patterns and tensions that may have influenced the stories that support the preservation efforts. Herbst finds that the beliefs of the people who led the drive to preserve the historic site continue to shape policy, even after structures have been turned into museums (p. 100).

Leon and Rosenzweig (1989) argue that social history has forced museums to attend to long-neglected subjects (e.g., the lives of women, African Americans, workers, and immigrants), and caution museums against “an uncritical embrace of social history... History from the bottom up can windup producing the same sort of celebratory history found in traditional great-man accounts” (p. xvii). Cultural critics James Oliver Horton and Spencer R. Crew (1989) argue that history museums tend to represent “exceptional blacks,” for example Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, and Washington Carver, a trend that “ignores the lesser known but no less significant makers of Afro-American and American history and perpetuates the mythology of American egalitarian and of a racially homogeneous society” (p. 217).
Colonial Williamsburg: Pioneer in Slave Life Representations

Several of the museum workers I have talked to over the past five years cite Colonial Williamsburg (CW) in Virginia as their role model and inspiration for expanding slave life representations. Colonial Williamsburg was established in 1934 as a non-profit foundation for public history. For the first 40 years or so, the interpretation at CW was focused on the Anglophile roots of our nation and aimed at fostering American patriotism. John D. Rockefeller, credited as the founding father of CW, insisted the real work of CW was making Americans patriotic (Van West and Hoffschwelle, 1984, p. 164). According to Van West and Hoffschwelle (1984), the 1951 official guide book stressed that CW should be seen “as an affirmation of the spiritual vigor which must underlie any strong democratic society” (p. 165). The museum’s decision to keep patriotism as the museum’s primary educational objective “had serious implications” for the site’s interpretation focus, which centered on the men who controlled colonial politics.

The historical site museum is a reconstruction of the historical town and includes streets, homes, shops, taverns, and outbuildings restored on the original remains of the colonial town. In the 1970s, CW introduced an interpretation program employing black actors to play the roles of enslaved and free blacks who encountered visitors on the grounds. The new social history expansion was so novel that historians and museum workers still refer to CW as a leader in historical site interpretation.

Visitors and actors, from a variety of ethnic and racial backgrounds, found the historically inspired first person encounters off-putting. The actors’ presentations were perceived by visitors as confrontational and intrusive (see Goodheart, 2001). The character program was abandoned, citing the players often produced confusion and
anxiety in visitors who encountered them in unexpected places (Leon and Piatt, 1989, p. 78). The museum established the African American Interpretation and Program (AAIP) department that was specifically charged with researching, developing and implementing African American history interpretative programs to augment the existing historical structures and tours.

The AAIP developed a narrated tour exclusively about African Americans in CW set in the mid-1770s. The hour-long tour entitled *The Other Half* examined black kinship networks, black codes, slavery, and relationships among the black and white, free and enslaved CW residents. In the 1980s, a major archeological endeavor was started to research and recreate the slave quarters at the Carter’s Grove Plantation, a satellite property to the main CW campus. In the 1990s, CW closed Carter’s Grove Plantation for preservation issues (personal communication, Lawrence Earl, March 2006) and opened a reproduction site with slave quarters called Great Hope Plantation on the main property.

The Governor’s Palace, the focal point for CW’s interpretation of the American revolutionary war era, was also the first historic structure used to introduce the new social history to a CW historic site in 1980. The renovation and social history interpretation goals, first stated in the 1970s, were to represent life in the Governor’s mansion beyond the romantic visions of an exclusively aristocratic (wealthy Anglo male) story and to add representations of enslaved laborers, women, and common people.

Van West and Hoffschwelle (1984) were among the first critics to scrutinize the results of the renovation and re-interpretation of the Governor’s Palace. They found the reinterpreted Palace disappointing, “After comparing the foundation’s past education goals and interpretative emphasis on the portrayal of colonial life one encounters at the new Governor’s Palace, one realizes the re-creation of America’s colonial experience at
Colonial Williamsburg remains narrow and misleading” (p. 157). The revision effort was a missed opportunity to break from the long-standing meanings of the Palace that described white wealthy male political leaders.

According to Van West and Hoffschwelle (1984), costumed actors portrayed members of the governor’s staff who explained the duties and activities of the governor to visitors and at the same time were to give a “slice of life’ view of their own back-stairs existence (p. 158). However, the slice of life described by the subordinate historical characters only upheld the same stories about the governor’s activities and character, supporting the traditional narrative enacted by the white male lead actor guiding the tour group. CW museum workers found the historical site’s original educational goals remained as an interpretative legacy that was difficult to escape (Van West and Hoffschwelle, p. 160).

Van West and Hoffschwelle were not surprised that CW was unable to successfully reach its new social history interpretation goals, explaining museum workers and supporters were members of the nation’s white elite and white educated class who usually elected to represent their own cultural assumptions. CW museum workers’ relationships to race, class, gender, and notions about American history provide “a formidable barrier against social analysis or change that seems to threaten the status quo” (p. 160).

Museums’ rights to authority and the Truths they express and support are relative, historical, and social. Hooper-Greenhill (2003) identifies three ways museums’ rights to hold authority are confounded: the difficulty in accommodating a plurality of histories; the invisible character of present political, cultural, economic, and ideological relations
that characterize different historical manifestations; and the competitive process of knowledge production for the power to impose meanings and definitions (p. 7-8).

Change is not only difficult because change brings new routines to the fore, but change also rearranges museum workers’ relationships to the collections and the stories they tell visitors. Some of the discontinuity is a result of the newness of the programs, but much of the problem rests with the museum worker’s resistances to changes to the traditional interpretation. It is easy to add a few new artifacts, change the tour route or add a few new names to the stories told in an historical house. It is harder to change the site’s interpretative meanings or themes. The CW example illustrates that it is far more difficult to change the interpretative themes and the meanings of an historical site long associated with the elite to include evidence of slave life and the lesser known common people.

Leon and Piatt (1989) explain that CW had been slow to represent slave life and the hardships of the common man in the colonial town because, in the 1980s, the new social history view would impose uncomfortable images on the historical landscape that would be in contrast to offering visitors a pleasant tourist experience. At that time, museum managers argued that CW relied on tourist dollars and visitors neither wanted nor expected to learn disturbing information about the past. Managers contended that CW could not afford to alienate their hard-won tourist audience (Leon and Piatt, p. 75).

Since this narrow argument was made, pluralistic representations have evolved as primary to broadening museum audience appeal as the new social history entered mainstream history museums and public education. Museum workers began to recognize that expanding representations could also serve pragmatic political and economic ends.
Since the 1970s when CW established the AAIP, CW has continued to experiment with different theatrical and exhibit formats with mixed results. The predominantly white staff and front line museum workers, strongly believed [in 1979] that this new integrated focus was far from John D. Rockefeller Jr.’s vision of a place that taught, ‘of the patriotism, high purpose, and unselfish devotion of our forefathers to the common good.’ Making matters worse, the implication that they would have to interpret slavery was unsettling at best. (Matthews, 1999, p. 6)

The conflicted attitudes of white museum workers resisting African American history and, at the same time, admitting the need to incorporate African American history into the museum’s interpretation is a common tension I have found in the literature, at MMP, and at other historical plantations in south Louisiana.

Included among thousands of historical sites in the United States, CW and MMP preservation projects were bolstered by the Centennial Civil War commemorations in the 1960s and the nation’s bicentennial events in the 1970s. MMP was saved from the wrecking ball in 1969 and opened in time to participate in the 1976 bicentennial. MMP founders followed CW museum practices that emphasized distinctive architecture and an interpretation focused on decorative arts, craft processes and the glorification of early American life styles. Around the nation, historical site museum workers who admired CW consciously copied CW’s white male patriarchal model and produced complacent versions in their own communities (Leon and Piatt, 1989, p. 66).

Critics Warren Leon and Margaret Piatt (1989) explain:

[H]istorical site museums showed visitors how a community worked and tended to downplay aspects of community life that were dysfunctional or produced conflict. Consequently, at roughly the same time Elizabeth Fox-Genovese and Eugene Genovese attacked academic social history for ignoring power relationships, social conflict, and politics, Thomas Schlereth accused living history-museums of depicting ‘peaceable kingdoms’ that ignored conflict. Schlereth called on museums to incorporate violence, vigilantism, family discord,
labor conflict, minority political movements, and other evidence of conflict into their interpretation of community life. (p. 69)

In 1989, Leon and Piatt reported that although CW was receiving praise for its pioneering work in social history interpretations, two recurring criticisms stood out. The two points were CW presented a sanitized version of the past and that it underestimated the role of slavery and slaves in colonial Virginia. The new programs, additional buildings, nor revised interpretations had successfully enabled CW in the 1980s to respond fully to these criticisms when Leon and Piatt did their review (1989, p. 74). The parallels in the literature between MMP and CW are not just coincidental. The development of MMP interpretation of plantation life clearly reflects the CW goals, successes, and choices made by museum workers at CW in the 1960s and 1970s.

The notion that historical site interpretations are fluid and change in relation to changing social movements competes with the notion that history is “just facts.” Critics Eric Gable, Richard Handler, and Anna Lawson (1992) argue that CW museum workers address African American history as conjecture, a historical relativism that can only suppose what life was like for an enslaved population in 18th century Williamsburg. Simultaneously, representations of the free white founding fathers are interpreted as factual mainstream American history (p. 791). This insight describing how museum workers transition between facticity and historical relativism will be important to my analysis of museum workers’ responses to adding slave life histories to MMP. Gable et al., (1992) found museum workers’ vacillating rhetoric from “basic facts” to “conjecture” worked to reveal subtle biases and resistances to African American history.

According to Gable et al., (1992), in 1989, the slave quarter at Carter’s Grove Plantation included a cluster of log cabins and a corn crib complete with furnishings and
was staffed with black interpreters telling visitors about 18th century rural slave life: “Its authenticity is thus understood to be primarily generic, although interpreters at times speak as though it were specific to Carter’s Grove site” (p. 801). I found that the generic character of the CW slave quarter interpretation is also found at MMP.

A few years later, Eric Gable (1996) revisited CW to examine ways CW tour guides engaged visitors in learning about 18th century black and white relations in the historical buildings and programs: “I focus on pedagogic practice among CW frontline [workers] because while the professional historians ostensibly set historiographical policy and monitor historiographical products at Colonial Williamsburg it is ultimately the dozens of guides who tell Williamsburg’s story to the visiting public” (p. 177). Gable explains the crucial role tour guides play in integrating the site’s interpretation, “If anyone is to be influenced by the pedagogic messages of the new social history, it is they” (p. 178).

Gable’s study focused on how the history of miscegenation remained a resisted topic at CW among frontline museum workers. Gable found CW museum workers spoke about being accurate and inclusive in their tour narratives, but in practice were not successful. Gable found stories about miscegenation were avoided, and that stories of “kinship denied” at CW suggested to him that “a largely white audience and mostly white ‘frontline’ would have to rethink the category of race itself in ways perhaps more threatening to their ‘identities’ than to their ostensibly ‘black’ peers” (p. 178).

Gable (1996) contended that CW’s social historians’ goal to “mainstream black history” by making African American history and the history of slavery integral parts of the stories told throughout the reconstructed town would promote a kind of “historiographical racial balance and in the process, ameliorate racial tensions and
misunderstandings in contemporary America” (p. 178). CW museum workers explained their fears associated with telling about the past from the perspective of the enslaved population or from the “common people,” and that this meant that there would be less pedagogic space remaining for the older celebratory narratives (p. 181).

Gable (1996) observed an atmosphere of mistrust that brewed over CW when social historians’ enthusiasm for change disrupted frontline museum workers’ habits and attachments to the exhibits they felt they knew so well. The emergence of the new meanings for CW’s historic buildings and landscape created tension among museum workers, “in this atmosphere of mistrust by influential outsiders who could never believe that the museum would ever be ‘dirty enough’ propelled mistrust and even resistance by institutional insiders towards the new social history programs” (p. 182).

In contrast, Mark P. Leone (1992) found that the AAIP programs and the guided tours of the Carter’s Grove Plantation slave quarter to be “the most radical, probably the most inspiring and moving, and in the long run, the most troublesome for the future of such museums” (p. 1083). Leone found the CW slave quarter exhibit was “a serious response to the foundation’s intellectual critics, and the most moving presentation of African American historical identity I have ever seen…it is the closest I have come to confronting slavery and its destructive consequences” (p. 1084). Leone describes the slave quarter exhibits and guided interpretations as

a fairly daring experiment for American outdoor history museums. It is slave history presented by Black Americans; it is several eras visible all at once; it is a direct message about historical relativism and the bourgeois management of history and about the role of historical archaeology as a primary source of knowledge about the past. (p. 1086)

Leone (1992) identified a key component to developing an interpretation strategy for expanding slave life representations at traditionally European American museums.
For Leone, “The answer centers on the mood I was left with at the slave quarter. I was impressed, moved and ready to act at the historical injustice portrayed” (p. 1087). What Leone identified is a kind of empowering pedagogy, as identified by education theorist Megan Boler (1999). Boler describes “active empathy” as a response to discomforting pedagogy that moves the learner, and in Leone’s case, moved the museum visitor-as-learner, to respond to new historical information. Boler explains the role of empathy in learning by asking educators and learners to consider “What is gained and/or lost by advocating as a cure for social injustice an empathetic identification that is more about me than you?” (p. 159). Boler goes on to explain that “active empathy” challenges the learner’s world view and does not enable learner’s exoneration from the privileges and complicities by a mere “ah-hah” experience” (p. 159). In this light, ethical and affective slave life interpretations in museums involve empathy that requires the learner’s (visitors and museum workers) responsibility (see Simon and Eppert, 1997; Eppert, 2000).

Leone (1992) considers whether historic sites should attempt to educate with advocacy. Leone explains the issue behind slavery and slave life interpretations are civil and human rights and the advancement of democratic institutions (p. 1087). Does information about slavery that shows how appalling the institution was disrupt the notion that sponsoring museums are neutral and purely academic?

I am reminded of the notion of ethical learning (Simon, et al., 2000). Museum workers and visitors are kept distant from the historical enslaved characters when they avoid empathic unsettlement in “face to face relationships,” to use a phrase inspired by Eppert (2000) on ethical learning, when no attempts are made to bear witness to historical characters’ suffering and survival. Without these connections and commitments to acknowledge the historical character’s difference and alterity and without allowing for
confrontation or learning crises in the present, dialogue will be inhibited and will likely limit movement toward action. Leone concludes, “Now that we have alternative pasts to listen to at Carter’s Grove, all we need is some opportunity to talk back and to begin that dialogue among living equals. That dialogue is how history in a democracy can be recognized” (Leone, 1992, p. 1087).

Opening historical plantation museums to pluralistic interpretations that allow for multiple perspectives to be heard on the landscape would require room for open dialogues that can include “outsiders,” like the cadre of social historians and museum workers dedicated to the AAIP department who CW hired in the 1970s and 1980s. New workers and fresh historical materials might bring marginalized historical voices into focus.

Assessments of Slave Life Representations at Other History Museums

Public historians James Oliver Horton and Spencer R. Crew (1989) conducted a formal study to assess African American representations in history museums. They refer to their project as a “policy of inclusion” and were stimulated to do their project after hearing reports of the glaring absence of African American historical representations at American historical sites (p. 215). Horton and Crew cite Zora Martin Felton of the Anacostia Museum in Washington, D.C., who scathingly reported the lack of African American representations at CW (p. 215). Horton and Crew also cite Thomas Greenfield of Virginia Union University, who noted the language of docents at Thomas Jefferson’s plantation Monticello “denied the troublesome existence of slaves”\(^9\) (p. 215). Horton and

\(^9\) Monticello in Virginia has made significant additions to the historical site’s interpretation in focused efforts to research, document, and interpret the plantation’s enslaved population. For example, in 2000, the Thomas Jefferson Foundation published *Free Some Day: The African-American Families of Monticello* by Lucia Stanton. Starting in the 1980s, Monticello in collaboration with the University of Virginia has been
Crew visited the recreated slave quarter at Ash Lawn Plantation, the historical plantation home of James Monroe in Virginia. What they found was consistent with their findings at the other historical site museums. Horton and Crew explain:

Ash Lawn thus glorifies its patriarch and romanticizes the slave era, confirming what many Americans would like to believe: that slavery was, in the final analysis, a paternalistic and largely benign institution. Not only is this picture unhistorical, it is unfair to both black and white Americans attempting to understand and come to terms with their history. Most disturbing about the distortions at Ash Lawn is the aura of scholarship surrounding them. Visitors are led to believe that the plantation restoration and historical commentary of docents is based on reliable research. (p. 231)

Horton and Crew found that, as late as the 1980s when they completed their report, the contributions and lived experiences of African Americans continued to be excluded from public history venues. They state that the interpretations ignore “the lesser-known but no less significant makers of Afro-American and American history and perpetuates the mythology of America as an egalitarian and racially homogenous society” (p. 216). Horton and Crew fault institutions for a lack of commitment and, an “unwillingness to recognize the importance of Afro-American history to a realistic understanding of American culture” (p. 233). They found multiple examples of resistance to change, especially change which demands a new attitude toward the place of race in the traditional halls of historic preservation. They found that the size of the museums, the composition of the museums’ staff, local politics, and budgetary constraints all contributed to deterring and stalling progress to elevate the historical presence of African Americans in museums (p. 216).

excavating sites on the 5,000-acre Monticello historical site, identifying slave dwellings, workshops and many artifacts to describe the lives of the enslaved plantation residents.
Horton and Crew (1989) conclude that there is no simple process for broadening the historical vision of America in museums. Horton and Crew say, however, that the results from their study demonstrate that there are committed museum workers striving to “convey a deeper sense of the complexity of American history and the diversity of the American experience” (p. 234).

The concept of including equal numbers of stories or time about free and enslaved historical residents in site interpretations brings up another key characteristic of the interpretation strategies at historical plantation museums. Lonnie Bunch (1992), historian and the current director of the National African American History Museum in Washington, D.C., explains that integrating mainstream history museums can mean adding black interpretative elements to mainstream museums but does not mean those stories are integrated. In the context of his work at the Valentine Museum in Richmond, Virginia Bunch concludes:

Museums must realize that … [a museum does not] simply [develop] segregated presentations about groups that are traditionally underrepresented in our cultural institutions...It is incumbent on [museums] to work towards a new exhibition paradigm – one in which exhibitions *transcend ‘separate but equal’ presentations* [my emphasis]. It is essential for museums to create a new synthesis that allows visitors to see how diverse ethnic and racial groups in this society struggled and interacted with each other. This interaction, often violent and often contested, shaped and changed each group and the whole society. Creating such a synthesis and presenting it honestly – warts and all – is not easily accomplished. But it is a goal worthy of the effort. (1992, p. 309)

Eichstedt and Small (2002) found this pattern of racially segregated tours at historical plantation museums throughout the southeast (p. 172). Colonial Williamsburg found it more palatable to keep African American history separate from the mainstream stories of the white founding fathers (Gable, 1996). I too observed many historical sites that offer segregated tours and exhibits that interpret free and enslaved histories.
The recent survey conducted by Eichstedt and Small (2002) of 122 historical plantation museums in the southeastern United States (Virginia, Georgia, Louisiana), including CW and MMP, did not find a museum renaissance for African American representations on the historical plantation landscape. Eichstedt and Small chose to study plantation museums because they had witnessed the white ethnocentric interpretations at plantation museums and found these museums were places to look for “racialized discourse” (p. 3). As social researchers, Eichstedt and Small focused on museums, arguing that plantation museum tours and exhibits speak of the desires and perceptions of the curators, donors and docents. They tell us not only about a region or people but also about the visions that the museum workers have about their world (p. 6).

Eichstedt and Small (2002) critique the ways southeastern U.S. plantation museums present themselves to visitors and find that the main tours are framed, in part, with a “racialized regime of representation that presents a pre-Emancipation South as genteel, honorable, and gracious and that generally regards the fact that the enslavement of human beings provided the foundation that the society of white enslavers rested upon” (p. 59).

I found Eichstedt and Small’s findings remarkable especially because they came 20 years after critics had initially documented this phenomenon at CW. Eichstedt and Small found “white-centric” representations of plantation life at these museums in rhetoric used by museum workers that normalize and valorize white ways of organizing the world, including the labor (and enslavement). Such a term also suggests that anything besides whiteness and white ways is superfluous and marginal. Finally, white-centric encoding works to sustain white dominance. (p. 4)
Eichstedt and Small found the slave life interpretations at historical plantation museums generally were presented in one of four themes or discursive strategies. The themes are: symbolic annihilation and erasure; trivialization and deflection; segregation and marginalization of knowledge; and relative incorporation (p. 10). The themes describe rhetorical or organizing strategies that position discussions of enslavement and enslaved people in different ways (p. 10). The themes are ordered from complete exclusion of slave life representations to inclusions of slave life that depict historical lived experiences.

For example, Eichstedt and Small found MMP’s interpretation met the criteria for the first theme of symbolic annihilation and erasure likely because they visited MMP before 1998, which was before MMP had installed the slave cabin exhibit and developed the Beyond the Big House tour (p. 273). Interpretations of historical plantations that can be ascribed to this first theme, the authors explain, employ symbolic annihilation and erasure as their primary organizing strategy when whiteness is central to the discourse and is unquestioned and unnamed. Such interpretations ignore the institution and the experience of slavery, or treat them in a perfunctory way. This kind of interpretation suggests that slavery, labor, life stories, struggles (i.e., the presence and contributions of people of African descent) were not important enough to be acknowledged (p. 10).

The mission statements for many south Louisiana historical plantation museums, including MMP (see Chapter Two), explain that the museum workers are to act in the best interest of the public in providing their interpretations of 18th and 19th century plantation life. I believe that the continuation of racially biased museum practices at particular sites is not intentional. By and large, the museum workers I have talked to express their sincere intent to provide “factual” information about plantation life that
includes slavery and slave life. The racialized organizing and discursive strategies
Eichstedt and Small observed at museums are subtle oppressive practices imbedded in the
habits and traditional meanings of the sites that have been passed onto subsequent
generations of museum workers. Eichstedt and Small explain:

[T]he continuation of racially oppressive institutions and practices does not rely
primarily on the intentions of some group of people we can identify as ‘racist.”
Instead, we believe that once racially oppressive systems have been put in place
and accepted as normal, and particularly when they are surrounded by language
that stresses racial neutrality, racialized disadvantage and advantage continue to
be created by even well-intentioned people. (p. 12)

Jean Muteba Rahier and Michael Hawkins (1999) conducted an ethnographic
study of plantation tours in south Louisiana in the mid-1990s. These sociologists contrast
two opposing categories of interpretations (p. 205): a “white narrative” and a “black
narrative.” A white narrative refers to plantation history imagined from the perspective of
the dominant classes. A black narrative is from the perspective of the descendents of
slaves who contest plantation sites’ claims to objectivity and authenticity, in order to
demand the visibility of their forefathers and their experiences of dehumanization.
Rahier and Hawkins are interested in the difficulties and resistances among American
museum workers who are attempting to come to terms with the institution of slavery and
its legacy, “in spite of the progress made since the 1960s” (p. 206). Black narratives,
explain Rahier and Hawkins, are expressions of unease in attempts to avoid stories of
African enslavement, which can be considered negative, painful and humiliating (p. 206).
The tradition of historical plantation landscapes as symbols of dominant ideology serving
white hegemony have been “one-sided, elitist interpretations of society,” and the
plantation big house remains a fixed central symbol of southern ideology and mythology
(p. 206). Rahier and Hawkins find that the white narratives heard on many Louisiana
historical plantation tours correspond to the kinds of obsolete narratives given to CW visitors in the 1960s and early 1970s (p. 208).

Rahier and Hawkins consistently found that the tour narratives at the south Louisiana historical plantations, in particular on the River Road plantation tours, recalled the plantations’ owners and focused on objects rather than on the social context of plantation life (p. 210). Tour guides described armoires to glass fly catchers and architectural details as material evidence of the genteel life style of the planter families, “Spatially, the narrative remains focused on the Big House and its contents even at those few plantations where slave quarters exist as material evidence of African American presence” (p. 210).

Key to Rahier and Hawkins (1999) research is their finding that accounts for the transitioning character of the tour narratives. They explain:

Although [the white tour narrative] is still firmly rooted in the ideology of the post-Reconstruction South and reinforced by the [Gone with the Wind] myth, the white narrative does not remain static. Reformed and alternative narratives have arisen in Louisiana, as in the rest of the South. (p. 211)

Reformed white narratives evoked suffering and hardship experienced by slaves on several of the tours Rahier and Hawkins observed (p. 212). The concept of a “reformed white tour narrative,” as an acknowledged revision of a white ethnocentric narrative, corresponds to Eichstedt and Small’s fourth discursive theme of “relative incorporation” to describe the observable references made to the lived experiences of the enslaved population at a museum, however constrained by the planter focus in the rhetoric. Researchers Rahier and Hawkins (1999) and Eichstedt and Small (2002) recognize that the changing meanings attributed to historical plantations are beginning to reflect the region’s multicultural identity. Eichstedt and Small expect these museums will
be open to making more than superficial changes to their tours and exhibits, and they recognize that fundamental changes to these interpretations will not come about quickly. However, it is important to note that while reformed white narratives or narratives as relative incorporation begin to give historical presence to historical enslaved individuals, these narratives do not necessarily describe representations of complex and multidimensional individuals. Often such stories or references limit further discussions among visitors and museum workers about slave life. Rahier and Hawkins (1999) find that reformed white narratives may tell a story that is already over. The narratives regard “the atrocities of the black holocaust as a twist of fate or as an inevitable consequence of history” (p. 212). Such narratives were not concerned with placing slavery into a wider social or political context. I observed a reformed white narrative in 2004 in Baton Rouge, Louisiana that began with a declaration from a museum worker who said, “Slavery was a sin, now let’s move on.” Such an apology only works to foreclose on further discussions about slavery or slave life. Rahier and Hawkins note that reformed white narratives can be characterized by visible evidence of enslaved residents and workers, however the tours are from a white perspective that are devoid of black voices and are preoccupied with the planter family’s stories (p. 215).

Experiments in Expanded Interpretations

The Maryland Historical Society and the Contemporary Museum in Baltimore invited artist activist Fred Wilson to create a monumental exhibit using the historical society’s collection to express his vision of how museum objects are used to write and rewrite Maryland’s social history. Wilson’s resulting exhibition, *Mining the Museum*, which ran from April 1992 through February 1993, addressed the challenge by exploring
how one museum had ignored the histories of people of color. Wilson’s method, as an artist-in-residence, was to closely study the Maryland Historical Society’s collection of art and artifacts, read extensively in the society’s archives, and install objects to raise questions about the ways museums represent (or fail to represent) African Americans and Native Americans. The third floor of the society was given over to the installation, which featured well over one hundred objects (Corrin, 1994, p. 8).

This exhibition was possible because of collaboration among the participating members of the exhibit team, museum educators, curators, designers, Fred Wilson, and docents, who expressed confidence in each other and agreed on the mission to elevate the presence of under-represented Maryland residents with an emphasis on African American and Native American history. The project invited innovation, change and actions to “subvert the dominant paradigm,” to use a phrase from anthropologist Miles Richardson (personal communication, September, 2004).

Wilson used the exhibit, Mining the Museum, to consider how deconstructing the museum apparatus can transform a museum into a space for ongoing cultural debate (p. 8). Participating museum educator Lisa G. Corrin explains that the experiment was part of the new social history movement in American museums to publicly purge its past, owning up to the social inequities it reinforced through its unself-critical practices (p. 2).

Based on her museum’s learning experience in developing and opening Mining the Museum, Corrin (1994) explains the tightly interwoven ties among collections, interpretations and exhibitions:

While updating labels and dioramas or historicizing the museum is no doubt valuable, are these changes enough? Museums must consider the infrastructure and value systems that generated prejudicial practices to begin with and use the self-study to change daily practices in programs, management, and governance. The “new museology” [See Vergo (ed.), 1989] or critical museum history, argues
that we cannot separate the exhibition from the museum or the method from the meaning of the institution. (p. 3)

The Maryland Historical Society’s experimental exhibit made me wonder whether MMP museum workers would critically assess the museum’s long-standing planter family representations. Could MMP museum workers recognize biased practices? Could MMP’s museum workers critically assess the limited representations of the generic interpretations of slave life in the permanent exhibits? Can biased practices be changed as part of letting go of the museum’s 30-year tradition of interpretation of plantation life? Do the depths at which the museum workers feel ties to the ethnocentric traditions evade scrutiny or confrontation?

The Museum of African American History (MAAH) in Detroit offers an example of museum workers’ response to the rise of museum interest in multicultural discourse and exhibitions. Cultural critic Edward Rothstein reviewed the MAAH exhibit, Of the People: The African American Experience, stating that it does not offer a typical museum-style collection of relics of contemplation (1997, p. 3). Rothstein notes that the expanding discourse on multiculturalism in the museum is changing the way museums do exhibitions, “Today’s exhibitions are a marked departure from the detached museum presentations of the last two centuries. The museum has become a forum, not a temple and messages are to be expected” (p. 3). Ralph Applebaum, whose museum design firm planned the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. adds, “New museums are less important for housing collections than for being a ‘trigger for moral discourse’ as a service to the community” (Rothstein, 1997, p. 3). The changes are propelling an ideology for pluralistic museum interpretations that allow for multiple voices. Sociologists Rahier and Hawkins (1999) believe that “Plantations constitute direct
material evidence of links between the past and the present and, as such, could become a privileged space for multivocality and dialogue” (p. 219). Rothstein suggests that the debates may now be arriving at a consensus that each culture should tell its own story, rather than submitting to the judgments of outsiders (p. 3). Who should tell the stories? How does Rothstein’s suggestion impact the efforts being made by traditionally European American museums to represent African American enslavement?

Museums Challenged

Steven D. Lavine and Ivan Karp (1991) argue the very nature of exhibiting lays on contested terrain (p. 1). The inherent contestability of museum exhibits is bound to the interpretation choices made in those exhibits. Museums attempting to act responsibly in complex, multicultural environments can be enmeshed in controversy (p. 5). Museum workers need not be intimidated by controversy. Rather, critic Rothstein argues that multivocality is a positive change that opens up space in museums for forums and dialogues. In his review of CW, Mark Leone (1992) asserts that controversy in museums is ideas to be moved by (p. 1087). Rahier and Hawkins admit their optimistic view for plantation visits demonstrates these sites as spaces for discussions, confrontations, and healing (p. 219). How do museums arrange exhibits and tours to have multiple voices and reasonably provide venues for debates? Lavine (1991) asks, “Can an exhibition contain more than one voice, or can a voice exhibit more than one message?” (p. 151).

Museum workers are confronted with choices that will likely increase the risks for confrontation. Crew and Sims (1991) maintain that confrontation is alienation that allows space for reflection, argument, and understanding the problem (p. 173). Boler (1999) contends, “The educator who endeavors to rattle complacent cages, who attempts to
wrest us anew’ from the threat of conformism, undoubtedly faces the treacherous ghosts
of the other’s fear and terrors, which in turn evoke one’s own demons” (p. 175).

I have observed museum workers face interpretation choices and conflicts, and
subsequently express fear that they are putting the museum’s authority at risk. In some
instances, museum workers discourage dialogue to avoid the risks. Eichstedt and Small
(2002) ask, in regards to oppressive and painful memories, what are museums to do with
remembrance that involves shame, doubt, or feelings of guilt? I wonder how can museum
workers negotiate a challenging past and be asked to commemorate mistakes and failures,
when this information is dissonant to their understanding of plantation history.

Karp (1991) argues that what is at stake for many museum workers in the
struggles for control over objects and the modes of exhibiting them is the articulation of
identity: “When cultural others are implicated, exhibitions tell us who we are and,
perhaps most significant, who we are not. Exhibitions are privileged arenas for presenting
images of self and Other” (p. 15).

Interpreting the American South: Collective Memory and Collective Loss

Scholarship on collective memory helps to demonstrate the ways everyday and
official remembering and forgetting serve political purposes and communal and
individual needs. The past is not simply there in memory, but it must be articulated to
serves as a key force that helps shape the meanings of historical plantations and that
promotes the personal attachments that work to support museum workers’ desires, or
resistances, to changing those meanings.
Museums are places where memories are regenerated and called to consciousness. Museum educators develop public curriculum for museum exhibitions by pooling historical references, museum workers’ interpretations of the objects, and their understanding of the subject on display. The information gathered by museum workers is further refined by the museum’s institutional mission. Museum interpretations are the collective results of multiple descriptions of events past. Spoken languages, written texts, visual images, and sanctioned landscapes are all examples of systematic social networks that rely on memory and perpetuate memory.

Collective memories are dynamic social networks in which individuals participate in and contribute to in the processes of belonging, in order to identify with particular groups and societies. Collective memory sustains societal networks and functions. As Tom Ingold (1999) explains, collective memory is the symbolic organization of experience that inures social relationships constituting persons and societies. Memory is essentially social (Connerton, 1989; Anderson, 1991; Halbwachs, 1992; Hutton, 1993; Terdiman, 1993; Irwin-Zarecka, 1994; Nora, 1996).

Collective memory, according to Maurice Halbwachs (1992), is a socially constructed notion which draws strength from a coherent body of people. Individuals as group members remember. There are as many collective memories as there are groups in a society. Social classes, families, associations, and armies all have distinctive memories that their members have constructed, typically over long periods of time. Individuals do the remembering, and those located in a specific group context draw on that context to remember and recreate representations of the past.

Richard Terdiman (1993), a scholar on the history of consciousness, explains that society achieves stability and coherence through constant rehearsal and reproduction of
memories. Collective memory is bound up to the extent that our respective relationships, commitments, and promises of a shared past are, to some degree, mutually constitutive. The tear and pain of even momentarily losing one’s ties to the past-one-knows are strong enough to generate feelings of loss, a traumatic event that could evoke refusals and resistances to learning new historical information.

Collective memory needs to be repeated. Patrick H. Hutton (1993) explains that Halbwachs accepted the philosophical proposition that living memory involves interplay between repetition and recollection. In repetition, however, memories are not transmitted intact, rather they are conflated as they are continually being revised. Over time individual memories coalesce into conformed images that sustain collective memories (p. 7).

Zelizer (1998) explains that collective memories implicitly value forgetting where remembering reflects a choice to select what no longer matters. Collective memories are unpredictable, and they are not necessarily stable, linear, rational, or logical (see Wertsch 2002). The important issue is not how accurately a recollection represents some past reality, but why historical actors constructed their memories in a particular way at a particular time. The embodiment of memory can rouse controversy.

Collective memory is “the telling itself,” the ongoing articulation of the “reality of the past” that forms and informs a community. Collective memory requires active remembrances that are deemed important to the community’s self-definition (Irwin-Zareck, 1994, p. 57). According to Pierre Nora (1996), sites of memory, or lieux de mémoire, contain a residual sense of continuity that carries traces of the past into the present. Nora investigates the history of memory through an extensive study of French
history and collective memory. Nora explains that collective memory informs history, while history seeks to describe “true memory” (p. 4).

Usable memories are memory works. One form of memory work includes psychoanalysis, the process of scrutinizing discursive structures and the psychological operation of forgetting, as in Freud’s concept of repressed memories. Another form of memory work includes the process of creating a material product, such as a text, an exhibition, or a monument. Memory work is the act of establishing a tangible presence for the past. For Iwona Irwin-Zarecka (1994), constructing a “baseline of historical reality” is foundational to memory projects. Irwin-Zarecka explains that an historical baseline works as the touchstone for reality, while the rest of our energies in memory work are subjective. Memory work has two components: the construction of memories and the analysis of the dynamics of memories represented in the construction. However, memories are activated. Remembrance is the process of making sense of memories for the present moment. Irwin-Zarecka (1994) acknowledges that because memory work gives order and meaning to the complexities and varieties of recollections, it is necessary to recognize the distinct ways we frame memory while we communicate ideas and feelings. Memory work is a process of emotional classification and evaluation of places, objects, images, and words that serve as memory markers. Films, books, exhibits, and monuments are examples of memory works.

Memory work impels us to do something with the past. Recall Leone’s (1992) review of CW’s Carter’s Grove slave quarter exhibit that moved him to action. The pain or glory of remembrance shapes our obligations to each other. The search for meanings from the past, as Irwin-Zarecka describes, “implicates wider and wider circles of
humanity, more uncomfortable, we have an obligation to our present and future as well as to our past, all entering the negotiations about the ‘proper legacy’” (1994, p. 29).

Collective memory is presently negotiated politically and culturally with regard to American slavery by over a century and a half of rearranging the memories of the real life human dramas of enslavement and emancipation; memories that are often traumatic and meaningful to present day American citizenship. The oppressive and violent history of American slavery has been largely marginalized in history museums and buried into the nation’s collective memory. Are present generations of museum workers confronted by these buried ghosts when they take on the challenge of amending mainstream history to more fully interpret slave life?

Collective memory harbors and transmits unresolved grief, our “phantoms” (Abraham and Torok, 1994). Losses so great that the subject is unable to mourn them can be buried into memory and passed onto subsequent generations. The regeneration of New South memory (discussed in the fourth review section below) continues to influence historical plantation interpretations (see Kammen, 1991). Eric Santner (1990) asserts, in the context of World War II Germany, that over long periods of time the bereaved population maintains a phantasized continuation from the un-mourned past that has been passed onto later generations. Understanding the memory of the white ethnocentric social forces that had silenced the history of American slavery and marginalized the history of emancipation helps to illustrate why the current cultural representations of American slavery constitute an increasingly liberating collective memory of American slavery.

The first fifty years following the southern surrender at Appomattox in 1865 were wrought by a fierce struggle to control the memory of the meanings and the results of the Civil War. National memory of slavery was de-emphasized, to remove suggestions of any
acts of immorality and treason of the slave-holding ex-Confederates. In the subsequent fifty years, white America repeated the reconciliationist rhetoric of high morals, patriotism, and white supremacy that produced a legal racially segregated nation (see Blight, 2001). It was one hundred years after the abolishment of slavery before the constitutional civil rights of all Americans would be protected and the collectively forgotten memories of slavery and emancipation would begin to be recalled, validated, circulated, and studied by mainstream Americans.

In a vehement movement to defend the secessionist cause as just and to extinguish possible future sectional strife, ex-Confederates chose narratives that created a “New South Creed” and “Myth of the Lost Cause” memories that vindicated southern surrender and was palatable to northern politicians, Union veterans, and white Americans (Faust, 1988, 1996; Kammen, 1991; Blight, 2001). In the language of mutual patriotism, national memory of the causes of the Civil War, controlled by elected officials and social organizations such as the United Daughters of the Confederacy and the United Veterans of the Confederacy, were produced to articulate a common memory of the causes of the war that excluded slavery and elevated the role in the war of women (Faust, 1996), loyal slaves, and states’ rights.

The reconciliationists’ purpose was to build nationalism (Faust, 1988) and their method was to invent myths and traditions (see Hobsbwam, 2003). An example is the teaching and preaching of the Lost Cause of states rights and the economic foundations of the New South told in schools, museums and popular literature. The myth of states rights as the cause of the war, while at the same time the erasure of slavery as a cause for the war (e.g., see Faust, 1988; Blight, 2001), continue to be repeated in schools, museums, and in literature. Southern pride was re-invigorated with the rhetoric of New South
regionalism, and southern political power and white social control were regained
nationally through the invented tradition of Jim Crow politics for racial segregation.
Devotion to the invented memory of the New South insured the continuity of the memory
of white control in the plantation south and the continuance of a racially divided society.

White southerners were immersed in the newly-formed New South and were
surrounded by the ritualized activities that often focused on personal attachments to the
traumatic events during the war and to Reconstruction. These ritualized activities
included walking the grounds of battlefields and cemeteries in search of family history,
attending reunions, and supporting the effects of racial discrimination of the Jim Crow
south (Pinar, 2001). The collective memory of Confederate valor, and of African
Americans as a burden to society, afforded white southerners external sensual
experiences and the making for deeply personal attachments to the (albeit) inventions of

The collective memories of the New South, over time and through performances,
have been simplified and folded into the economic and political needs of later
generations, and have impacted how slave life is represented in museums today. Stories
of a romantic antebellum plantation society and a complacent enslaved population have
 lingered into the 21st century. The meanings of the New South were translated into
Southern heritage (Kammen, 1991) and acted as an alternative history that smoothed over
points of conflict in favor of aesthetic effects.

William F. Pinar (2001) considers historical issues of collective loss as the
underpinning for two centuries of racism in the United States. In examining racism in the
American south, for example, Pinar works from the historical research of Drew G. Faust
(1996) to psychoanalyze how a melancholic white southern population faced the painful
realities of the South’s defeat at the close of the Civil War. Confederate men and women of the ruling master class refused to accept political defeat in spite of losses of family fortunes, lives, and the loss of a world with slavery. And perhaps most significant to his study is Pinar’s identification of the loss of white southern men’s masculinity. New South memory was the manifestation of melancholic white Southerners who were determined to reclaim political power and re-build the battle weary south to resemble the Old South based on racial segregation. Pinar explains:

If southern white men were once again to rule the world, southern ladies would have to express sufficient confidence in male superiority that both they and their shattered men could somehow believe that such a patriarchal social order could be again natural and desirable. More than ever before, fantasy, not reality, came to characterize (white) southern history and culture. (p. 264)

Pinar looks to the psychic loss of manhood to understand the murderess violence directed at black men in the fifty years following the close of war. Pinar writes, “He [white southern men] would uphold the antebellum promise of protection in return for the masculine presumption of superiority... [defeat was] profoundly a gendered defeat” (p. 267). When Pinar explains that white southern men flew to the safety of their imaginations, he is describing the intrapsychic safety of a melancholic ego-ideal.

Pinar (2004) later looks at the collective white post-bellum response to loss in the project of public schools. Constrained by their ancestors’ repressed and unresolved trauma, Pinar contends, white southerners share a nostalgia for the racial and gender hierarchies of the past (p. 235). “As psychoanalysis has demonstrated...the past remains, hovering like ghosts” (p. 241). Release from collective melancholia is an on-going project that has been “‘deferred and displaced’ for 140 years” (p. 247). Pinar asserts that not until the “South re-experiences its past in ways that allow it to recover memory and history, (especially white) southern students will not work through it” (p. 241). Pinar’s
study reminds me of Abraham and Torrok’s (1994) “phantom,” when inherited melancholia is transmitted to younger generations and is buried into repressed memory.

Americans are more vigorously researching and representing the historical voices of enslaved individuals, though many of us are humbled and shaken by recalling American slavery. While the recollections we have inherited from our American ancestors continue to predominate in national memory, the increasing reflections on memories of American slavery often position present day scholars, students, museum workers, and audiences in a state of ambivalence. We ask ourselves, “How am I to respond to this historical trauma?” (see Walcott, 2000).

Finishing Remarks

While this literature offers significant inroads to understanding the psycho-social complexities of learning, collective memories, and complexities of loss in learning, it does not talk about the importance of multidimensional representations. My dissertation seeks to foreground this dynamic as central to a commemorative museum pedagogy. We might find cause for satisfaction for the increasing breadth of diverse representations in museums that I have observed in south Louisiana since the early 1990s, however, what appears to be missing are the specific names and faces of historical enslaved individuals. While slave life exhibits in, for example, south Louisiana, increasingly mark the presence of enslaved populations, the memory of who lived in these places is conflated into the term “slave.”10 The word “slave” is flat and devoid of humanity, a word I call a “one dimensional” representation. Museum interpretations today display “ungendered” (see

---

10 See Rose (2004) for a analysis of historical plantation museums’ representations of historical women. These history museums compromise the memory of enslaved black women in representing the work and character of white plantation mistresses.
hooks, 1981; White, 1999) and un-named enslaved residents. The complex stories that would enable us to recall how people survived their enslavement and established homeplaces for themselves within the limits of bondage can not be represented without knowing the personal stories. Petra Munro (1998) explains, “History as we know it limits contradiction, multiplicity, and difference. Remembering this suppression is the memory work which must be done” (p. 265). The “ethical response” (see Simon and Eppert, 1997) to those individuals whose stories the museum exhibits represent need to go deeper into memory, adding more dimensions to slave life representations to describe historical individuals as persons and history as complex, contradictory, and nonlinear.

In preparing for my study at MMP, I wondered how visible could the current transformation of the historical landscape in south Louisiana be when there where clear indicators for change and resistance. Could I really find evidence of museum workers contending with difficult knowledge in the introduction of the history of slave life at their site? Would the words and expressions I would hear at MMP genuinely reflect events of learning to live with loss?

I was encouraged by the wealth of evidence in the museum literature that museum workers at CW and other museums were asking these same kinds of questions about the slow and reluctant emergence of slave life history at historical sites. Other researchers and critics were able to uncover some of the obstacles and constraints to more equitable representations of our American and African American ancestors in the nation’s museums.

This chapter laid the theoretical and social underpinnings for my examination of the emergence of slave life history on the museum landscape. In the next chapter, I describe my action research study with MMP workers who were asked to engage in
learning and using a newly documented history of the MMP enslaved population and to develop expanded representations of slave life at their historical plantation museum.
Chapter Four: Methods

I used an action research approach, supported by archival research, to identify ways in which museum workers engaged in expanding representations of the historical enslaved population at Magnolia Mound Plantation (MMP). In this chapter, I describe my rationale for using action research as my principle methodology; the potential benefits and outcomes of the study; how I arranged to use MMP as my research site; the selection process I used to assemble the museum workers into the action research team; and how I collected data in two phases (an action research phase and an archival research phase).

The action research phase generated data in the form of transcripts, and was gathered in six phases: tour observations, post tour conversations, team meetings, informal interviews, outside scholars’ reviews, and pilot tours. According to Maykut and Moorehouse (1994), qualitative research studies that use multiple methods of data collection allow for richer and more diverse data to emerge to explore a focus of inquiry and add to the rigor of the investigation (p. 113). The variety of ethnographic data collection methods I selected offered multiple ways to view the complexities within the museum worker community at MMP that contributed to decisions to adhere or change the shape and content of the site’s interpretation.

The archival research describes the methods I used to write the history report documenting the availability of information needed to construct multidimensional representations of slave life at MMP, which was used to revise the regular tour. The archival research generated a history report (Appendix A) that was used to provide information for several key steps in the action research component.
Rationale for an Action Research Design

Interpretation and design of exhibits typically involves a team of museum workers. I selected an action research approach to study how museum workers can improve their practices of interpreting plantation life, and thereby address critics’ reports of marginalized slave life representations. Action research is a qualitative research strategy that is team-based and intended to initiate social change (Britzman and Pitt, 1997). I used an action research approach to expand slave life representations as a method of social justice education (Carson and Sumara, 1997) in a museum setting. Action research is an inquiry with its efforts focused on improving the quality of the performance of an educational organization (Carson and Sumara, 1997; Bogdan and Biklen, 1998; Mills, 2003). The research is designed and conducted by the same practitioners who utilize data to improve their own practice. The approach is a collaborative effort aimed at initiating sustainable changes. In the context of developing history exhibit interpretations, Candace Tangorra Matelic (1992) of the Museum of Florida History argues, “We know two things for sure. It is much easier to produce exhibits without the team process. The product however, is much better with the team process” (p. 190).

Action research is a systematic inquiry conducted by education researchers and other stakeholders in the learning environment to gather information about how their learning environment operates and how they teach (Carson and Sumara, 1997). I selected action research for my study because it was a qualitative methodology that allowed for an emergent study design that could include multiple museum workers’ perspectives on the historical interpretation at MMP. The advantage of implementing my study at a MMP was that my results would reflect a real-life scenario of south Louisiana museum workers
interpreting the racially integrated plantation’s history. Data that included museum
workers’ perspectives on interpreting slave life was central to my broader objective of
developing a workable pedagogical approach to expand representations of historical
populations for use by other plantation museums. According to Robert C. Bogdan and
Sari Knopp Biklen (1998), action research is a practical choice for researchers “[s]ince it
is the people in the setting who must live with the change, it is their definitions of the
situation that are crucial if change is going to work” (p. 211).

Action research gives team members opportunities to reflect on and assess their
teaching; to explore and try out new ideas; to assess how effective the new approaches
were; to share feedback with fellow team members; and to contribute to the decisions
about which new approaches to include in the team’s curriculum (see Mills, 2003; Bray,
Lee, Smith, and Yorks, 2000). The action research design I used emphasized museum
workers’ responses to co-generating knowledge on the history of free and enslaved
residents’ lives at MMP. My study was concerned with incorporating the museum
workers’ perspectives and responses in order to practically address the criticisms of the
museums’ interpretations of slave life I discussed in Chapter Three.

Museum representations invariably reflect their creators and the present moment.
Objects alone are dumb, despite the historic authenticity of the object itself. Crew and
Sims (1991) explain, “Authenticity is not about factuality or reality. It is about authority.
Objects have no authority; people do. It is people on the exhibition team who must make
a judgment about the past” (p. 163). I could have simply used my archival research on the
enslaved population at MMP to script a new tour narrative in isolation of the MMP
workers. It was necessary, however, in the design of this study to acknowledge the
significant role the team of museum workers play in constructing the narrative at MMP,
and the importance of engaging museum workers in reflective conversations as the study unfolded (see Crew and Sims, 1991; Simon, 1992; Hooper-Greenhill, 2003). By organizing the MMP museum workers into an action research team, it is more likely that the general pedagogical approach that would emerge would be workable in real museum settings and more likely that other museums might consider the approach.

Specifically, I wanted to study what happened when museum workers were asked to revise the regular MMP tour into a new tour narrative that would include expanded representations of slave life at MMP. My action research study design was focused on museum workers’ responses to essentially three texts: the present regular tour narrative, my history report on slave life at MMP generated from my archival research, and the new tour narrative that included expanded representations of slave life at MMP. Data in the form of transcripts were generated and gathered in six phases over the course of the action research component: tour observations, post tour conversations, team meetings, informal interviews, outside scholars’ reviews, and pilot tours. Museum workers were purposefully participating in the action research study to address the social injustice of the limited interpretation of the enslaved population presently in place at MMP. The ethnographic strategies for data collection and analysis were focused on understanding the museum interpretation team as a particular kind of cultural setting. This method was designed to address a curriculum problem stemming from the education role museum workers choose to take and how their chosen role, in turn, shaped how history would be interpreted for the public.

My ultimate goal was to develop a workable pedagogical approach that would move museum interpretations of slave life beyond objectifying historical enslaved characters in “one dimensional representations” that were limited to the term “slave” or a
job title, and towards “subjectifying” enslaved individuals in the process of scripting “multidimensional” representations to more fully describe individuals. I used historical records and literature on slave life in Louisiana to begin to describe “personhood” for enslaved historical individuals.

My study utilized two distinct components: an action research phase that analyzed museum workers responses to expanded information on slave life and an archival research phase that provided the historical personal stories about slave life at MMP. These two components necessarily intersected in the middle of the study.

Potential Benefits and Outcomes of My Study

Identifying how museum workers learn about new slave life information, and add the new information to the site’s current tour, would inform other museums of the limitations and possibilities of increasing slave life representations at their sites. The potential benefits for expanding slave life representations at museums includes improving the museum’s accessibility and accountability to an increasingly more broad and diverse audience, and to commemorate the lives of the long-silenced African American enslaved families and individuals. My study focused on interpretation expansions at MMP for the residential population, free and enslaved, who lived and labored at the south Louisiana cotton and sugar plantation from approximately 1786 to 1830. In more broad terms, my study was aimed at encouraging museum workers to change MMP’s long-held interpretation of plantation life that recalled the planter’s history and plantation life from the planter’s view towards representations that recall the achievements, obstacles, and humanity of the historically integrated free and enslaved plantation population.
My results should be applicable to many other plantation museums, as they attempt to expand their slave life representations (see Chapter One). Based on my literature review (Chapter Three) and my visits to historical plantation museums in south Louisiana, I found that MMP is representative of the many museums who are in transition and are trying to expand their slave life representations. MMP is also representative of plantation museums in a historical sense, considering the many commonalities MMP has with hundreds of other south Louisiana plantations. MMP was typical to other plantations in terms of the crops grown, the number of enslaved residents, acreage, and the French and African heritage among the residents.

My study had three major objectives. First, my study would provide a case study of a historical plantation museum’s endeavors to generate a new tour narrative that included expanded multidimensional slave life representations in the regular tour. Second, my study would generate a history report on the enslaved population at MMP, and thus demonstrate that such multidimensional information exists and is obtainable. Third, my study would result in a pedagogical approach based on educational psychoanalytic theories for museum workers and educators to consider when developing expanded representations of historical enslaved populations in learning settings.

Getting Access to the Study Site

I met with the MMP director and curator of education in January 2005 at an off-site location to discuss my proposed study of MMP museum workers engaged in expanding slave life representations. I asked the director and curator if they would be willing to allow me to conduct this action research study at MMP. The museum director told me she was interested in the study and that she was interested in my archival
research on the MMP enslaved community (i.e., the history report). The director and curator explained that MMP interpretation already addressed slave life, and that they were interested in learning more about the history of MMP to expand the site’s slave life interpretation. After the director and curator agreed to open up their museum to my study, they offered to help me select museum workers for the action research component of the study.

While I had the good fortune to have worked at MMP (1999-2002) as the curator of education, I was obliged to learn the current tour narrative. In the spirit of action research, I immersed myself as a team member. In May and June of 2005, I participated in the MMP docent training program and gave a practice tour to a museum worker on the team so I could better appreciate the current logistics and current historical interpretation. I wanted to be knowledgeable about the interpretation the action research team would be exploring. According to Bogdan and Biklen (1998), in action research the investigator is often a practitioner who wants to use the qualitative approach to do what he or she does better. As a museum educator and a researcher, I viewed this study as a way of becoming a more effective practitioner along with my MMP action research team members.

I consciously tried to minimize my status as an outside researcher in order to secure my membership in the MMP museum workers’ community. Team members, and other museum workers at MMP, were more likely to continue supporting the study if they were comfortable and informed about the study activities going on at their museum. In addition to completing the docent training, I attempted to involve the action research team members in the challenge of addressing outside critics by sharing some literature that specifically critiqued MMP and other fellow River Road plantation museums (Eichstedt and Small, 2002). The action research team approach necessitated that the
team members be aware of external criticisms and other documented shortcomings of present slave life interpretations at plantation museums so they could be responsive to the social injustices featured in the criticisms.

Sample Selection

Selecting Team Members

In order to engage museum workers in the study, I needed to identify museum workers at MMP who believed that expanding slave life representations for the historical site interpretation was a worthwhile endeavor; an endeavor that they were willing to invest time and energy into in order to develop a new interpretation for the site. At the time of my study, MMP employed five professional staff, six paid staff, and approximately 25 volunteers. I spoke with the museum director and curator of education about candidate workers for inclusion on the action research team. I referred to Pamela Maykut and Richard Moorehouse (1994) to guide how we (myself, the director, and the curator) would carefully select participants from the pool of museum workers at MMP. Maykut and Moorehouse recommend qualitative researchers build a sample of participants “purposefully” to acknowledge the “complexity that characterizes human and social phenomena … and limits of generalizability” (p. 56). To that end, I spoke with the director and curator of education to identify the range of museum workers to aim for “maximum variation” to be represented on the action research team (Maykut and Moorehouse, p. 57). We discussed the range of experiences of the museum workers and identified the two major criteria of length of employment at MMP and type of position (volunteer or professional staff) upon which to order MMP workers. Other criteria we considered included those museum workers charged with some responsibility for
interpretation at MMP and those museum workers who have expressed interest in slave life history at MMP

Based on these criteria, I invited and secured four museum workers for the action research team. I refer to the sample of four museum workers, and myself, as the action research team and the individual museum workers as team members. I recognize that there are some dimensions that were poorly represented or missing in the pool of candidates and in the final five-member team. Particularly noteworthy is the lack of African American museum workers. I attempted to partially address this shortcoming by including present-day African American voices via my use of outside scholars (described below) to critique the new tour narrative, which was a critical step in the study.

The following profiles help to characterize the four individual MMP museum workers on the team without revealing their identities. I have used pseudonyms and I do not explicitly reveal the job titles of the team members to protect their identities. I was accompanied by the director and the educator when I invited three of the identified MMP museum workers to participate in the study and join the action research team. For one participant, I made the invitation by telephone after getting the director’s approval.

Profiles

Kz was the first person I approached to participate in the study. Kz enthusiastically asked detailed questions about the study and then agreed to participate. Kz is a white woman who, at the beginning of the study, was the newest professional staff member at MMP. Kz has family ties to Louisiana and has lived in Louisiana for at least the past 10 years. Kz explained she was especially interested in interpreting slave life for young visitors.
Az was the second person I asked to participate in the study. Az explained she had a heavy work load and was concerned that the study might require her to do more work. I explained the role she would play as a member of a team to help shape a new tour narrative that would expand slave life representations. I informed her she would not be required to conduct research or write text herself. Az, who came to Louisiana in the past 10 years, joined the team explaining she was very interested in slave life at MMP. Az is a white woman and she is a long-time professional staff member.

Gz was the third person I asked to participate in the study. Gz explained she was interested in the project because she enjoys researching MMP and Louisiana history, and does genealogical research about her own family. Gz is a white woman who was a museum worker at MMP for the longest time among the study participants. Gz is a volunteer at MMP. Gz is a native to Louisiana.

Dz joined the team midway in the study. The MMP director who helped me arrange the study at the museum retired during the third month of the study and was not able to continue her participation. Dz replaced the retired director and enthusiastically joined the team at the third team meeting. Dz is a white man and a member of the professional staff and has lived in Louisiana periodically over the past 20 years. Dz explained that the study offered him an opportunity to learn about the history of MMP and he was particularly interested in slave life history. Dz was the newest staff member among the team members.

I explained to the four team members that I was also a team member. Kz and Dz were new acquaintances I made in preparation for the study. I have causally known Gz and Az through my earlier employment at MMP. When I asked team members to participate in the study I explained to them that the study was a research project I was
undertaking to complete my doctoral degree. I am a white woman who had worked as a professional staff member and a volunteer at MMP.

The MMP team members’ backgrounds included a former travel agent, a housewife, an anthropologist, a former art teacher, and I was a former museum educator and am currently a student researcher. Two team members were native to Louisiana. The museum workers expressed their interest in expanding the interpretation of plantation life to more fully represent slave life to the general public. The museum workers recognized the pedagogical mission for the museum and were each in charge of some aspect of developing and disseminating historical interpretations to visitors. One of the museum workers was charged with training new paid tour guides and volunteer docents. Three of the team members regularly give tours and one member occasionally gives tours.

Research Protocol

Prior to the initiation of the action research component, I asked the four team members to sign consent forms. The consent forms explained how the study would be used, how the findings would be made public, how museum workers’ participation in the study would not jeopardize their professional or personal integrity, how participants’ names would be kept confidential, and that team members would not be subject to incriminating activities (see Appendix E). I received a waiver from the Louisiana State University’s Institutional Review Board from an internal review that would have examined the risk of mental or physical harm to study participants.

In order to maintain a cooperative work environment during the study period, I made informal presentations to other (non-team) MMP museum workers and explained that I was conducting a study at MMP with an interest in researching slave life and
expanding the slave life representations at the museum. The ethnographic data from the action research portion of my study remains confidential, and is in my possession and will not be used for any other purpose than those stated in the consent form.

The museum workers generously agreed to allow me to observe the museum’s operations as a participant observer and to use the museum to conduct meetings and interviews. I was fortunate to receive permission from the director to carry out the study at the museum, with an understanding that MMP would receive no monetary benefits or other tangible benefits from the study other than access to the results of the study. The museum workers who volunteered to be in the study understood they could withdraw at any time. I explained to the museum workers they were not obligated to generate written materials for the study.

I described to the team members their participation would include allowing me to observe some of their tours; to talk to me about their tours; and to participate in team meetings to develop a revised tour narrative. I explained to team members they would be asked to read a history report about the MMP enslaved population and would be asked to select information from the history report to expand the regular MMP tour interpretation to include more about plantation slave life. I explained that I would collect their comments and ideas regarding the museum’s interpretation on slave life in my notes and on tape, and that I would later transcribe the audio recordings.

In addition to my meetings with the director and curator of education and team-related meetings, I stayed in contact with team members, the director, and the curator of education throughout the study via telephone and email. I wanted to maintain communication to minimize the chances of MMP workers feeling surprised by the results of my study. As expected, divisive opinions and attachments to French heritage,
Louisiana ancestry, and to plantation history surfaced during the study and posed hurdles to developing a new tour narrative. Mills (2003) explains, “Action research is a very personal business, so it makes sense to personalize our interpretations” (p. 114). I recognized the personal nature of this study. I tried to be sensitive to the personal attachments of the team members to Louisiana heritage and to MMP. Effective communication among me, other team members, and other MMP workers was critical to the success of my study.

### Defining the Interpretation Target at MMP

Qualitative research often examines people’s words and actions in narratives to closely explore the situation as experienced by the participants (Maykut and Moorehouse, 1994). I was interested in gaining insight into how museum workers engaged in expanding slave life representations in an effort to understand the seemingly slow appearance of slave life representations at historical plantation museums that has been documented in the literature and that I have personally observed. I selected a specific interpretation project for the action research team to address to explore how team members would respond to documented slave life histories in the context of their work to interpret MMP.

The team members were not fully aware of the extent of the criticisms in the literature directed at historical plantations for their insensitive and limited representations of African American slavery. The team members were also only vaguely aware of the availability of historical information about Louisiana slave life. Team members were referring to information used in the *Beyond the Big House* tour for an interpretation of slave life at MMP. This special tour had been developed in 1998 and spoke of enslaved
residents as cooks, servants, and field hands, without historically ascribed names or lived experiences.

While the team members were aware of the growing number of historical exhibits on slave life around the nation they did not actively pursue changing the interpretation of the regular tour in the big house of MMP that has been used for nearly a decade. Learning to interpret plantation history differently at MMP would require team members to engage in practices that, in some way, “removes one from the comfortable habits of the familiar” (Carson and Sumara, 1997, p. xvii).

I decided that my study should concentrate on the focal point at MMP, the plantation big house, because the regular tour associated with the big house was most frequently used and had little mention of the details of slave life. Some degree of slave life interpretation was already offered in the Beyond the Big House tour, in A Day in the Life of a Slave school program, and in the slave cabin exhibit. I reflected on Lonnie Bunch’s (1992) call to elevate African American history by integrating museum interpretations and by moving away from “separate but equal” tours. My original intent was to interpret the MMP landscape as a whole, which would have included the slave cabin exhibit. It became apparent to me that targeting the entire MMP landscape was too broad, and would require an enormous amount of archival data and could run the risk of the study not addressing the most central source for MMP’s ethnocentric interpretation, namely the regular tour with the big house (see Eichstedt and Small, 2002). The team members would have faced a different kind of challenge in expanding an already existing “slave life tour,” rather than being faced with expanding the “regular tour” to include slave life.
Elizabeth Hallam (2000) explains that texts are central to the “cultural translations” involved in museum discourse and “it is often the textual components which predominate in the communication of displays’ aims and themes” (p. 268). The tour narrative given by tour guides and docents at MMP was a selection of what the museum workers would like visitors to know. Rahier and Hawkins (1999) explain,

We understand the ‘narrator,’ the producer of the narrative, as a multidimensional entity in which a chain of individuals have differing authority in the making of the text: the foundation or institution that owns a given plantation, the historian(s) hired to help design the narrative and the tour guides or “front line interpreters” who interact with the visitors and deliver a final text. Tour guides usually have the last input to the white narrative. (p. 206)

Addressing the tour narrative was a targeted research design that was focused enough to be manageable, while also allowing me to closely study how museum workers rhetorically engaged in expanding interpretations of slave life.

Data Collection

My data collection consisted of two components: action research and archival research. The action research section describes the ethnographic methods I used to study the team members’ engagement in the process of learning about slave life and in integrating this new information into a revised tour of MMP. The data from the action research component was comprised of my field notes and transcripts of audio recordings of the six phases of the study (tour observations, post tour conversations, team meetings, informal interviews, outside scholars’ reviews, and pilot tours). The results of the action research component formed the basis for the development of a workable pedagogical approach for other museums to consider (see Chapter Seven). The archival research section describes the methods I used to write the history report documenting information needed to construct multidimensional representations of slave life at MMP, which was
used in the action research component to construct a new tour narrative for the regular tour.

Action Research Data Collection

The action research component involved the generation of data in the form of observations (field notes) and transcripts during six distinct phases: tour observations, post tour conversations, three team meetings, informal interviews, outside scholars’ reviews, and pilot tours. A timeline of the phases is shown below.

A Time Line of the Phases of the Action Research Study Phases

- May, I assembled the action research team.
- May through June, I completed docent training at MMP.
- May through August, I observed regular tours with visitors. I held post tour conversations for each tour I observed.
- July, I held the first team meeting.
- August, I distributed the history report to the team members.
- September, I held the second team meeting to discuss team members’ responses to the history report. I organized the ethnographic data to develop a Tour Framework worksheet.
- September, I held the third team meeting. The team used the Tour Framework worksheet to develop ideas for the new tour narrative.
- October, I distributed the first draft of the new tour narrative.
- October, I informally interviewed team members individually to collect their responses to the first draft of the new tour narrative.
October, I revised the new tour narrative and gave a copy of the second draft with the history report to two scholars at LSU to review. I collected their responses to write the third draft of the new tour narrative.

November, I distributed the third draft of the new tour narrative to the action research team members (See Appendix C).

November, Two museum workers gave pilot tours using the new tour narrative.

Tour Observations

I observed eight tours of the big house that were led by three different team members in order to establish the baseline tour content. I was immersed in the tour groups as a participant observer along with museum visitors in the “natural setting” of regular MMP tours. The tours provided me opportunities to hear the current tour and see how different team members interpret plantation life and respond to visitors’ questions. I was especially listening for references and questions to slave life on the tour. The tours I observed were 45 to 75 minutes long and started in the visitor center, where team members discussed a diorama of early 19th century MMP, and included a brief discussion of life in the slave quarter. The tour went through the big house and ended in the kitchen building. The team members were the tour guides and they discussed architecture, furnishings, the planter family history, and the life style of the planter class in colonial and early antebellum Louisiana. I wrote field notes in my journal describing the tour contents, tour route, visitors’ questions, and I wrote descriptions of how slave life was described on each tour.
Post Tour Conversations

Immediately following each tour, I held a post tour conversation with the team member who was the tour guide. I interviewed the team member about how she felt the tour represented the plantation’s enslaved residents and what ideas she had, and what information she would like to have in order to expand the representations of the plantation residents. I used the same “interview guide,” a set of open ended questions, for all the team members after each of the tours I observed (see Appendix B). The questions addressed tour logistics, tour content, and team members’ ideas and requests for historical information to improve their interpretations of slave life. This interview method is recommended by Maykut and Moorehouse (1994). Bogdan and Biklen (1998) refer to this as “guided conversations” (p. 95), which allows study participants to speak freely without limiting the time or direction they wanted to take to reply. It was necessary for team members to speak with me in a quiet space where we could sit and have refreshments in the museum. Guiding tours is physically taxing work. This proved to be a helpful tool to collect data to explore how team members’ ideas changed or stayed the same after several tours, and allowed me to compare team members’ responses to similar questions. I wrote notes in my field notebook and taped and transcribed all the post tour conversations.

Team Meetings

I held three team meetings (July 8, September 7, and September 28) during 2005. The team meetings were primarily held in the administration building at MMP. Due to the events of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, I had to revise our team meeting schedule and,
in one instance, I visited a team member’s home to collect her responses to the history report.

The team meeting format, which could also be described as a “focus group” format (Madriz, p. 373-375), used the dynamics of group interaction to gain information and insights that are less likely to be gained through individual interviews or participant observation (Maykut and Moorehouse, p. 104).

My role as group moderator was to get the group talking about the topic on the meeting agenda. I encouraged team members to discuss and reflect on their work to expand slave life representations at MMP. Maykut and Moorehouse (1994) explain that groups bring several different perspectives into contact (p. 103). Museum workers often work in teams to develop exhibit interpretations and thus it was natural for the action research team members to talk about the site interpretation in a group setting.

I took advice from H. Russell Bernard (1994) on running a focus group to help me run the team meetings. Bernard recommends tape recording meetings and transcribing the recordings, “The real power of focus groups is that they produce ethnographically rich data. Only transcription captures all the richness” (p. 229). Bernard explains that people will disclose more in groups that are supportive and nonjudgmental. Allowing group members to vent frustrations at critics and assuring team members that the team meetings and interviews were safe spaces to express new ideas about historical interpretation at MMP helped to encourage rich discussions. I tape recorded all the discussions in the three team meetings, transcribed the tapes, and made field notes after each team meeting to describe the group dynamics and the settings.
First Team Meeting

The first team meeting was in July and included four team members: Kz, Gz, Az and me. We discussed the study design and scheduled tour observations and post tour conversations. I handed out a time line for the study. It outlined how I would find historical information about the enslaved MMP population that I would share with the team in a history report. Team members would use the new information to revise the regular tour to expand slave life representations. I emphasized that the museum was not committed to using the new tour narrative after the study was completed. I explained that I was also interested in developing an “interpretation strategy” (a pedagogical approach) based on this study for other historical plantation museums to consider. The team talked openly about some initial ideas for expanding the site’s interpretation about slave life and tour techniques.

Six weeks after the first team meeting I gave each team member a copy of the history report (Appendix A) with instructions on how to mark up the report to identify information. They were asked to highlight in pink those pieces of information or stories they would like to include in the revised tour and to highlight in green the parts of the history report the team members would like more information about or additional clarification. The process of reading new information and then using it to expand slave life representations was the curriculum theory aspect of the study and the new tour narrative was a tangible product the museum could have at the end of the study. In the first team meeting, when I explained I was researching new information to write the history report about the enslaved MMP community, Gz replied, “It will be a surprise. There is nothing” (TM1, p. 5).
Second Team Meeting

The second team meeting was held in early September. Kz, Az and I met at MMP to share responses to the history report. This was an important juncture in the study. It was the first opportunity at which I collected team members’ ideas and comments about the historical enslaved families and individuals. I met with Gz two days later at her house to hear her responses to the history report. Gz was unable to travel to MMP for the second team meeting due to Hurricane Katrina. I collected team members’ copies of the history report with the team members’ written comments. I made notes in my field notebook to document the team members’ written comments they made in their copies of the history report.

Due to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita (August and September 2005) the team members were unable to give tours in September and early October. The post history-report tours were intended to allow team members to experiment using the new information about slave life in their tours. This was disappointing, but the team agreed to continue the study by using the next team meeting to discuss what they would use from the history report to develop the new tour narrative.

Third Team Meeting

The third team meeting was held at the end of September. Az, Kz, Gz, a new team member Dz and I met at MMP. Dz joined the action research team, signed a consent form, and enthusiastically participated in the meeting. First, I shared photocopied pages of documents and reference materials with team members who specifically asked for additional documentation and clarification regarding the history report we reviewed at the
previous team meeting. The primary objective for this meeting was to begin to develop a new tour narrative.

To aid the team in drafting a new tour narrative, I designed a worksheet I called a “Tour Framework Worksheet” (Appendix D). Due to the events of Hurricane Katrina, the team had to rethink how we would begin to try using the new slave life information from the history report. In lieu of the original design of team members leading real tours and experimenting with new slave life information, we agreed to talk about our ideas to change our tours in the next team meeting. The alternative method I offered the team was to use the worksheet. The worksheet was an outline of a “route driven” tour featuring the stops on the regular tour in the big house and in the kitchen.

The current tour was a template for developing the worksheet. I included stories and information noted by bullet points on the worksheet. The points came from the docent training manual, my tour observations, the post tour conversations, team meeting transcripts, and from the notes team members made in their copies of the history report. I reviewed all the “tour content” types of data looking for intersecting selections to describe slave life. The intersections were the overlapping highlighted stories and the bits of information team members most often referred to and the places those stories and bits of information were most often mentioned. For example, most team members’ tours included detailed discussions of slave life in the master bedroom and in the girls’ bedroom, and all the team members highlighted the story of an enslaved mother who was used as a wedding present.

I gave each team member a copy of the tour framework worksheet to fill in with their ideas. Team members discussed the possible content for each stop on the tour. In order to keep the group discussion reflective, I used a large flip chart and wrote down
everyone’s ideas for each tour stop as we progressed metaphorically along the tour route. The team members referred to the worksheet, the flip chart notes, and drew from their tour experiences, individual study, and the history report to generate the new tour narrative.

The team spent three and a half hours going through the worksheet piecing together stories about MMP slave life with the current tour route and stories the team members used in their current tours. Dz had taken several tours but was not trained to give the regular tour. Dz explained that the present regular tour was in the throws of revision and the action research team efforts came at a good time for him, “What I am saying is the tour that we currently have is not necessarily the tour we want” (TM3, p. 10).

I explained to the team that the new tour narrative we were developing was a working document that could change overtime. I emphasized to the team that the new tour narrative was open to revisions, hoping team members would feel more at ease and could reflect on the stories to make suggestions for interpreting slave life stories for the new tour narrative.

New Tour Narrative Developed

The next phase of the study was to hear team members’ responses to the first draft of the new tour narrative. As the team leader, it was my job to synthesize team member’s previous suggestions and concerns into copy for the new tour narrative. I recognized that I was not a neutral player and I worked to encourage progress and maintain the team’s focus on the goal of expanding slave life representations in the regular tour. Lisa Roberts explains, “While ethnographic field work traditionally conjures the image of a
dispassionate, outside observer, there has evolved a school of thought contending that the
observer must enter and even participate in the culture to fully comprehend it” (1997,
p.10). I continued my effort to wear the hat of team member and keep my perspective of
a museum worker who would use the new tour narrative to interpret the big house and
kitchen.

I consulted the transcripts and notes from the tour observations, post tour
observations, team meetings, and the completed tour framework worksheets to organize
and write the first draft of the new tour narrative. I believed if the new tour narrative was
to be workable for MMP, then the narrative had to address the guidelines the museum
upholds for the regular tour. The tour could only last 45 minutes and had to reflect the
political history of Baton Rouge and the chronological record for the legal ownership of
MMP through 1830.

The first draft of the new tour narrative moved visitors from the visitor center to
the big house and ended in the kitchen building. I organized the architectural story of the
big house, the planters’ stories and the enslaved residents’ stories in roughly
chronological order using the information documented in the history report. I imagined
how visitors who moved through the tour would hear how the plantation changed over
time in coordination with the family changes among the free and enslaved residents. I
read the draft out loud multiple times and paced myself as if I was leading a tour to check
that the narrative did not exceed 45 minutes.

The first draft of the new tour narrative was 20 pages and included stories that
described topics that were of interest to the team members including religion, health care,
language, work life, home life, slave resistance, and the Black Codes. I was careful to
include a blend of stories that addressed team members’ suggestions and that also
respected the traditional interpretation at MMP. I conscientiously included stories from the history report that team members highlighted about the enslaved community.

I included kinship ties with almost every enslaved and free person described in the tour narrative, guided by my theory that multidimensional representations of historical characters need to incorporate relationships to family and community. I distributed copies of the first draft of the new tour narrative to team members in early October.

Informal Interviews: Responses to New Tour Narrative

The next phase of the study was designed to collect team members’ responses to the new tour narrative. About two weeks after I distributed the new tour narrative, I informally interviewed each team member to collect their comments. In lieu of a fourth and final team meeting, I opted to change the team meeting format to informal interviews because previous team meetings took too much time for the team members and because of the changing group dynamics among the team members. The emergent design of this qualitative study enabled me to develop and alter the planned team activities as situations presented themselves (see Maykut and Moorehouse, 1994, p. 80). The previous team meeting took three and a half hours, which was too draining on everyone. Also, during the previous team meetings, I observed team members asking permission to contradict a senior team member and another team member apologize for holding different views on history. Bogdan and Biklen (1998) explained that it is not unusual for status conventions to reign in group conversations (p. 9), and H. Russell Bernard (1994) warned that people will disclose more in groups that are supportive and nonjudgmental (p. 229). I therefore needed to arrange for an alternative environment to the team meetings, in which team
members could openly reflect and express themselves fully about their tour experiences and their concerns for the historical interpretation at MMP. I therefore changed to individual interviews to provide all the team members with a setting that I could be more confident was comfortable for them.

I followed advice from Bogdan and Biklen (1998) who suggest,

Good listening usually stimulates good talking. Other forms of positive reinforcement work too. Being empathetic by expressing appropriate feelings when subjects tell about the ups and downs of their lives, good eye contact and showing the informants that you take them seriously all contribute to getting the subject to open up....treat the person you are interviewing as an expert. (p. 97)

I held the informal interviews in the work space of each team members’ choosing. I opened each interview by asking team members to tell me their thoughts about the first draft of the new tour narrative. All the team members gave detailed comments and offered constructive critiques. Two team members also provided me written comments. I used the feedback to revise the tour narrative and produced a second draft. I gave a copy of the second draft to the outside scholars for their comments.

Outside Scholars’ Reviews

Two LSU professors, sociologist Thomas Durant and historian Tiwanna Simpson, agreed to review the second draft of the new tour narrative. Dr. Durant is an African American scholar who has published work critical of museum interpretations of plantation slavery and slave life (Durant and Knottnerus, (eds.), 1999). Dr. Simpson is an African American scholar who has expertise in colonial American slavery. In addition to their fields of expertise, Dr. Simpson and Dr. Durant added the much needed African American voice to the study.
I used their comments to write the third draft of new tour narrative. I combined the third draft of the new tour narrative with a glossary that included a brief biographical sketch of each enslaved and free resident included in the new tour narrative and an outline of the tour to reflect team members’ request to have a “skeleton tour” available as an overview of the tour contents. I used these three components to produce, “An Interpretation Proposal for Magnolia Mound Plantation’s Regular Tour.” (see Appendix C). Each team member received a copy of this new tour narrative in November 2005.

Pilot Tours

The final step in the action research component was my observations of pilot tours. Two team members agreed to give pilot tours based on the third draft of the new tour narrative. I observed the two pilot tours in November of 2005. I observed the tours by taking on the role of a visitor. The pilot tour format was similar to the practice tour I gave to a team member at the onset of the study, just after I had completed the docent training. The tour guide and her audience recognized that this was a trial run of the revised regular tour. Gz gave the first pilot tour and Dz, Az and I were her audience. A few days later Kz gave a pilot tour and I was the only person on her tour. I tape recorded the tours and transcribed the tapes. I wrote field notes immediately after each pilot tour to record the contextual information for each tour.

Archival Research Data Collection

The archival research component involved using primary and secondary sources to produce the history report that provided historical information to the action research team. This information was used to integrate the interpretation at MMP by expanding the regular tour narrative with stories and identities of enslaved residents (i.e., with
multidimensional representations). The team members received the history report before the second team meeting for them to read and to select stories about historical characters in order to expand the regular tour and develop a new tour narrative; the report was a topic of discussion at the second and third team meetings.

I focused my archival research on information that would contribute to a richer description of historical enslaved characters that exceeded one’s name, forced labor job or enslaved status. I refer to the descriptions, such as a job, as a “one dimensional” representation that limits my understanding of historical individuals by marginalizing and objectifying their historical presence. I needed to find information that documented relationships of the free and enslaved to kin and communities that helped to describe their relationships and shared humanity. I was encouraged in my archival research to find fuller descriptions of enslaved individuals by Edward Linenthal (1995), who describes the determination of the museum planners for the U.S. Memorial Holocaust Museum to personalize the exhibits and artifacts recalling mass murder,

[T]here was concern that the millions of individual deaths that made up the Holocaust would be lost in a story of mass death and overwhelmed by a fascination with the technique of destruction. The design team was determined to personalize the Holocaust, since it wanted visitors to eschew forever the role of bystander, and this, it was felt, could be accomplished effectively through a painful link with the faces of Holocaust victims. (p. 171)

The idea of personalizing the larger history of oppression was useful to my study to give historical presence to the long-silenced enslaved population. Descriptions of the enslaved community should not be limited to “one dimensional” faceless characters with only a name or a job. The enslaved population should not be recalled only as victims or only as survivors.
In order to develop “multidimensional” descriptions of the historical characters, team members would have to learn the real names, jobs, religions, and genders of enslaved individuals, as well as their kinship ties, family stories and their individual relationships to the plantation community, their heritage communities, and to their work-life communities. Team members would be asked to consider moving from universal notions of slave life towards particular personal stories of enslaved lived experiences. These kinds of socio-historical descriptions would be central to the history report and would be critical in order for the action research team to develop richer descriptions of the plantation life of enslaved residents in the new tour narrative.

Ethically, museum visitors need access to the spirit and character of individuals who lived as slaves at MMP. Museum representations need to recognize historical enslaved individuals as complex multidimensional persons with relationships to parents, children, kin, enslavers, and friends, and with aspirations and interests. When a historical person is more fully represented on a tour at MMP, museum workers and visitors are obligated to listen and respond to the historical individuals and the historical landscape that combine to support that description. The MMP big house, for example, is endowed with human experience from its making, to its utility, to its expressive capacity to represent its makers and users. More than empathy is required to come face to face with historical people. Pinar explains, “Empathy fails to expand the space of the other but merely places itself in its stead” (2000, p. 37). On the tour at MMP, museum workers and visitors need to be moved, as Mark Leone (1992) describes, and must ask themselves what the history of enslavement means to them and how should they respond? What do I do with this knowledge? (see also Di Paolantonio, 2000).
As I pursued the literature on Louisiana slave life, I further clarified the objective of the archival component of my study to expand slave life representations at MMP by acknowledging the human relationships among free and enslaved residents between 1786 and 1830. Who lived at MMP and how can the museum interpret their stories? To assist the action research team to more fully answer these driving questions, I needed to have in-hand the histories of the free and enslaved residents of MMP. I chose to concentrate the history report around the enslaved population’s kinship ties. I did not expand greatly on general socio-historical information in the history report.

The historical web of relationships among free and enslaved individuals and families help to re-create the place called MMP. I did not work from an exclusively black or white framework in researching the history of MMP’s population. I had to know the stories of the free and enslaved residents because each historical baseline I followed led me to black, white, free and enslaved stories closer and closer to the present. Because the records were written by free and mostly white record keepers, I had to acknowledge their positions politically and in relation to MMP (e.g., plantation owners, slaveholders, white clergy, politicians).

I had to get a sense of the black voices in this otherwise exclusively white-charted history. To this aim, I read several ex-slave narratives including Solomon Northup (1970), Harriet Jacobs (Gates, 1987), and Frederick Douglass (Gates, 1987), and a collection of Louisiana WPA ex-slave narratives (Clayton, 1990). These narratives informed me and helped me begin to better imagine the plantation setting from the slaves’ position and to make sense of the often dry and flat records that resist expressions of emotions, desires, and attachments.
In 1999, when I first starting working at MMP, my fellow museum workers explained to me that the museum did not have information about the enslaved MMP residents because the free and enslaved families did not leave any records about slave life. In the absence of historical documentation about MMP’s enslaved community, the museum used generalized information from secondary sources about West African Diaspora, archeological slave life history from the eastern seaboard, and Louisiana antebellum history about sugar and cotton plantation slavery.

It was imperative for me to conduct historical research to identify the enslaved community at MMP. The genealogies, life stories, names, faces, or even the forced labor duties of the enslaved individuals at MMP had never been fully researched before this study. There were no books or articles that discuss the enslaved residents of MMP. There were online family genealogies on the planter family’s kinship relationships and the MMP museum collection included materials from descendents of the original planter family. However, no already published ex-slave family or planter family materials were found that specifically described the enslaved population at MMP.

In the summer of 2004, I had the privilege of participating in an ongoing research project through the Louisiana State University College of Education called the Histories and Cultures of Old South Baton Rouge. My charge was to assemble social history data to describe the evolution of the urban neighborhoods from the 1700s to the present. Not coincidently, about 950 acres of present day south Baton Rouge were included within MMP boundaries from approximately 1786 through 1890.

With this background in Baton Rouge history provided by the Old South Baton Rouge Project, I researched the identities of the people who lived in slavery at MMP through legal and historical records, church records, census databases, and genealogical
resources. I invested 15 months in combing through archives and libraries to identify 221 individuals affiliated with MMP who lived in bondage. My focus was on identifying families, individuals, kinship ties and slave life stories (e.g., work life, family life, and rebellion) to determine some of the social dynamics among the free and enslaved residents at MMP.

I realized early in my study that my goals to engage museum workers in adding slave life representations to the historical plantation’s interpretation had to be limited to a manageable number of historical families and individuals. After several months of archival research, I was able to refine my search to a sub set of approximately 150 enslaved residents for whom I could more likely develop more full “multidimensional” descriptions. I found names and references to enslaved individuals who had some affiliation to the owners of MMP over the course of roughly 80 years (from the year MMP was established in 1786 to the end of the Civil war in 1865). For practical reasons, I further narrowed my investigation to a selection of 17 families and 45 individuals living at MMP within a 44-year time span for the study (1786-1830) focusing on the museum interpretation period at MMP.

Below I describe the primary and secondary sources I used to formulate the history report, and the construction of historical baselines as an intermediate step. I also describe the secondary sources I used to go from one dimensional to multidimensional representations of the enslaved residents of MMP. I provide examples involving the topics of homeplace and rebellion. Information on the other topics of medicine, education, work-life, religion, language, and Black Codes from the secondary sources and, although not discussed here, were also used in the history report to develop multidimensional representations.
Primary Sources

I looked for historical information that helped to describe desires, heritage, resistance, and personal decisions in letters, wills, conveyance records, slave sales and other documents. I began my research by reading the Spanish West Florida Records (SPWF), the official court records of the Royal Spanish government of colonial Louisiana, 1782-1816, at Louisiana State University’s Hill Memorial Library in Baton Rouge. The court records were originally written in Spanish and were translated into English and transcribed by the Works Progress Administration in the 1930s. The transcribed records (over 7,000 pages) include slave sales, emancipation records, succession inventories, wills, conveyance records, criminal cases, and civil cases that include documentation for enslaved individuals who were affiliated with MMP.

Three inventories from May 1800 that I found in the SPWF records were especially useful as they listed MMP slaves in family groups. The inventories were conducted in Baton Rouge and New Orleans to identify all the slaves and plantations held by the estates of John Turnbull and John Joyce after their deaths in 1798. At that time, MMP held approximately 54 enslaved individuals.

I also researched additional primary sources held at Hill Memorial Library, online genealogical resources, at other libraries and at the East Baton Rouge courthouse. The primary sources at the Hill Memorial library in the LSU Special Collections included the Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections that included plantation and family papers, the Newspaper Collection, and the Survey Collection that included maps. Online genealogical resources I used included: Library of Congress’s online American Memory collections that held digitized images of primary sources including letters written by Armand Duplantier; the Afro-Louisiana History and Genealogy 1719-1820 database
made available by Louisiana scholar Gwendolyn Midlo Hall; and Ancestry.com that offered genealogical information from U.S. census records and the U.S. social security indexes. The Afro-Louisiana History and Genealogy data base was especially useful as it contained hundreds of court records from south Louisiana parishes that referenced Hillin, Trénonay, Rochon, and Duplantier families’ slave sales and purchases, wills, and manumission records regarding slaves affiliated with MMP. I also gathered information from official state and federal census records, property conveyance records, and city directories held at Middleton Library at Louisiana State University, the East Baton Rouge Public Library, and the East Baton Rouge Parish Courthouse.

I also conducted research at the Catholic Life Center in Baton Rouge. The Catholic Life Center had marriage, death, and baptismal records for Baton Rouge’s Catholic residents from as early as the 1790s. These were handwritten Spanish documents. The baptismal books and the burial records kept by the 18th and 19th century priests in Baton Rouge included a separate section for slaves and free people of color. I found burial and baptismal records for several MMP enslaved residents including attending godparents.

Two books by Brenda Perkins (2003, 2004) were particularly useful. These books included court documents from New Orleans translated from French to English. These New Orleans documents were very helpful because the SPWF records end in 1816. Perkins’s books provided documents that named and described MMP enslaved laborers in the second half of the museum’s interpretation period, roughly 1814-1830. For example, Perkins (2004) included the court records from New Orleans documenting Armand Duplantier’s bankruptcy case and Constance Duplantier’s suit for legal separation of property from Armand, both of which provided information on the enslaved
MMP community members. These books will also be important in my analysis, as they were considered controversial by some members of the action research team who believed the books described the MMP planter in a negative light.

I took into consideration ethnographer Harry F. Wolcott’s (1999) warning that many graduate students are not familiar with “prior work of regional specialists” (p. 60). I investigated work done by local Louisiana genealogical societies (e.g., Louisiana Ancestors at the Louisiana State Archives, East Baton Rouge Public Library Bluebonnet Branch Genealogy Room) and the informal Duplantier family genealogical network (a family network of those families that have ties to the Armand Duplantier family who originally lived at MMP in the first-half-of-the 19th century) in search for information on family ties to MMP. Unfortunately, these sources did not have information on the enslaved community at MMP.

My information gathering techniques included transcribing records and text from the many primary source documents onto a laptop in the libraries and archives. I photocopied select maps, census records, and documents. Some of the materials I used were in French or Spanish. I had these translated for me by others. I organized the roughly 500 pages of notes in notebooks. The notebooks were divided into the following groups of information: Hillin era (1786), Joyce era (1788-1798), Armand Duplantier era (1781-1802), and Armand and Constance Duplantier era (1802-1841). I stored duplicate copies of my data electronically and maintained a file cabinet with the notes in notebooks organized chronologically by document dates.

Using mostly the SPWF records, augmented with information from the other primary sources, I created a large wall chart listing the names of the MMP slaves I was able to more fully identify, grouped by their respective families. I highlighted the MMP
slaves claimed by Constance Joyce Duplantier in yellow and the slaves claimed by Catherine Turnbull in blue. I created a file card for each enslaved individual who I could confirm had an affiliation to MMP and included details I found about that enslaved individual on his or her card. These cards were filed alphabetically and served as the database for the history report. Each card had the citation for that information, and a kinship list of names for which I also had a file card. This cross filing system, coupled with the wall chart, was beneficial in weaving together the information into stories.

One particular challenge was deciphering the tradition of particular first names that were regularly used by enslaved individuals making it more difficult to confirm that the person I identified as “A” was in fact the same “A” whose name appeared later in records. To that end, I used year of birth notations and geographic references to confirm the identities of particular individuals.

According to Bernard (1994), a problem with archival data is that records can be riddled with errors (p. 339). It was important, although difficult, to find confirming information in additional historical resources. The necessity to find confirming evidence to help identify MMP enslaved residents contributed to the process of sifting through the hundreds of identified enslaved individuals to develop a select group of identified enslaved residents who could be more fully described in the history report.

An Example of the Information from the Primary Source

An example of the type of information I was able to obtain from the primary sources is a story that tied MMP directly to the Middle Passage and the New Orleans slave market. The earliest record I found that described the first enslaved community at MMP was in the first volume of the SPWF (p. 199-204). It was the succession record for
Jane Stanley Hillin, the wife of the James Hillin, the Scottish yeoman farmer who in 1786 established what would later become MMP. The succession record was an inventory containing the names, genders, ages and countries of origin for the six slaves listed.

Chinny or Jenny was 17 years old when she was taken away from her native home in Chamba, (present day Nigeria) as one of 55 captives on a ship bound for the New Orleans slave market. Held below deck of the brigantine for over seven months, Jenny along with 50 of the surviving captives was taken to Martinique before arriving in Louisiana in 1788. Captain Miller, who sailed the brigantine for Captain Mayronneella, sold Jenny to James Hillin the month she was able to leave the slave ship. Hillin bought five other captives from Africa and brought them to MMP to clear the land and start an indigo crop. Jenny spoke either Leko or Daka, dialects from Chamba. Jenny began her life as an “indigo” slave at MMP having to learn how to speak English, Spanish and French. Jenny was forced to tend corn, tobacco, and indigo crops, milk cows, feed hogs, and mend fences and levees before she was sold again to another small struggling plantation in colonial Louisiana.

The story of one of these six slaves was partially revealed in a small notation in the Afro-Louisiana History and Genealogy 1719–1820 database in a record for James Hillin’s purchase of an 18-year old woman, described as ‘brut’, meaning newly arrived or untrained slave, from a ship captain in New Orleans in 1788. The record included the name of the Portuguese sea captain and the name of the ship, La Joven Feliciana. I was able to research the ship captain’s name and the ship’s name (see Leglaunec, 2005). This information led me to LSU Special Collections where I found microfilm of the handwritten ship route and ship manifest listing the slave cargo in New Orleans in 1788 signed by the same ship captain who sold the woman to Hillin. The document was handwritten in Spanish and listed “Cargo of Negroes” with a notation that the slaves were to be sold in the New Orleans slave market (see Appendix A). The remarkable paper trail confirmed that some of the MMP slaves survived the Middle Passage. This revelation allowed for the real possibility of including the Middle Passage and West African Diaspora as part of the new tour narrative with an identifiable person’s story.
Historical Baseline Methodology

As an intermediate step between the amassed information from the primary and secondary sources and the generation of the history report that was distributed to the action research team members, I constructed three historical baselines. The historical baselines were: Magnolia Mound Plantation and Baton Rouge Historical Baseline, Armand and Constance Duplantier Residences, and Enslaved MMP Community. I had many pages of historical information that held interconnected stories about the free and enslaved families at MMP over decades. I needed an organizational tool and I used Irwin-Zarecka’s (1994) suggestion to work from a historical baseline and build the histories on top of the historical baseline. I was flexible and able to change the historical baselines as new information surfaced. I kept a copy of the historical baselines in a notebook that I took with me to the libraries and archives as a reference to consider as new records were found. The baselines helped clarify relationships among individuals and through time.

For the Enslaved MMP Community baseline, I used the card file and wall chart described above that contained the detailed information on each of the 221 enslaved individuals. For the history report, I followed 17 specific families 45 individuals, noting when possible when they arrived or were born at MMP and when they left MMP, died, or disappeared from the record.

Below I include an abbreviated story of one of the 17 enslaved families from the Enslaved MMP Community historical baseline I constructed to give the reader a sense of the complexities and breadth of the records that are available for reconstructing the kinship stories of the MMP enslaved community. This is Quashee’s family’s story I wrote:
Quashee’s Family Story

Baton Rouge was a small Spanish colonial town at the end of the 18th century when 44-year old Quashee and his 34-year old wife Take had their first child, Juba, in 1784. Juba was born a slave. Her parents were captives from West Africa who survived the Middle Passage and were sold into slavery to a businessman, John Joyce. Joyce brought the family to Baton Rouge to cultivate cotton and indigo on his plantation on the east bank of Mississippi River just south of Baton Rouge. Joyce brought as many as 54 enslaved individuals to his River Road property, most of whom were in young families like Quashee’s family. Juba was eight years old when she came to live as a slave at MMP with her parents and her new born sister, Venus.

Quashee and Take tended to Joyce’s fields and to their two daughters sharing, the daily ration of corn meal and pork. They lived in a cabin set in view of the big house. Quashee and Take likely grew fruits and vegetables and raised chickens in a plot outside their cabin in the slave quarter. They were allowed to sell their goods in the Baton Rouge market on Sundays and could keep the cash to buy goods and food. Quashee rarely saw his master Joyce, who lived in Mobile, Alabama. After Quashee’s family had been living at MMP for six years, Joyce suddenly died at sea. Planters and businessmen hovered over Quashee’s community inventoried all the buildings, livestock, and slaves at MMP. Quashee, his wife, and two children were counted, examined, and listed in court records in 1800. Quashee was aging and could no longer do much work in the fields. Take remained alongside her daughters growing, picking, and ginning cotton.

New French speaking owners appeared at MMP in 1802 and moved into the big house facing the river. They were Armand and Constance Duplantier with young and teenaged children. Juba was a grown woman and Venus was eight years old by then, and the sisters were told to work in the big house to serve the new planter family. Quashee, Take, and others continued working in the fields. Now, they saw a master regularly and the slaveholder ordered the workers to gin cotton that was to be shipped to New Orleans.

The Duplantiers were planning to move to France and sold many of Quashee’s friends and neighbors to planters in Baton Rouge, New Orleans and other places in Louisiana. Quashee’s family was severed by the Duplantiers in 1804. The Duplantiers sold Quashee and Take (and possibly Venus) to a French physician, who lived across the river. Juba was separated from her family and from the community she had grown up with at MMP. Juba was sold, as a house servant, to a German man who owned Hope Plantation, which was five miles from MMP. It is possible that Juba was able to see her sister in spite of the destruction of the MMP enslaved community. Mdme. Duplantier asked the courts to keep 12-year old Venus in her MMP household. If Venus remained at MMP, it was possible for Venus and Juba to visit each other by walking on Highland Road that connected the two plantations. Venus could only leave MMP with permission from the Duplantiers, who could write a pass that would enable Venus to take the short journey to see Juba. Juba remained at Hope Plantation.
Secondary Sources

The condition of a slave being merely a passive one, his subordination to his master and to all who represent him, is not susceptible to any modification or restriction,…he owes to his master and to all his family, a respect without bounds, and an absolute obedience. (From the American Black Codes 1808 in Judith Kelleher Schafer, 1994, p. 8)

The quote above helps to describe how enslaved individuals were denied the liberty to live on their own terms and were subject to subordination to their owners.

Secondary sources helped me begin to better imagine the multiple ways slavery impacted the lives of the MMP enslaved community members. I conducted a brief literature review of south Louisiana slave life, slavery on sugar and cotton plantations, and Baton Rouge history that provided a rich source of socio-historical information to give depth and context to the information obtained from the primary sources. The primary sources were focused on relatively simple descriptions of individuals. For example, many of the records from the primary sources were limited to enslaved individuals’ first names. Slave records were often organized by the slaveholder’s names and then slaves were sometimes listed by their first name and occasionally their approximate ages and skills were recorded. I used the socio-historical descriptions in the secondary sources to contextualize and to analyze the information I was finding in the archives, libraries and databases to draw important connections and to help figure out the stories of individuals.

I wanted to write about the lives of enslaved MMP individuals and their families and found this body of literature was useful to understanding family life, household life, work life, religion, 19th century West African traditions and heritage, health care, political constraints, and social boundaries that impacted the lives of MMP free and enslaved residents.
I read a selection of books and publications after discussing ideas with LSU professors and researching the literature indexes (e.g., Taylor, 1963; Blassingame, 1972; Genovese, 1972; Stoddard, 1973; Richter, 1974; Gutman, 1976; Moody, 1976; Myers, 1976; Crété, 1981; Bannon, Yancy Carr, and Edwards, 1984; Fox-Genovese, 1988; Jennings, 1989; Hall, 1992; Malone, 1992; McDonald, 1993; Carleton, 1996; Gaspar and Hine (eds.), 1996; Sternberg, 1996; Bankole, 1998; Johnson, 1999; Wilkie, 2000; Fett, 2002; Camp, 2004). I took notes from these publications and organized them according to the topics of: work life, homeplace, rebellion, religion, language, education, medicine, and Black Codes. These topics evolved during my research into “frameworks” to develop multidimensional slave life descriptions. This expansion of the representations of the enslaved individuals at MMP was critical to the history report and for providing a basis for modifying the regular tour to include more information on the enslaved population. The socio-historical literature helped me to identify and articulate documented representations of slave life.

Multidimensional Representations: Examples of Homeplace and Rebellion

The following examples use homeplace and rebellion to illustrate how information from the socio-historical literature review (i.e., secondary sources) helped me to develop multidimensional representations from the plethora of one dimensional information provided by the primary sources. Other examples of homelife and rebellion, as well as many examples of the other framework topics of work life, religion, language, education, medicine, and Black Codes, are described and documented in the history report (Appendix A).
Homeplace as an Example for Multidimensional Representations


According to Ann Patton Malone (1992), Louisiana enslaved households were plastic, forced to bend and reshape to fit the changing circumstances of the plantation community. Authors Stephanie Camp (2004), Elizabeth Fox Genovese (1988), and Herbert G. Gutman (1976) drive home the point that crisis and major changes in the slaveholding planter’s lives directly impacted the lives of the slaves they held. This became evident for the MMP enslaved community, especially at times of slaveholders’ deaths and marriages and the planter’s bankruptcy.

Homeplaces on slave-era plantations were established safe places where residents could affirm one another and could reciprocate loving and caring relationships (see bell hooks, 1981). Villanes and Moreno (2001) found that within 21st century homeplaces mothering is a willful act for practicing ways of community, family and nation. Slave quarters were homeplaces where parents taught younger generations how to be mothers, fathers and community members, a place constructed by the flow of relationships among household members. According to Herbert G. Gutman (1976), the study of African American plantation history needs to account for the network of connections that bound the enslaved individuals to the larger community (p. 335).

Homeplaces are created by intricate webs of familial and communal relationships on plantations (Rose, 2004a). In Louisiana, slave communities were tightly knit, each a collection of families built around married couples and parents or a parent and their children and grandchildren. Single individuals were well integrated into the larger community whether they were young, old, unattached or widowed (Malone, 1994, p. 5).
The MMP enslaved community primarily included families with married parents and their children. For example, one early MMP enslaved family had three generations in one household: African born Charlotte who had two daughters, Judith and Lindor, each of whom had an infant daughter, (Clarinda and Aimee).

The enslaved population on Louisiana plantations lived in family and communal households that likely provided them with respite, comfort, love, support and encouragement in the face of their bondage. According to John W. Blassingame (1972), enslaved parents were responsible for rearing and training their children which enabled parents to “cushion the shock of bondage …and to help them to understand their situation, teach them values different from those their masters tried to instill in them, and give them a referent for self-esteem other than the master” (p. 151). Malone (1992) found the Louisiana slaves’ domestic organizations could embrace and buffer them from the pains of slavery (p. 271). Likely, the MMP enslaved community shared intimate working and living conditions.

This dynamic web of relationships supporting the enslaved MMP population to survive in bondage, enabling individuals to shape their individuality and dignity, was an important component to document in order to more fully interpret the MMP enslaved population. While the big house was the physical homeplace for the slaveholding Duplantier family and the site for the museum’s interpretation, the invisible enslaved community’s web of familial and social relationships needed to be made visible in order to develop fuller representations of the enslaved population. The word “slave” and historical names like Juba and Venus alone cannot describe them as persons. Representing plantation slave life at MMP without representing enslaved families or community relationships (e.g., as only ordered as master-slave), denied the complexities
and the reality of interdependence of parenthood, brotherhood, sisterhood, and neighborhood among individuals in the enslaved community.

One example of homeplace that was evident in the secondary sources was intergenerational learning. Gutman (1976) explains that younger generations of slaves learned from senior generations how to respond to the conditions compelling slaves to fashion new life styles in the face of oppression (p. 33 and p. 165). Bankole (1998) found specifically that many enslaved families in south Louisiana listened to the stories, advice, and medicinal remedies told by their parents and grandparents (p. 144). Including interpretations of responsibility and care that derive from histories of relationships magnifies humanity, adding more dimensions to historical characters.

Another example of homeplace is provided by the marriage relationships that I was able to document from the primary and secondary sources. Much of this information was evident in the court and church records describing families and households by either the husband or father’s name or by the single mother’s name. A solidified sense of kinship and household identifications among MMP enslaved residents was evident in the court and church records. Malone (1994) finds that the duration of slave marriages in Louisiana were about the same as those in the white population (p. 226). Gutman (1976) finds that slave marriages in Louisiana were long lasting and extended beyond the Civil War period (p. 17).

I found information that documented several key events that greatly affected the family relationships among the enslaved population at MMP. One event was in 1798, seven years after Joyce and his partner Turnbull peopled MMP with the enslaved community. Half of the community was torn apart, sold and transferred to other plantations thereby severing enslaved families and putting their homeplaces in peril.
After Armand married Constance in 1802, more than half of the remaining original 1798 MMP enslaved community was again torn apart and sold away to plantations in Louisiana. The enslaved community’s adaptability to circumstances not of their own making was necessary to contend with the Duplantier family’s changes and crises.

Another event occurred around 1809-1814 that showed how planter actions could also occur that acted to maintain the family relationships among the enslaved population at MMP. When Armand Duplantier was living apart from his wife Constance, Armand purchased slaves for his New Orleans plantation and home. When Armand was then facing bankruptcy, his son Fergus bought most of the remaining MMP enslaved community, likely to save the slave families from separations and to retain the favored planter family-held slaves, such as Pelagie, Pompee, Onezime, and Josephine, from being sold to creditors. Bankrupt Armand returned to live with Constance at MMP by 1816, likely with several dozen unsold slaves from his New Orleans holdings.

My research showed that the MMP enslaved community was better able to stabilize relationships after 1816, when the Duplantiers permanently settled at the plantation and took less business risks. Much was at stake and could be lost after the slave community had time and resources invested in their own gardens, crops, households, and communal and kinship relationships. According to Stephanie Camp (2004) and Malone (1992), slave resistance was prevalent but many members of enslaved communities recognized their actions could not threaten the community.

Slave Resistance and Rebellion for Multidimensional Representations

Stories about resistance and rebellion by the enslaved residents at MMP provided another source of information for developing multidimensional representations in the
history report. Slave quarter dwellings as homeplaces were sanctuaries for renewal and private places to formulate ways of rebellion to oppressive forces, as has been well documented by Stephanie Camp (2004). Without stories of resistance or rebellion, the enslaved population at MMP would be simply represented as compliant to the plantation system.

Rebellion was sometimes public and sometimes privately enacted (Camp, 2004). For example, Hall (1992) documented that the assassination of Armand’s uncle in Pointe Coupee, by his slave Latulipe, was in response to Latulipe’s enslavement. Latulipe was retaliating against the uncle’s penal methods. Latulipe hung himself after his escape, upholding an Ibo belief in a better afterlife. I also found evidence that later some of Latulipe’s fellow enslaved community members came to live at MMP. Another example of rebellion was American Will’s story, an enslaved carpenter at MMP, who ran away from MMP, likely to his family that was sent to a plantation north of Baton Rouge.

---

American Will may have felt desperation for the welfare of his young family when the slave community he lived in for eight years was torn apart by the legal division of property decided by his master’s attorney. American Will watched as his wife Minta and five children were separated from him and forced to leave MMP to live and labor at a cotton plantation fifty miles north of Baton Rouge. He ran away. But did American Will run away or run to his family? American Will was a skilled carpenter who helped others run away from their sites of bondage. American Will proved that he could negotiate the nuances of his enslavement since his childhood in Jamaica, through the years he spent in the American colonies, and after he was traded and held in Baton Rouge at MMP. American Will had much at stake and traveled north to St. Johns Plains, an area where he was closer to his wife and children, living like a fugitive for four years. Notices were out to alert free men to capture American Will. He was captured and offered for sale by his owners, Armand and Constance Duplantier, who no longer wanted the liability of a runaway slave at their cotton plantation. The Duplantiers sold American Will to his captor, a planter in Galvezton several miles south of Baton Rouge, and even farther from his family.
Other examples of rebellion within the MMP enslaved community I found included enslaved parents naming their children with traditional African names and using traditional West African cures in times of sickness.

Manumission was another form of rebellion to slavery. Freedom histories were public forms of resistance to slavery. After 1795, the Spanish Black Code allowed enslaved individuals to purchase their own freedom and included mechanisms for slaves to earn hard cash. Slaves were allowed by law to grow and sell crops at the Baton Rouge market on Sundays and sell to riverboat traffic (Stoddard, 1973; McDonald, 1993; Schafer, 1994). They could hire out their own labor, with permission from their slaveholder, to accumulate money to buy food, goods, and their freedom. For example, I found information that documented how in 1810 a “mulatto” woman named Frosine paid Armand 200 pesos towards her purchase price (800 pesos) in order for her to be sold to Hypolite Tivollier, with the condition that she could earn more money to purchase her own freedom. All parties agreed that she would work for Tivollier to earn the remaining 600 pesos that would be given to Armand Duplantier to pay the balance of her purchase price (SPWF v. 18. p. 188).

Data Collection Summary

The archival research I conducted resulted in a dense history report (Appendix A) that is the most detailed survey of the enslaved MMP population presently available. My review of the Louisiana slave life literature provided a socio-historical context for analyzing the primary source data, and for understanding the complex relationships among the free and enslaved residents at MMP. I used primary and secondary sources to construct three historical baselines to organize the tremendous amounts of interconnected
histories among the free and enslaved populations at MMP. Secondary sources provided contextual information I needed to develop multidimensional representations regarding work life, homeplace, rebellion, religion, language, education, medicine, and Black Codes that I overlaid onto the historical baselines. I presented a few examples within the topics of homeplace and rebellion to illustrate the types of information that I accumulated using the secondary sources. The history report was distributed to the action research team, discussed during the second and third team meetings, and provided the basis for the new tour narrative.

The action research component generated a rich collection of ethnographic data describing team member’s responses to expanding the regular tour to include more multidimensional representations of slave life. The ethnographic data was in the form of about 500 pages of transcribed audio recordings and my field notes. These were organized into notebooks by phases: tour observations, post tour conversations, team meetings, informal interviews, scholars’ comments, and pilot tours. These were then filed chronologically and subdivided into sections by the code name of each participating team member. The next chapter describes how I analyzed this collection of ethnographic data using the constant comparative method.
Chapter Five: Data Analysis

I analyzed the roughly 500 pages of transcripts obtained from the action research component using the constant comparative method (Maykut and Moorehouse, 1994; Ryan and Bernard, 2003), supported by a theoretical basis grounded in educational psychoanalytic theory reviewed in Chapter Three. My qualitative study called for an inductive analysis. Once I established a baseline from my initial tour observations and docent training, I then analyzed the transcripts and field notes of team members’ responses to the six data-generating activities: tour observations, post tour conversations, team meetings, informal interviews, outside scholar’s reviews, and pilot tours. This ethnographic database was accumulated over seven months. The variety of data I collected in individual and group formats provided a range of perspectives.

The constant comparative method is a systematic analytic method that allows the researcher to compare each coded response, or unit of meaning, with all other units of meaning in the study. It is a rigorous way of grouping ethnographic data and finding patterns and relationships. The constant comparative method involves the coding of the data, examining the coded data looking for clusters of responses, and determining relationships among the clusters and raw coded data by using clearly stated propositional statements. The propositional statements are best developed within a sound theoretical framework, which in my case, was educational psychoanalytic theory, especially the theories related to mourning and melancholia.
Data Coding

After I transcribed the set of tapes for one activity, I read the transcripts looking for significant word patterns and themes of meaning in phrases and sentences. I analyzed the data scrutinizing the references, expressions, topics, and words the team members used to engage in the process of expanding the regular tour with slave life histories. I looked for patterns, regularities and disconnections in the transcripts. I coded the word patterns and themes by writing a descriptive key word or phrase in blue marker in the margins of the transcripts and I highlighted the identified words and themes in the text in yellow marker. As I read new transcripts, I found I needed to add more key words to code the emerging data. The coding process was an “active coding” process (Atkinson, Coffey, Delamons, Lofland and Loftland, 2001, p. 165). Rather than forcing the data into a fixed set of categories, I allowed new codes to emerge as I read the data.

The key words I used for codes were largely terms from the educational psychoanalytic literature, museum literature, and slavery history literature; terms used by the team members in the transcripts; and from my previous experience. This method of creating code words for data analysis is recommended by Ryan and Bernard (2003, p. 275). I coded data to reflect patterns and themes across team members and across the six data generating activities.

I developed an index of codes to identify and locate specific passages in the data. This was done by highlighting the words or sentences and writing in the adjacent margin the assigned code for this segment. I created a page for each code and, on the appropriate page in the index, I recorded the identification for the data source (e.g. EPT1 is Gz’s first post tour conversation) and the page number for that unit of meaning in the transcript.
Table 1. Codes for organizing transcripts in notebooks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TO</th>
<th>Tour Observation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PT</td>
<td>Post Tour Conversation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TM</td>
<td>Team Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Informal Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilot</td>
<td>Pilot Tour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Notes</td>
<td>Field Notes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The initial set of codes included (alphabetically): one and multidimensional representations, 45-minutes tour rule, ambivalence, attachments and loyalties, balance, big house as icon, comfortable entrances, habits and traditions, desire to engage in slave life history, difficult knowledge, fears and risks, fitting in, foreclosure, just the facts, learning crisis, passion for ignorance, planter focus, scholarly evidence, and separate tours. I modified the codes as the study progressed.

Clustering

The coded data were stored on my personal computer and I was able to use the “cut and paste” function in Microsoft Word to assemble the coded data into chunks by clustering the units of meaning for each code word or phrase onto one page to compare and contrast them. Maykut and Moorehouse (1994) refer to culled units of meaning as “provisional categories” (p. 136-137). Before I clustered, I reread all the material in
order to remind myself what I had seen, heard and talked about with the team members over the seven months. I also reviewed and fine-tuned my coding scheme.

I sorted the provisional clusters into the following five themes: *reception, resistance, repetition, reflection,* and *reconsideration.* I reflected on how the five themes might be related. Using Ryan and Bernard’s (2003) recommendation on implementing the constant comparative method, I asked myself when, why and under what conditions did these themes occur in the text (p. 279)?

**Development of Propositional Statements**

Maykut and Moorehouse (1994) recommend the analytic method of writing “propositional statements” (p. 139) to describe the broad themes in the coded data. I wrote propositional statements to tease out my initial theories on how the five themes might be related over time, across team members, to each other, and to existing psychoanalytical theory. According to Maykut and Moorehouse, propositional statements are “inductively derived from a rigorous and systematic analysis of the data” (p. 126) and “convey the meaning contained in the culled data” (p. 139). I carefully reread the marked and coded transcripts and my theory notes (Ryan and Bernard, 2003, described below) to write propositional statements to describe how I understood the recorded phenomena.

I referred to the educational psychoanalytic theory literature and museum literature, reviewed in Chapter Three, to write theory notes to describe ways the data in the five broader themes could be linked to each other and to theory. Using educational psychoanalytic concepts, I analyzed the data with the basic questions. What knowledge or understanding of plantation life is affirmed or made strange for team members? And how do team members as learners engage in slave life history in the process of developing and
adding slave life representations to their historical site? I read the coded transcripts looking for passages that described how team members responded to new slave life information and then how they used it to develop a new tour narrative.

I used “post its” (small note papers with adhesive backing) to write theory notes and pasted them to the appropriate coded data and broader themes in the data notebooks. I noticed that the five themes corresponded to the educational psychoanalytic theories on loss in learning and mourning and melancholia discussed in Chapter Three.

Below I list some of the more provocative propositional statements under each of the five broad themes of reception, resistance, repetition, reflection and reconsideration. Codes are not unique to each of the major themes, and the same code can appear under one or more of the themes. For example, the code of “traditions and habits” appears under the themes of reception and repetition.

Theme 1. Reception

a. Team members expressed enthusiasm about learning new slave life history to make the MMP tour narrative “more real” and to “put flesh on the bone.” (desire)

b. Team members were loyal to the traditional tour narrative and were reluctant to change the planter focused tour when adding new slave life history to the tour narrative. (traditions and habits)

c. Team members engaged in slave life history to support the site’s traditional planter focused tour. (planter focus)

d. Team members expressed interest in slave life stories that supported team member’s attachments and loyalties to French Creole heritage and the Duplantier family. (attachments and loyalties)

e. Team members used generic stories and terms to describe slave life, and were interested in additional information about historical slaves’ names and jobs. (one and multidimensional representations)
Theme 2. Resistance

a. Team members used the 45-minutes time frame for their tours as a guideline until the traditional tour was at risk of changing from an exclusive story about the planter to an integrated story with free and enslaved residents at which time the “45 minutes” became a steadfast rule. (45-minutes rule)

b. Team members solicited other team members to support their distrust and questioning about the history report. (group dynamics)

c. Team members expressed concerns about offending visitors if they changed the planter focus of the regular tour. (risks and fears)

d. Team members expressed enthusiasm for new information on slave life but then had various reasons for rejecting the new information. (ambivalence)

e. Team members were skeptical or rejected new stories about enslaved families or slave life that were generated from newly introduced historical records. (scholarly evidence)

f. Team members offered reasons why they did not have time or access to resources to learn about slave life at MMP. “Az and I don’t have five hours to spend in the library” (TM1, p. 12). (passion for ignorance)

g. Team members openly refused information that challenged their deeply felt personal attachments and loyalties to French Creole heritage and MMP. (attachments and loyalties)

h. Team members said that if more enslaved individuals were included in the tour then the regular tour would become a “slave tour.” (balance)

i. Team members argued that the meanings of the big house were based on the legal ownership of MMP and the interpretation on the regular tour had to focus on the legal owner’s stories. (basic facts)

j. Team members preferred to increase slave life representations at MMP by expanding the “slave tour” and keeping the regular tour exclusively about the planter family. (separate slave tour)

k. Team members who could not reconcile the disruptions the new slave life stories presented to the regular tour or to their personal attachments and loyalties refused to engage in the project of expanding slave life representations at the museum. (foreclosure)
Theme 3. Repetition

a. Team members reread the history report or the new tour narrative or repeated slave life information out loud that they refused to accept as believable or as historical and/or as significant. “Joan died. She died? Joan died” (TM2, p. 23). (learning crisis)

b. Team members were loyal to the traditional tour narrative and were reluctant to change the planter focused tour when adding new slave life history to the tour narrative. (traditions and habits)

c. Team members stated many times that the big house was the home to the Duplantier family and that the tour should be about the big house. (basic facts)

d. Team members, when faced with new information, openly repeated their deeply felt personal attachments and loyalties to French Creole heritage and the Duplantier family. (attachments and loyalties)

Theme 4. Reflection

a. Team members spoke with each other about the study, the contents of the history report, and the new tour narrative outside of the organized study activities to share ideas and gather support for individual views on slave life history content. (group dynamics)

b. Team members discussed their difficult knowledge adding, bit by bit, pieces of new information. (learning crisis).

c. Team members oscillated in their commitment and hesitation to expanding slave life representations. “I don’t know...You know” (TM2, p. 1). (ambivalence)

Theme 5. Reconsideration

a. Team members were more likely to incorporate slave life stories into their tour narratives if they could individually identify a physical space, artifact or non-controversial topic or phrase to introduce the stories. (comfortable entrance)

b. Some team members continued to use generic references and jobs to represent slaves, while other team members began to incorporate more historical and human stories about slave life into their tours (one and multidimensional representations)

c. Team members were more likely or able to use newly introduced slave life information and multidimensional representations of slave life after much time had passed and when they had opportunities to repeat and reflect on the slave life information by reading or in conversations. (working through)

d. Team members found agreeable ways to use new slave life information without making radical changes to the regular tour narrative. (fitting in)
Synthesis: Loss in Learning

After I analyzed the data using the constant comparative method and developed the propositional statements under each of the broad themes, I brought everything together and wrote the following working hypothesis to frame the broader discussion and findings:

Team members who engage in learning and using new information about slave life at their historical site suffer and mourn losses that “difficult knowledge” can incite, disrupting the traditional meanings and team members’ personal attachments to the historical site.

The final stage of my analysis was relating my findings about MMP to educational psychoanalytical theory reviewed in Chapter Three. The museum literature I reviewed helped me to identify and situate MMP among museums engaged in increasing slave life representations. Drawing connections from educational psychoanalytic theories, the museum literature, and the slave life history literature I reviewed informed my analysis and helped shape my understanding on how team members engaged in interpreting slave life history.
Chapter Six: Findings

Complexities of Museum Workers’ Engagement with Difficult Knowledge

In this chapter, I elaborate on the five themes or non-linear stages that emerged in my analysis of the transcripts, which appeared in the following somewhat forward progression: reception, resistance, repetition, reflection, and reconsideration. In the following sections, I first present the results of my initial tour observations to determine a baseline. I then organize my findings from the data analysis illustrating how team members expressed each of these five themes noting the specific code words I associated with each theme in lower case in the section heading. To varying degrees, each theme is divided into subsections roughly corresponding to the different codes that were defined in Chapter Five. I discuss how the five themes reflect issues and dynamics raised in the educational psychoanalytic literature and examine how they can help us to identify the foundations for a productive commemorative museum pedagogy.

Baseline for Interpretation of Plantation Life at MMP

On the tours I observed at the beginning of the study, slave life was often discussed by the three team members from the planter’s view point using first person for planter’s stories and using third person or a passive voice to refer to enslavement and individual slaves. The slave life references I heard in the tour narratives reflected the tour as described in the docent training manual; a tour focused on the planter’s lifestyle supported by enslaved laborers. The tour narratives referred to enslaved laborers’ work duties (e.g., house slaves and field slaves) and mentioned the slave quarter dwellings. For
example, Gz explained that the first MMP owner held slaves to produce indigo, which was detrimental to the slaves’ health,

Hillin realized his indigo slaves were getting sick working with indigo. Your slaves were your major outlay. He realized he had to protect his slaves from [illness]…So Hillin converted to cotton and sugar cane. (EPT1, p. 2)

Gz provided an example of using a passive voice to represent slaves on her tour,

[W]e mentioned that there were slaves on the plantation when we were in the girls’ bedroom, not using the term but we did mention that food was brought into the dining room from the kitchen. (EPT2, p. 3)

The team members did not have historical names for the enslaved MMP residents and referred to slaves with generic references. For example, Az explained, “I can speak about the sugar cane and the work of the slaves” (BPT2, p. 2).

Slave life was mentioned an average of 9 of the 11 stops on the tour by team members. The most common stops on the tour where slave life was described included the diorama depicting the slave quarter; the boys’ bedroom in reference to enslaved labor used to construct the big house and to raise crops; the master bedroom in reference to the plantation slave labor hierarchy referred to as “the three tiers of slaves”; the girls’ bedroom in reference to health care for the enslaved community; the dining room in reference to food service, slave access to locked storage for spices, silver, and teas, and a “punkah” fan over the dining room table that a “slave child” operated during meals; the plantation office in reference to the succession papers on display that lists the names of six slaves held at MMP; and the kitchen where an enslaved woman cooked food for the planter’s family and a “fire boy” who assisted her in tending the fire, hauling water, and “putting her out when her skirt caught on fire” (Field notes, p. 21).

Slavery was presented as a mechanism supporting the planter’s life style. For example, Gz referred to MMP house slaves who would bring morning “hot toddies” to
Armand Duplantier in the master bedroom, and in the hot summer months “slaves would bring out the furniture onto the gallery for the family to sleep in a cooler breeze” (Field notes, p. 3).

On several occasions, team members explained that the planter provided “slave clothes,” health care, and food rations to “the slaves.” Team members referred to Le Code Noir, or the Black Code, to support their stories of “good masters.” Gz explained,

[...] every year [slave holders] were mandated to give a certain number of shoes and clothing and so forth, that was in the Code Noir, they had to provide your slaves with the stipulated items. [At Christmas] gifts were in addition. They were then given a day off and a party you know food put out in a little room... (EPT1, p. 4)

The above paternalistic interpretation describes a master-slave relationship with an enslaved population that was dependent on the slaveholder’s good will. Az explained on her tours that the Black Code allowed for these few life sustaining rations and privileges for slaves. Az explained to visitors, “The master provided food and housing and allowed slaves to have a garden and chickens. They could sell or consume those. They could earn money this way to buy their freedom” (Field notes, p. 35).

Team members more often named Le Code Noir, or the Black Code, in reference to the laws preventing family separations, which consistently led to a short discussion on the better quality of life slaves in Louisiana enjoyed compared to slaves in other places in the American colonies. This trajectory marginalized the state of captivity of slaves at MMP and what they had to endure, being the Black Codes legalized slavery and the penal systems that maintained slavery.

---

11 The enslaved community at MMP was subject to the laws of the colonial Spanish Black Code that required the Duplantiers to provide the enslaved individuals with two sets of clothes per year and to provide food rations and land to grow and sell their own food stuffs on plantation grounds (see Taylor, 1963; Stoddard, 1973; McDonald, 1993; Schafer, 1994).
No names were mentioned on the tours for enslaved workers in the big house or in the kitchen on the tours. Slaves were referred to by their status as either a “house slave,” artisan, or “field hand.” Slaves were not described as family members or as individuals with lives outside of forced labor.

The findings from the tour observations showed team members did increase the amount of time they spent on, and the number of references they made to, slave life on their tours over the two months that I observed tours. My presence as a researcher interested in slave life likely encouraged the team members to increase slave life representations on the tours (Table 2). Az agreed that my presence on her tours made her more likely to increase the number of slave life representations on her tours (BPT3, p. 4). I noticed a 100 percent increase in the number of times Gz mentioned slave life on her last tour, which was after she had engaged in two post tour conversations and two team meetings.

Table 2. Number of times slave life was mentioned during the eight tours I observed between May and July 2005, as part of establishing a baseline for the study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team member</th>
<th>First tour</th>
<th>Second tour</th>
<th>Third tour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gz</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Az</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kz</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Not Completed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My observations of the regular tours early on in the study helped me to identify a baseline and to evaluate how team members changed their slave life representations during the rest of the study. One key finding from this baseline analysis was that team
members used one dimensional representations of slave life. Team members used a passive voice when they referred to slave life and generic references to slaves using words like “slave,” “cook,” and “house slave.” Team members described slave life from the planter’s view, emphasizing slaves as complacent laborers without lives beyond their forced-labor work duties. The increase in slave life mentions during my tour observations indicated that the team members were receptive to the challenge of expanding slave life representations on their tours.

Theme 1: Reception –We Are Evolving

That is one thing that I really like about Magnolia Mound. You know, about sharing that with people. We are sort of, we are evolving. We are still in the process of finding out information about the plantation so we are not an open and closed book. You know the story is still being written, the research is still being done. So it is a living breathing entity it is not static. Kz (JPT2, p. 6)

The team members expressed interest in learning new historical information about slave life at MMP. The initial theme that emerged in the data analysis was their reception to new slave life history. The following examples from the transcripts outlined below, and noted with the specific code words in the subheading, demonstrate that the team members were receptive to the project of expanding slave life representations at their site.

- New Histories Put “Flesh on the Bone”: desire

Team members expressed their desire for new historical information about slave life at MMP. They felt that visitors were interested in learning about slave life. Gz recalled,

I had a woman [on a tour] from Houston and her two children…She really wanted them to understand what went on but the children really had very little concept they wanted to know, what it all boils down to is what did the slave children do? …they wanted to know first of all could the slave come in the house? Did the family children help their parents? By the same token were the slave children
made to work? ... it brought to my attention the fact that the life of the slave children is not being addressed. (TM1, p.7)

Kz offered a story about a group of children she took on a tour of the slave cabin,

We started talking about the slave cabin and what slave life would have been like. One of the last questions we talked about was... when the kids say “Why didn’t they just run away?” … So we all did a reality check. One of the questions I like to leave them with is, and end on is does slavery still exist? [Yes] and they all go, “What?” So there is something going on in their lives today that is related to slavery they are tying into. (TM1, p. 8)

Kz and Gz both recognized the relevance that historical slave life stories have to the lives of present day visitors. Both team members explained that their commitments to interpreting slave life at MMP were to teach the public about historical oppression.

The conversation veered away from 19th century plantation slavery to a global and historical look at oppression. Az started this discussion by saying, “Even during the time of slavery that we are talking about there were kids working in the mines in England” (TM1, p. 8). She concluded, “Oppression is from everywhere” (TM1, p. 8). Az’s interest in historical relativism emphasized that MMP was not unusual in holding enslaved laborers.

Team members expressed their desire for new historical information about plantation life at MMP that would help make their interpretations “more real.” For example, Az asked, “and if we can have a name of a slave we can link with speaking of the slave code, the Black Code, and it would be more realistic because we use the name of a slave that was actually here” (BPT1 p. 3).

Gz, Az, and Kz expressed their receptiveness for slave life information in the post tour conversations when I asked them what new information they were most interested in getting from the history report. The three team members independently said they were most interested in learning the historical names and jobs of the enslaved individuals from
MMP. The idea that historically accurate slave names would make the tour more real appealed to the team, Gz exclaimed, “Oh yes, they are fascinating, they make the whole family, they put flesh on the bone…And that is what we want here. To make it real” (EPT2, p. 7).

- Cultural Stories: traditions and habits, planter focus

Kz was aware that the current tour included a repertoire of stories about slave life that she had learned from the docent training manual and from observing other MMP museum workers lead tours,

I go through the first two rooms and in the girls room, well in the master bedroom we talked about the slave entrance, and then the tiers of slaves, we talked about the bath tub and filling up the water, them [slaves] sleeping on the floor in the girls bedroom. In the dinning room the job of the slave boy pulling the punkah. Talking about the spices in the relationship between the mistress and the cook. And the mistress and the health of the slaves. We talked about also in the salon, I talked about demonstrating what would have gone on when the men were sitting around the table talking about farming and planting but also slave rebellions and things that were going on in slavery issues. (JPT1, p. 3)

These generic references to slave life were familiar stories that provided team members with “comfortable entrances” for slave life representations.

In a post tour conversation, Gz described slave life from the planter’s perspective using an often shared story about the planter family’s bath time,

I make a point of [discussing slave life] in the master bedroom because we are talking about house servants and I use the amount of effort involved in something so simple as a bath to bring in the fact that calls were made on servants other than house servants for such as that house servants would not chop wood for the fire or hauling water from the well or the river and that would have been necessary. So they would have had to call in outside workers to do that. Then you would have kitchen workers involved in the heating up the water and you would have house servants involved in the setting up and cleaning up afterward. (EPT1, p. 2)

The bath story is a good example of data I coded as “traditions and habits.” In my analysis, I found that traditions and habits were comfortable entrances for team members
who used the stories to support the planter focused tour. Stories, like the family bath
story, were based on conjecture. Qualitative researchers Ryan and Bernard (2003) explain
how to analyze narratives by thinking about how respondents use “culturally available
resources in order to construct their stories” that enabled the respondents to participate in
the immediate culture (p. 345). Team members were using “cultural stories,” like the
family bath story, as part of the culture of interpreting MMP.

The “traditions and habits” were repeated cultural stories that supported the
planter focus and marginalized slave life representations. I identified omissions and cases
of marginalization of slave life due to team members’ heavy use of the cultural stories.
The tradition of using particular cultural stories to refer to slave life on the regular tour
generated a level of comfort or complacency, with slave life as a “normal” part of life in
the big house.

Dz had not attended the docent training program when this study was
implemented and possibly had not established the degree of loyalty to the present regular
tour narrative as the other team members. However, Dz was familiar with historical
plantation museums and recognized the generic character of the references to slave life
and cultural stories used to describe south Louisiana slave life. Dz explained that the new
information in the history report and the new tour narrative provided him with
possibilities for MMP’s interpretation that may not be available at other historical
plantation museums. Dz explained:

Yeah, and I would have to say you hear that at every plantation. If you get
anything you get there is a slave boy on the punkah fan, and there is chamber pot
duty, and the sleeping on the floor. And you do get that just about every place.
That is why all the, practically everything in here [new tour narrative] is new to
me. That is why I am so glad to see it. (IC, p. 11)
• What MMP Means to Me: attachments and loyalties

Team members’ personal attachments to MMP history surfaced during the post tour conversations and were more clearly expressed in the team meetings. By personal attachments, I mean the social, emotional, and historical connections each team member identified with, or found personally meaningful in, the stories told on the regular tour at MMP.

Gz let the team know her personal attachments to MMP over the course of the seven month study. Gz shared personal family history that tied her to MMP. At the first team meeting Gz, a native born Louisianian, used French to answer a few simple questions, “Merci beaucoup” (TM1, p. 1) and offered to translate French documents for the project. During the first team meeting, Gz also let the team know that she was a descendent of the Louisiana slaveholding planter class with kinship ties to MMP planter families. I had been sharing the story of the 18-year old woman James Hillin purchased in the New Orleans slave market in 1788 and mentioned that I traced this particular woman’s journey from MMP to the property of Winniford Russ, another Baton Rouge planter. Gz exclaimed, “Aunt Winnie! ...I have her jewelry somewhere…I can tell you about her children” (TM1, p. 15).

Gz also made references to her family’s history in the context of discussions about the history report, elaborating on her personal attachments to MMP. There were several stories about enslaved women and a free woman of color named Pelagie affiliated with MMP. Gz was interested in the French name, “Among French Canadians it is a very common name…It was my grandmother’s name which caught my eye immediately” (TM2E, p. 2). Gz highlighted the stories about Harry and Dick, twin brothers who were enslaved at MMP around 1800-1804 (see Appendix A). Gz thought their story would
enrich the regular tour because she had personal information about what young slave
boys did on Louisiana plantations. Gz told me her interest in Harry and Dick came from
her direct relationship to Louisiana plantation heritage,

I guess it was partly because some of the slave plantation’s populations and their
descendants had stayed on my mother’s family plantation. And it was traditional
that the man in the family had two little black boys who were his errand runners,
his go-fers. (TM2E, p. 4)

Gz’s personal attachments to MMP history shaped her questions about slave life and her
tours. Gz’s interest in new slave life information was aimed at enriching the planter’s
story that she self-identified with, “I would love to know the names, who the house
servants were, because those were the ones the family would have been most concerned
with” (EPT3, p. 3).

Az, who was also fluent in French, offered to translate historical documents,
which was a generous offer and a subtle suggestion of Az’s personal attachments. Earlier
in a post tour conversation, when I asked what research information she would like, Az
more clearly demonstrated her attachments to Armand Duplantier’s family history,

I am interested in finding, according to Armand’s life, and Armand’s financial
problems …and the real story of this house …. the people down the line through
the years…I think we would have a better view of the house. We also need to put
the business matter of Armand. I think it is too easy to say, OK, he went bankrupt
in 1814. OK. Right. What is happening here at this time? And we know the time
period is very complicated. For many reasons. They had bad crops one year,
hurricanes, disease, economy. For example, the time of the Duplantiers, at one
point, I read that Spain did not send currency, money, there was a lack of money,
and also there was a lack of economic activity. So this is what I am interested
in…I guess it is a lot of work. (BPT1, p. 5)

On the tours I observed, Az told visitors that she was originally from a town close
to where Armand Duplantier was born in France. Az was attached to Armand Duplantier,
the historical character who MMP has traditionally featured as the main personality
associated with the big house. He was a planter, slave holder, soldier, businessman,
husband, widower, father, and brother. Az focused on the planter’s story in the big house. She did not want to use historical accounts that portrayed Armand as immoral or unsuccessful (See TM1, TM2, TM3, IB).

Kz’s and Dz’s personal attachments to MMP were not apparent. Kz and Dz were the newest museum workers on the action research team. Kz and Dz did not reveal whether they felt ties to Louisiana, if they could speak French, or if they had French or French Creole ancestry. Dz grew up in Louisiana, but neither Kz or Dz were natives to Louisiana. Both team members expressed that their interest in slave life at MMP was grounded in their commitments to increasing museum access to a larger and more diverse audience. Kz was, however, loyal to the traditional planter focused tour, attachments she likely developed from her recent docent training and from leading tours.

- Choosing Slave Life Stories: one dimensional and multidimensional representations

Dz started the informal interview by saying, “I was a very delighted to learn the names of a lot of the slaves that we did not have before. So I really think that that adds a third dimension to the whole issue…That slaves’ names is really the place to start when we start trying to see the story of what their life might have been like” (IC, p. 1). Dz helped me phrase the fuller descriptions I had been calling ethical representations of enslaved individuals. His description of “starting” with slaves’ names was a pattern I had observed among the team members, who demonstrated enslaved individual’s names and jobs were comfortable entrances, a place to start, but to use Dz’s phrase, they were not “three dimensional.” Using Dz’s terminology, names and jobs of enslaved individuals were “two dimensional” representations, and for this study I refer to them as one dimensional representations. I have since co-opted his phrases to describe the fuller more
subjectifying descriptions that I argue were needed in the tour narrative. The fuller
descriptions would include kinship ties and stories about relationships.

While Dz suggested to pare down the number of slaves referred to in the new tour
narrative, he insisted that we find ways to ensure that multidimensional representations of
the fewer enslaved individuals would be included,

So if there is a way to keep that third dimension I don’t know if that is just scaling
back the net number of names used in one presentation you know stick with
finding the slave that you have the most information on, forgive me but, or the
best or most interesting story sticking with something like that rather than
covering them all. (IC, p. 8)

Docents and tour guides were free to use their own preferences to interpret the big
house, as long as they used the traditional tour route and the docent training manual
stories about the Duplantier family and plantation life. Dz explained, “Of course
everybody can read the tour and everybody can take what they want from it” (IC, p. 5).

As I discuss later in more detail, I found over the course of the study that team members
preferred to use one dimensional representations that allowed team members to hold onto
their personal attachments in the regular tour.

Az explained that her interpretation in the big house would more accurately
describe how the prices of slaves reflected the skills slaves offered slaveholders if she
could use names and refer to the skills of historical individuals,

Probably what would be good to have to integrate some names with actual real
functions. Probably also because I think the price of the slave is important to
explain that slaves are skilled and if we can have a name with a function and if the
slave was sold it was sold this price and then we can relate to say, OK that was
how do determine the price of the slaves. (BPT1, p. 3)

The above passage helps to illustrate how Az viewed slave life from the planter’s
perspective. The historical names of MMP slaves and their forced labor jobs would
enable Az to more accurately describe the planter’s decisions to purchase slave laborers
and yet, would not expand descriptions of enslaved individuals as persons with relationships outside of their enslavement.

However, Az also demonstrated in her second post tour conversation that enslaved laborers were knowledgeable individuals. Az explained,

What I try to do now is make clear that the first slaves they were the people who knew things. While the master was not the farmer. And I try very much to emphasize that to the people so that people understand that. It is not every slave was a field worker, they were skilled. (BPT2, p. 3)

Az’s interpretation added another descriptive dimension to represent enslaved farmers who had knowledge that was of value to the slaveholder.

Az demonstrated that she was aware of how to subjectify enslaved individuals she described on her tours. I also observed a visitor in Az’s tour group who announced “Slaves knew things!” The comment prompted a discussion led by Az that many slaves were skilled artisans, knew about herbal medicines, and many slaves in Louisiana were trained farmers from Africa.

Gz seemed committed to preserving the planter focus tour and intent on using the slaves’ stories to support the interpretation of the planter’s life style. In the following example, Gz used the information about the enslaved seamstress to construct a one dimensional representation of Lucy,

Simply that she [Lucy the enslaved seamstress] needs to be worked into the tour. She would make it much more interesting because we do talk about the clothing that would have been worn at the time…And I just thought it was interesting a person you can speak of busy making clothing and making drapery for the bed. (TME, p. 3)

Gz demonstrated her comfort with one dimensional representations of enslaved historical characters. Gz explained how she would like to speak about Lucy in the regular tour, “Lucy was the seamstress and Lucy was making some very fine underwear for the
girls” (TME, p. 14). Gz said she was pleased to have historical names of the enslaved women house servants (TM2E, p. 12-15).

Kz concurred with the other team members that the information she most wanted from the history report were the names and jobs of the enslaved residents. Kz explained in her second post tour conversation:

Of course, it would be nice to have names. When I talk about the three tiers of slaves, I would love the three types of slaves to have a name of one of each you know. So and so worked on the floor, and such and such nailed the ceiling together, the cook was this person and Michael worked in the field and delivered her baby in the field nursed and worked until the day she delivered was back two days later. You know a real situation. (JPT2, p. 5)

Kz’s reference to “the three tiers of slaves” was another cultural story I coded in the data as “traditions and habits.” Approaching representations of slave life on the tour by describing the labor hierarchy of enslavement (commonly defined by cooks and artisans at the top, followed by house slaves, and with field laborers on the bottom) supports the planter’s view of enslavement. However, in addition to Kz’s expressed interest in learning new slave life information, notice in the passage above that Kz added an interesting human element to the otherwise one dimensional description of slaves. Kz mentioned an enslaved mother who delivered her baby in the field and nursed the baby while she worked. While Kz had not changed the planter focus of her tours at this stage in the study, Kz was interested in the personal stories of the enslaved residents.

Kz’s comments in the post tour conversations suggested she was curious about the enslaved community’s view of plantation life. Kz said:

The kitchen is the greatest chance or opportunity I should say to talk about the life of a slave. You did have the job there but you also had to fit the job into daily comings and goings of everyone on the plantation. Gives you a whole big picture. And it adds to the lifestyles, the food they [slaves] would have eaten, the routines, clothing, holidays and celebrations, things like that. (JPT2, p. 6)
Kz demonstrated that while she would be receptive to multidimensional representations, the more personal slave life stories would not be swiftly accepted into the regular tour. It is important to note that, within the theme of reception, Kz recognized that historical site interpretation evolves as new information surfaces and social interests shift, like a “living breathing entity, it is not static” (JPT2, p. 6).

Team members’ interest in multidimensional representations showed their desire for new information about slave life, and yet their desire for names and jobs also served to place a limit to receiving more personal stories about the enslaved individuals. Team member’s recognized that one dimensional representations of enslaved individuals would both enrich the tour and preserve the planter focus for the tour.

Team members did not ask for stories about fatherhood, childhood or slave resistance, like running away or rebellions. Kz asked for stories about motherhood. No one asked about slave households (as homeplaces) or manumissions. The origins of MMP planter family residents were traced to Europe, primarily France, and no stories were told about MMP enslaved residents’ African, Caribbean, or American origins. Team members were interested in slaves’ names and jobs to support the traditional tour narrative about the slaveholding family.

Theme 2: Resistance – It Just Can’t Be

Team members also revealed resistances to further engaging in slave life stories. Why did team members resist learning new slave life histories? The team’s focus on using the history report to learn new slave life histories for the regular tour raised personal questions. Deborah Britzman and Alice Pitt (1997) offer a list of possible personal questions educators raise in the context of action research:
What prior knowledge or understanding is affirmed or made strange in the process of implicating oneself in one’s learning? What is attended to and what is ignored? What happens when one understanding shuts out consideration of the meaning of another? How do the meanings one already holds map onto or ignore larger questions of individual and sociocultural histories? (p. 69)

I listened to the passionate resistances team members expressed in team meetings and in informal interviews that indicated how personal the meanings of slave life at MMP were for team members. Team members’ identifications and dissociations to the meanings of MMP were not predictable. According to Britzman and Pitt, “Identification and disassociation with representations are far more complicated because as a dynamic, identifications are partial, ambivalent and shifting: they pass through specific memories and unconscious desires and therefore are uniquely singular” (p. 70).

The following examples from the data analysis illustrate the variety of resistances team members expressed to expanding slave life representations for the regular tour. The groups of data are not exclusive and passages from the transcripts naturally overlap. Resistance was the largest theme in the coded data and included the most complex text in the transcripts. Team members’ passions varied throughout the study, demonstrating that individual team members were both moving towards accepting new information and reverting back to resisting information. The oscillating nature of their resistances amplifies the ambivalent nature of team members’ engagement that is indicative of loss in learning.

- Not Enough Time: 45-minutes rule

Team members explained that their tours were hampered by an administrative guideline that regular tours should last not more than 45 minutes, “And so while the tour is nominally 45 minutes, it is really supposed to be, it is actually an hour, it is longer than
it can comfortably be” (TME2, p. 15). Seven of the eight tours I observed exceeded the authorized time of 45 minutes. Each team member confessed in the post tour conversations that it was very difficult to give a tour in 45 minutes and that they usually took 50 to 75 minutes for their tours. Team members explained there was so much information they could share with visitors that they had difficulty limiting what they would say to visitors. When I asked Gz what new ideas she had to expand slave life, Gz responded,

I wish I had the time to include more about the personal, the facts, the dates juggling these, the children were usually assigned a child as a playmate who may later become a personal maid for the girls… but there again there it is the constraint of time. (EPT1, p. 2)

One of the most direct forms of resistance to integrating the regular tour was the team’s commitment to the 45-minute limit. For example, Az expressed concern that adding new slave life stories to the regular tour would make the tour too long, “So basically what I am saying is you are putting in a lot of work, …and you are just going to put a little [slave life] information into the 45-minute tour that is already too long” (TM2, p. 26). In the third team meeting, Kz asked that we disregard her suggestions from the previous team meeting to include stories of the Middle Passage in the new tour narrative, “We may need to prioritize … I don’t know that we are going to be able to add in any information, we may not, a little bit” (TM3, p. 19). Both Dz and I explained to the team not to think about the 45-minute rule for now. Our project was a creative endeavor and the new tour narrative could exceed 60 minutes if we wanted (TM3, p. 19). Kz, Az, and Gz could not imagine the regular tour on these terms.

Team members unified their expressed concern that adding more slave life stories to the regular tour would exceed the 45-minutes,
Kz: Az and I went back and forth talking several times Julie, talking about …what you gave us and it wasn’t a narrative [history report], and you know we have a 45-minute tour. It can’t get any longer…To add more information to it, it is going to be really hard. We want to do it, we want to add more information about the slaves. So it has to be really succinct, and pared down to its essentials…these interesting longer stories just simply are not going to fit into our time frame of 45-minutes. … (TM2, p. 1)

While I had envisioned that the new tour narrative would not be bound to the 45 minute time constraint, I respected team members’ preference to adhere to the time limit when I assembled, with the team’s suggestions, the new tour narrative. In her informal interview, Az said she could not endorse the new tour narrative for the regular tour. Az told me it took her 65 minutes to read the tour out loud while she walked through the tour route, “It should be 45 minutes” (IB, p. 2). Az may have exaggerated her timing as a form of resistance. When I read through the new tour narrative out loud, pacing it for the tour route it took me 45 minutes.

• I Beg to Differ: group dynamics

I found that the group dynamics, especially in the team meetings, contributed to shaping team members’ responses to expanding slave life representations. At times, team members responded collectively and, at other times, they showed their personal interests, attachments or resistances to new slave life information.

Team members sought opinions and support from each other in reflective processes to make sense of the new slave life histories. For example, Kz and Az had decided they would tell a unified impression of the history report in the second team meeting (TM2, p. 1). Kz said, “Az and I actually talked about it a little bit…Trying to follow how it is going to fit” (TM2, p.1). Their responses to the history report in the second team meeting showed Kz and Az shifted the committed attitude they had
expressed earlier in the study to a new attitude of distrust. I was addressed in this meeting as an outsider, not as a team member. I found Kz’s and Az’s unified expression of distrust was a form of group dynamics resulting in resistance to parts of the history report.

Kz and Az resisted parts of the history report as difficult knowledge. The slave life information seemed to be dissonant to how Kz and Az understood slave life at MMP and they could not immediately recognize or use many of the new histories to interpret MMP. The history report included the same historical baseline the current tour was built upon but used a multidimensional representational lens on slave life.

I had expected Kz and Az to be as excited as I was about the rich information about MMP’s enslaved community in the history report that we could work with to develop a new tour narrative. I was naively unprepared when Kz and Az said it was too much information, it was too hard to read, and that they could not use it in their tours. I re-explained this was a working document for us to use to select slave life stories. In the introduction of the history report I wrote:

The purpose of this brief report is to recall the enslaved community that peopled MMP during the time period the current museum-tour addresses…The report is not a tour narrative. It is a historical report to describe the names and lived experiences of the enslaved population at MMP, circa 1786 -1830. The tour narrative is our final goal. The report is just one step towards that goal. (Appendix A, p. 2-3)

Kz found the report was too difficult in terms of oppressive stories. For example, Kz expressed pain in reading about family separations, and concern in how she would be able to take in so much new information. Kz sounded ambivalent,

I like stories, so some of the information about American Will was interesting to me… There was some interesting information I want to ask you about, about a free child being bought, two freed slaves buying a child that was theirs, I did not
understand how it worked. I don’t know. I like the personal stories in it. (TM2, p. 1)

Shortly after, Kz came forward with a stronger commitment to work through the new stock of MMP slave life histories. Kz’s willingness to reflect on and reconsider new information about slave life put her in a confrontational space within the team meetings. While at times team members were unified in their responses to slave life information or interpretation suggestions, there were also times of disparity. The team members did not simultaneously receive, resist, repeat, reflect or reconsider information. In addition to team members’ struggle to observe the seniority of individuals on the team, team members were also conflicted by their differing individual personal attachments to MMP and Louisiana French plantation heritage.

Team members’ responses were also shaped, in part, by their professional relationships to the museum. For example, in my analysis I found that Az was concerned about losing full control of the regular tour’s content. At the beginning of the study and then again towards the end of the study, Az explained to me in private conversations that MMP already interpreted slave life. Analysis of the transcripts shows that Az did not want me to be under the impression that this study was initiating slave life interpretations at MMP. Az’s remarks suggested that she thought that MMP did not need outside help to address slave life.

Az questioned my role as an outside researcher to suggest changes to the regular tour, “How are you going to be able to change the tour and say that it was an issue we want to talk about, that we have to talk about” (TM2, p. 26). Az explained that the study coincided with her current work to revise the regular tour that she was responsible for, “A
time when I really want to be thinking about our tour. This is a project for MMP. So you are putting a lot of work just to add a few things to the tour” (TM2, p. 28).

When I sensed Az was displeased with the team’s agenda to develop a new tour narrative for the regular tour in the third team meeting I tried to encourage her, “I want you to know that this is just a proposal. It is an offering. It is not something that anybody is obligated to.” Dz added “I think it comes at a really good time” (TM3, p. 11). I recognize that team members should have reciprocal relationships where each member is giving and receiving something he or she values from the study. It appeared that Az was not expressing a sense of reciprocity. Az withdrew from the conversation and no longer wrote notes on the tour framework worksheet. She took out her own notepad and made notes for herself that she did not share with the team.

The changing group dynamics shifted the team members’ roles, including mine, midway into the study. Aspects of critical ethnography (see Madison, 2005) emerged as I became more of a team leader who was bringing disruptive information into the group by way of the history report, which changed individual team members’ attitudes toward the group’s task to revise the regular tour. The collaborative spirit of action research was made vulnerable to resistance when the difficult knowledge slave life presented significantly impacted individual team members’ understandings of slave-era plantation history.

Towards the end of the informal interview, Az explained that she did not see the development of the new tour narrative as a team effort and indicated her desire to have rather played a leadership role in the team. I was disappointed that Az viewed the study this way, given we had spent 6 months engaged in conversations and team meetings to come up with ideas and to select information to develop the new narrative. Az stated:
Because we are all different and we are going to be little more interested in one thing and a little more interested in this... I don’t think it is normal that one person write a tour unless everybody decides that OK this is a goal, everybody is going to write a tour. You need to get everybody’s view so this can be interesting for everybody... You wrote the tour … Your vision. (IB, p. 10)

and

It is basically more of your vision. Even if you took our vision, even if you took our interest, because that is the reason for having a team meeting. But you are the decision maker on this. So it is more your tour. With probably input of everybody, but you are the leader of the team. (IB, p. 12)

Az’s remarks reminded me of the concept of a dystopic curriculum identified by Marla Morris (2001) in the context of teaching traumatic histories of the Holocaust. Morris explains that historians and authors operate out of their own memories and psychological relationships to historical events that influence the particular ways in which writers reconstruct the past. I took this criticism seriously and reflected on how difficult it was for me to balance my vision for integrating the regular tour with some of the team members’ interest to maintain the planter focus for the regular tour.

There are ways I could have involved the team members more intensely in developing the new tour narrative. If the team could have done tours following the second team meeting, in which we discussed the history report, we would have been able to try out some of our ideas and voiced some of the new slave life information on tours. Perhaps Az would have felt more invested in developing the new tour narrative if she had experimented with the history report before the third team meeting, when we outlined the new tour narrative with the new slave life stories.

When Az joined the action research team I recorded in my field notes Az’s warning that the study could not add more work to the museum workers’ already busy schedules. I designed the study to make little demands on the team members’ time.
Perhaps if Az and others were more invested in researching and writing the new tour narrative, then they would have had more personal attachments to slave life histories.

This study was my vision but the new tour narrative was not my own. If the new tour narrative was truly my own, then I likely would have changed the tour route, the time constraints, and used a different historical baseline featuring the Middle Passage, slave trade in the North American continent, and the historical events in the lives of Quashee’s family, Charlotte’s family, and select other MMP enslaved families and individuals.

- Tours Are Not Supposed to Be Painful: risks and fears

The analysis of the transcripts revealed team members felt that the slave life stories raised sensitive subjects that required careful consideration. Team members expressed feelings of risk and fear that slave life stories might raise conflict. For example, Az explained, “I think that … [slave life] it is a tricky subject. I think slavery, you don’t want to offend people, and it is also to explain how it worked back then…” (BPT1, p. 6).

Gz sensed museum workers’ and visitors’ pain in hearing about slave life at MMP when she answered my question, how were slave life descriptions constructed for this tour group? Gz asked black visitors to accept the realities of slavery and to understand slavery as an economic situation not a human story of oppression,

The things that I try to convey in speaking to both children and to adults, regarding to you might call the shame of slavery is that rather than feel any shame that their ancestors were slaves I think they should feel very proud of this because for the very fact that they are personally here now; had those people not been survivors they wouldn’t be here, they had to be survivors. And I think they should take pride in the fact that they did manage to survive through such a horrific situation. (pause) I also feel that it is important to get over the fact that not all slaves were abused [my emphasis] whether for moral or economic reasons, hopefully it would have been for reasons primarily, but economically you
couldn’t afford to do that! You could not just lay waste to your slave population. They were what was going to produce your livelihood. (EPT1, p. 4)

Nowhere on the tour or in the training manual were stories of corporal punishment for slaves recounted. On occasion, I have observed visitors ask questions about corporal punishment inflicted on enslaved laborers on tours at other historical plantations. This topic was not broached on the tours I observed at MMP. Gz’s above response seemed to defend planters’ actions as slaveholders and seemed to suggest she had encountered questions about corporal punishment and slavery on past tours.

Az explained the tour could include traumatic stories:

The difficulty in my opinion is to come up with a history, come up with facts, and not come up with judgment, so you certainly don’t want to fall down or another direction. You don’t want to picture or tell everybody was happy, ha, ha, ha, like there was not punishment. You certainly don’t want to jump on the other direction, that it was completely terrible that they were beaten, they were starving, none of this is right. And it is probably and I don’t, what I say on my tour, plantations were run by men, human beings, we have a law, we have a law. (IB, p. 37)

Az did not or could not include slave life stories involving starvation or widespread use of torture or punishment. Perhaps these issues were too difficult for Az to bear in the context of MMP.

When I asked Az what tour features did not work well to represent slave life she offered an insightful response:

This question would be interesting if we had a group of mixed persons. If we had just a group of African Americans to see what actually works. It is easier to speak about slavery in a certain way with a group of Caucasians. (BPT2, p. 5)

Az was conscientious of her responsibility to interpret slavery on her tours and recognized the possibility of editing or censoring slave life stories on tours,

[W]e have a story to cover. And I have to speak about slavery, I have to speak about that, you can adapt of how you speak of those things. But you have to speak of those things…So that means you have to speak about slavery. You can speak
on a different level. But those subjects should not be erased because of the population you have in your group. (PTB1, p. 4)

These examples suggest that for team members a “comfortable entrance” to interpreting slave life is enabled by the team member’s identification with his and her visitors. I found that the data in the transcripts suggested that team members were likely cognizant of the ethnicities of the visitors on their tours, which required team members to address slave life stories in accordance to the diversity of visitors in particular tour groups.

The museum’s New South interpretation legacy was built upon European American memory of plantation life and the traditional interpretation of the planter focused tour made use of the collection of “cultural stories” that included comfortable entrances for the white team members to discuss slave life stories from the planter’s perspective. Risk and fear of conflict were raised when team members were faced with alternative views on slave life history, as illustrated in the passage from Az’s post tour conversation above.

It is significant to note that Az followed up on her response to address ethnically diverse audiences by stating she was confident that her interpretation of slave life was appropriate as it stood. Az was resisting changes to the current tour, insisting that the tour adequately addressed slave life history,

I don’t have any problem when I talk about slavery. We have to try not to put on a Hollywood picture of it. Saying that is was nice, and that it was not completely bad. This is what I said. I don’t know if I said it on this tour, that the plantation was run by people and you have good and bad people. (BPT2, p. 5)

Kz explained her commitment to interpreting slave life at MMP for children. Kz recognized that teaching about slavery raised the risk of contradicting mainstream
knowledge of plantation history. She wanted to open opportunities for visitors to learn about slave life:

> Because they are so young and this is how changes come about and perceptions and preconceived notions [about plantation slavery] and if you can get these children while they are young to think about the bigger picture. And not think about what they have always been told and you can open up their minds to a whole new world. And they have been taught different from what you know, older generations were taught different. They believed different things as they were raised and taught by their parents. Children, it is a different world we live in. And they don’t have the same ideas we did. (PTJ, p. 5)

Dz explained that the current tour could be more “honest” in representating plantation life, suggesting that MMP can modify the tour to better reflect the numbers of free and enslaved plantation residents,

> If I just had a carte blanche to do what I wanted to start my own museum, I would definitely want to do a tour more like this [points to new tour narrative]. To be honest, because I think it is more balanced. I think it is more interesting to be honest and more relevant than the [current] MMP regular tour. (IC, p. 19)

The third tour I observed Az give was for a group of travel writers. Az discussed slave rebellion in a story about an enslaved man, Latulipe, who assassinated his master Claude Trénonay in 1791 (Appendix A). I asked Az why she chose to tell this story of conflict on this tour and not tell this story on other tours. She explained,

> B: This is a group of travel agents and you want to really…it is travel agents so you want to give a good picture obviously…

> JR: So I am interested in how you worked it into the tour.

> B: I tried to, it was Ibo, the belief that when they kill themselves their soul returns to their country. (BPT3, p. 4)

Az deliberately included an expanded representation of slave life using Latulipe’s story to impress the travel writers. This was an exceptional effort for Az to talk about slave resistance on her tour, she said she was “very careful.” She recognized an appeal of bearing witness to the violent history that likely would impress the travel writers. Az took
a risk to use disruptive knowledge for the regular tour, anticipating the impact the violent history of slave life could have on visitors.

Az recognized the compliant and frivolous nature of some of the current tour content. She referred to this kind of narrative as “blah blah” (BPT3, p. 4). The tour rhetoric Az and the other team members more often used did not include “risky” or disruptive knowledge, such as Latulipe’s story of rebellion or stories of manumission. Az explained that controversial or “outside information” raised her concerns for historical accuracy and the presentation of non-traditional tour information at MMP could increase the risk of offending visitors.

- Oscillating Between Wanting and Not Wanting Slave Life Stories: ambivalence, scholarly evidence, and “passion for ignorance”

Az and Gz had been actively researching MMP history for several years with a particular interest in the Duplantier family and the history of the big house. My study offered the museum a potential windfall of historical research. At the first team meeting, Az requested that my research be well documented and that I provide sufficient evidence for my historical findings (TM1, p. 12). I assured her I would do so, as outlined in the archival research methods described in Chapter Four. I found in the analysis of the transcripts of the team meetings and my informal interview with Az that Az’s concern that the history report be based on sufficient evidence was also her primary form of resistance to integrating new information into the regular tour.

While Az said she found the history report interesting, Az was not fully willing to embrace the history report. In the second and third team meetings, Az questioned my sources and said she was skeptical about whether the slave life stories were true. I coded Az’s expressed skepticism about the history report as “scholarly evidence,” and as a form
of resistance to new slave life histories. Az resisted the report saying it was not accurate. Az implied that she did not trust my research. She asked what sources I used for each story she was interested in and then asked how I found the sources. I was patient and answered each question, even though the report was well documented. I had to consider the possibility that Az did not know how to use footnotes or a reference list when reading a paper.

Gz came across one particular story in the history report that appeared to be difficult knowledge for her. For example, in regards to the history report, Gz questioned a point of speculation on my part, “It says that Claire’s mother, Marrietta, by this time a free woman of color … Recall that Armand owned Marrietta so he could have been Claire’s father?” Gz repeated the question four times in this discussion (TM2E, p. 10). The speculative story that Armand could have had a sexual relationship with an enslaved woman troubled Gz. The story was only based on conjecture and was significantly less tolerable for Gz than other speculative stories in the history report. For example, I suggested in the history report that it was possible that Julian, Armand’s enslaved butler in New Orleans, came to live at MMP after Armand’s bankruptcy case was settled. Gz’s response to my speculation about Julian’s story went as follows, “Well, you have no record of his sale. Which doesn’t mean he could not have been sold or loaned or whatever…It is reasonable that [Armand] brought him with him” (TM2E, p. 12). Armand Duplantier’s legacy, and the memory of the planter’s moral character, was disrupted in the speculative passage about miscegenation, and Gz resisted it. Recall that Eric Gable (1996) found stories of miscegenation at Colonial Williamsburg were resisted by tour guides. Gz was not unique in resisting a story of miscegenation.
One of the more apparent forms of resistance to the history report from team members, and consequently to learning about slave life at MMP, was their skepticism about the quality of the research in the history report. Rosenzweig and Thelen (1998) and Colonial Williamsburg researchers (Gable et al., 1992) found that most novice historians more often believe inherited stories than newly researched stories. Colonial Williamsburg researchers also found that front line museum workers who were white more often accepted general conjecture about European American colonial history, and rejected general conjecture about African American history and that front line museum workers demanded primary source evidence for the stories they were asked to interpret about slave life (Gable et al., 1992). My results, especially from the second and third team meetings, confirm Rosenzweig and Thelen’s and Gable et al.,’s findings.

This early sign of ambivalence demonstrated by Az (i.e., wanting new information and then refusing to believe it) baffled me. I honored my plans and her concerns for accurately documenting my historical research with a carefully prepared history report that included detailed footnotes and an extensive reference list. Az’s demands that I repeatedly answer her questions about historical evidence regarding MMP slave life in team meetings and her continued ambivalence towards integrating the regular tour were indicative of remembrance learning. Perhaps the oscillating pattern I found in the data of her desire for new historical information and then resisting it suggested “a passion for ignorance” (see Felman, 1987) for slave life history at MMP.

I did not know until the second team meeting that there were at least two books about MMP that Az found unacceptable because they put in jeopardy Armand Duplantier’s honorable reputation as a successful planter, civic hero and moral family man. I used these books and included them in the history report reference list. Az
explained in the second team meeting that she did not approve of these books. Az’s ambivalence manifested as a passion for ignorance when I learned from Az that she had not read the books she did not approve of, but had heard the books contain negative descriptions of Armand Duplantier. Az showed her “passion for ignorance” by not reading the two books that threatened Az’s memory of Armand Duplantier.

I identified other examples of team members’ refusal of information as a form of resistance to slave life history. Az and Gz explained they did not have time to visit Hill Memorial Library at Louisiana State University (LSU) in Baton Rouge where the primary documents pertaining to the history of MMP can be researched. Az said, “It is a strain as a museum here, you are very fortunate to have the time to look everywhere” (TM1, p. 12). Gz was an experienced genealogist having invested years working on her family’s genealogy. Gz said in regard to resources available at LSU, “Az can’t spend five hours at [LSU] Hill Memorial Library. Neither can I” (TM1, p.13). I considered the possibility that team members’ desire not to know the history of MMP slave life would, for Az and Gz, keep the traditional meanings intact at MMP. In this light, Az and Gz’s ambivalent attitudes were manifested by a passion for ignorance, and were a form of resistance.

Az further showed resistance to slave life stories at MMP in her refusals to accept information about a slave auction Armand Duplantier held at MMP in 1806 and in her confession that she never went on the Beyond the Big House tour,

It is so confusing because we are not talking about five slaves; we are talking about a lot of slaves here. Do we want to, how can we integrate this because this is big. It [1806 slave auction] is a huge thing just based on the information. I never saw the tour Beyond the Big House tour or never heard of the 1806 MMP slave sale. It was long? It was, how can we integrate a huge thing like that based on one document like that? We have to dig for more information…So the seller was Armand Duplantier? (TM2, p. 46)
At the next team meeting I gave Az a photocopy of the SPWF record documenting the 1806 slave auction (SPWF v. 11, p. 78). Az gave the most unexpected response,

JR: One of the pieces of information that Az had asked for was the 1806 slave auction sale held at Magnolia Mound. So I went back to the library and photocopied it for you straight from,

Az: I have it.

JR: You have it? You found it since we talked?

Az: No, I already have it. I did not have time to, it is a document that we have been working on. Sorry. (TM3, p. 1)

I wondered why Az asked me for the photocopy from the original SPWF records when she already had that in her possession? I considered the possibility that Az was catering to a passion for ignorance that might have shielded her from the pain of knowing more fully about Armand Duplantier’s role as a slave trader. Kz was surprised to hear that Az had the document copy and surprised that Az had not shared it with her.

In my analysis, I considered that Az might have been clinging to a passion for ignorance that provided a safe space where she would not have to know the difficult knowledge that would threaten her understanding of Armand Duplantier. Felman (1987) asserts that ignorance is not simply opposed to knowledge, rather ignorance is an integral part of the structure of knowledge (p. 78-79). I found that some team members’ preference for ignorance was a form of resisting new slave life information; they preferred to maintain their understanding of slave life and thereby preserve their individual attachments to MMP.

After I shared photocopied pages documenting the 1806 slave auction and Az had told me she had a copy in her files, team members continued to resist the information. Kz
and Az argued that the SPWF transcriber noted in brackets that the auction was the largest slave sale to date in the SPWF records, which negated the validity of the record. Kz argued, “So that is what we are going on, someone else’s interpretation? … This was her observation. It was not in the transcription” (TM3, p. 4-5).

Kz and Az asked for more evidence that the auction took place and repeatedly asked me to further prove that Armand Duplantier imported 200 enslaved individuals from Africa (see Appendix A for documentation). Az asked several times, “How do you find the 200, where that come from?” (TM3, p. 5). In my analysis, Az’s responses suggested she needed to hear the information repeated in what might have been attempts at working through the difficult knowledge. The information was clearly cited in the history report. I referred team members back to the history report.

The seemingly antagonistic discussion was long, and ended when I explained they were missing an important point in using the slave auction as a resource, “The point that it was big or not, I think is immaterial for our talk…the point is that those kinds of activities were taking place” (TM3, p. 5). Gz and Dz agreed and the meeting went forward. In my analysis, the team was able to move on with the team meeting once members realized they did not have to accept the most painful part of the story (i.e., that this was the largest slave auction to date), preferring to accept tolerable information that simply an auction took place at MMP.

I gave Az information (Taylor, 1963; Schafer, 1994) outlining Le Code Noir and the Spanish Black Codes regarding the sale of children. Az accepted the paperwork and quietly said she already knew this information (TM3, p. 8). I considered the possibility that Az was resisting slave life stories to obstruct the task to integrate the regular tour,
which possibly infringed on her job responsibility and her attachments to Armand Duplantier.

I found Gz expressed a passion for ignorance that was tied to her resistance to multidimensional representations of slave life when she explained that learning the kinship ties of enslaved families was too confusing. Gz had reflected on including enslaved brothers Harry and Dick in the new tour narrative,

Oh, I like Harry and Dick...Because Harry and Dick as being probably in the same age group with the boys who tended to be their own personal slaves. And whether they were their slaves per se or whether they just happen to be here, those kids would have played together. The other, ah, I think is too involved. The carpenters yes, Harry and Dick but to go into the wives and all is too much. It gets confusing. (TM3, p. 31)

Gz did not want to interpret Harry and Dick as sons who lost their father when he died, or as step children in a new blended family at MMP. In the same discussion, Dz argued that if the team has the information about Harry’s and Dick’s parents, Fanny and Abram, it should be included in the tour narrative. Gz replied all that was necessary were their names and to say that Harry and Dick were playmates to the planter’s sons (TM3, p. 30).

The team members’ negotiations regarding Harry’s and Dicks’ stories were resistance to multidimensional representations of enslaved families. I had suggested that team members interpret both enslaved boys and free boys who resided at MMP while they were in the boys’ bedroom on the tour. Gz and Az suggested that Harry’s and Dick’s story could be used to interpret how enslaved children were kept from a formal education. Gz and Az suggested, and Dz supported, the idea of comparing the Duplantier brothers’ education in France to brothers Harry’s and Dick’s experiences likely learning skills from their parents and the enslaved community. Az explained, “Also the interesting
thing that you can say were the two slaves, I can’t remember their names, is about education. What a boy from a white wealthy family does at age 13 and what a slave his age would be doing” (TM3, p. 36). I included these suggestions in the new tour narrative. In the informal interviews, Az and Gz suggested that the family story about Harry and Dick and their education should be cut from the new tour narrative, explaining the stories were too confusing for visitors to follow and made the tour too long. This example illustrates team members’ ambivalent resistance to new slave life stories. The brother’s kinship ties and the 1806 slave auction stories are examples from the transcripts that illustrate how receiving information was tied with resisting information, and resisting information was tied to repeating and reflecting on information.

- **Difficult Knowledge: attachments and loyalties**

In the analysis I identified several instances when new slave life information challenged team members’ personal attachments to MMP and to French Louisiana plantation heritage. In these instances, new slave life information was often a multidimensional representation that appeared to disrupt the regular tour that focused on the planter and his family, and team members worked to protect the status quo of the tour. Most team members insisted that the slave kinship ties were “too confusing” (e.g., TM3, p. 35). However, “the family” (i.e., Duplantier family kinship ties in the big house) were deemed essential to the tour by Kz, Az, and Gz.

My analysis of team members’ use of the word “Creole” shows team members’ resistance to new information that impacted their attachments and loyalties. The word “Creole” was used many times during the tours I observed and the team discussed how
the definition for Creole would be useful to include in the new tour narrative. In the third team meeting, Az helped the team construct a definition,

Az: The thing is about Creole, and we said that this house was a French Creole cottage. And we speak also about French Creole [genealogy]. So you can tie those two Creole meanings to the architecture and we talk to the person during our time period. This is something we have to explain to the people this is during our time period…

Dz: When you talk about the architecture, you have to address the definition that you know when you are talking about the house and talking about slave names …

Az: Creole comes from the Spanish word born in the colony from European descendents…

Kz: Black.

Az: Born in the colony can mean for everybody.

Kz: of European descent.

Az: Well born in the colony of European descent can make the high rank in the Creole society, but what understanding much is when you think born in the colony you will have slaves born in the colony but those slaves are born in their country, that is when you have a database that says Creole from Jamaica…

JR: So when we say that Cato is a Creole of Jamaica it means that he was born in the colony, his parents are African, right? ...So his parents are African, so when, OK so we have Venus a Creole because both her parents are from Africa.

Az: Yes. (TM3, p. 85-87)

Gz and Az rejected the definition in the new tour narrative in their informal interviews and in Gz’s pilot tour. I was puzzled by their rejection, given I had used the definition as we constructed it together during the third team meeting. I attended a MMP docent training session when Az shared a definition for “Creole” with the new docents and tour guides at the end of our study. Kz pointed out to me that Az used the same definition for Creole from the new tour narrative, except she excluded the word “African,” and only referred to parents from Europe. I considered the possibility that Az
and Gz preferred the definition of Creole that excluded African lineage because Az and Gz use “Creole” regularly to refer to the planter class in Louisiana, who were of European descent. Adding African parentage to the definition broadened the meaning of the word “Creole” beyond the exclusive planter class of citizens.

Religion was a framework I considered useful to developing multidimensional representations of enslaved individuals. Team members highlighted stories about Catholic and Islamic traditions practiced at MMP in the history report. However, in the third team meeting and in the informal interviews, team members explained Islam was more difficult than Catholicism to include in the tour. Az explained, “Armand was a French man, Constance was a Creole and she was a Catholic. He was Catholic. And they were running the plantation with a Catholic faith” (TM3, p. 44). Gz responded to a team member’s suggestion that we could discuss both religions in the master bedroom, “That would be the place to do it. If your going to go into that much detail. Then you would” (TM3, p. 44-45). Az and Gz’s attachments to Catholicism seemed to overwhelm stories about Islamic traditions at MMP.

The team agreed that the Hillin succession papers listing the six enslaved individuals displayed in the big house should be substituted with the May 1800 inventory of the MMP enslaved community. The idea was that the larger enslaved community held by the Joyce, and then the Duplantier family at MMP, better represented the enslaved community during the tour interpretation period. Gz had a different interpretation of the succession papers that reflected her personal attachments to the planter class, “Well, the only purpose that document really serves is to acquaint people with the manner in which property was settled for the protection of the heirs” (TM3, p. 23).
Team members emphasized stories that highlighted MMP’s relationship to France and that supported team members’ personal attachments. For example, Az and Gz agreed that the tour should include stories about Armand Duplantier’s friendship with General Lafayette. Az pointed out her attachments to Armand Duplantier announcing, “It is important that we have to explain General Lafayette to explain the status of Armand Duplantier. He was not a nobody” (TM3, p. 35).

I described in the history report how Armand Duplantier faced bankruptcy, his wife sued him for legal separation of property, his children sued him for property, and he dabbled in the slave trade in 1806. Historical accounts of these events in the life of Armand Duplantier are documented in books by Brenda Perkins. Recall Az refused to use these books to interpret MMP. These stories were difficult knowledge for Az, “The Code and the situation of bankruptcy, that is where I disagree with Brenda [Perkins] completely. And I refuse to analyze it like that…” (TM2, p. 33) and “Brenda Perkins interprets Armand as a bad guy” (TM2, p. 35).

I explained to Az that my use in the history report of the bankruptcy story and the other legal battles Armand faced was a means for tracing the stories of the enslaved residents at MMP and not to judge Armand Duplantier. I said to Az, “Anyway the reason why that is important to us in terms of the slaves’ lives, it impacted the slaves that were a part of that transaction” (TM2, p. 14). When I assured Az that my intentions were not to harm MMP, but to enrich the interpretation for broader audiences, Az was more willing to engage with the history report during the meeting. I found that these negative stories about Armand Duplantier were difficult knowledge for Az that disrupted Az’s understanding of Armand Duplantier. Az candidly explained, “So that is why I am afraid” (TM2, p. 35).
I found that the history report contained difficult knowledge that posed disruptions to the traditional interpretation of an honorable and harmonious Duplantier family. In light of the history report, Az wanted to defend Armand Duplantier’s character during the team meetings. In one instance, I mentioned a church record that showed Armand Duplantier paid monthly for a pew at Church. Az replied, “That is a good story” (TM2, p. 43).

Learning difficult knowledge caused a learning crisis for Kz. When Kz was confronted with the difficult knowledge in the history report that the Black Code did not protect the enslaved families from separation, Kz became visibly upset by the story. Kz asked me about the story of an enslaved woman named Charlotte and her two daughters, Rosette and Frosina, who were sold apart. The story was:

In 1788, when Charlotte was a teenager, she was given to Constance Rochon Joyce as a wedding gift. A few years later, Constance was widowed and married Armand Duplnatier. By then, Charlotte had two daughters who, by law, were born into slavery and were the property of Constance Duplantier. In 1803, Constance and Armand sold Charlotte and her younger daughter to a slaveholder in New Orleans. A few months later, Constance and Armand sold Forsina to a slaveholder in Baton Rouge.

Kz and Az refused to believe the story and asked for documented proof and for an explanation of how children could be separated from their mothers when *Le Code Noir* specifically protected children from being sold away from their families. Kz did not use the footnotes to learn where I found the story. The resistance dialogue went as follows:

Kz: Talking about Mrs. Rochon giving her daughter the slave for a wedding gift. I know you mention this later on in your narrative, using a person as a wedding gift. The objectification of the people. First I wanted to know, how did you find this information? Where does it say this? Some one wrote a letter?

JR: That came from the Spanish West Florida Records… So in two separate sales it says Constance owned these three female slaves they were a wedding gift from her mother…Frosina and Rosette are both natives of Baton Rouge…The children
were not the gift, which means that Charlotte was given as a gift before her children were born. You see.

The discussion that followed included an explanation of the Black Code that children under ten years old could not legally be sold away from their natural mothers. For example, 8-year old Rosette was sold with her mother Charlotte and 13-year old Frosina was sold away from Charlotte and Rosette.

Kz could not grasp the horrors of family separations described in the history report. At first, Kz resisted the stories, arguing that *Le Code Noir* or the Black Code protected enslaved families. When she learned through our discussion that the Black Code only kept children under ten years old with their mothers, she cringed and expressed disbelief. Kz repeated the stories and the new reality that children older than ten and fathers and husbands were separated from their wives and children at MMP. Kz struggled with her discomfort of learning that *Le Code Noir* did not protect all children and families; a scenario she was trying to hold onto during the team meeting. It was possible that Kz was contending with a loss, the loss of a law she believed protected enslaved families from forced separations by slave sales.

- What is Fair? balance and basic facts

I like that this is a first draft, because obviously you are going to go several revisions and somewhere in those revisions you are going to find a good balance. We all are. At the beginning of the project you took a tour narrative that was focused on a Caucasian family. This first draft focuses, I looked at it as a balance and it was all one way and this draft went too much the other way. Kz (IJ, p.1)

I found that many of the team members’ responses to the first draft of the new tour narrative expressed a desire for “balance” between free and enslaved residents. Team members expressed their view that the regular tour had to be empirically balanced. If more enslaved individuals were included in the tour, team members explained, then the
regular tour would be a “slave tour.” I heeded their request and tried to include similar numbers of free and enslaved individuals in the second draft of the new tour narrative. The first draft included 11 free residents and 34 enslaved residents. The second draft included 12 free residents and 17 enslaved residents.

The team members, including me, freely used the term balance to suggest some combination of historical characters would satisfactorily represent free and enslaved residents at MMP. Kz recognized that during this period at MMP, there were five times the numbers of enslaved residents than free residents.

You forget that white people were the minority. You know? There were definitely a smaller number. You say less than 10 people lived in the big house and 50 people lived in the slave quarters. I would really like to reiterate that fact on the tour to put it in perspective that there are 10 people in the family but there are way more slaves, you know? And that may be the reason why the tour bent was that way. (IJ, p. 2)

Kz explained in her informal interview that she was seeking balance in the new tour narrative and she did not find it,

To me again, it was the balance I got, we can’t loose sight that really we have to give both sides of the story and this section right here dealt a lot with the slaves’ side of the story. It did not tell a lot about the planter’s family. (IJ, p. 12)

When Dz said the new tour narrative was heavily weighted with enslaved residents’ stories, I explained:

So I need to, you know, make it more balanced. But it is not, surprisingly it is not really an imbalance…I was thinking about the ratio of the census that we have for this project it was one planter family member for every five slaves that lived here…I thought that would be OK, it would be a 1 to 5 ratio on the tour. You know, but that does not work. (IC, p. 16)

I asked the team members for suggestions on how to improve the balance they envisioned for the new tour narrative. Dz suggested that I focus on a few enslaved families and select a few individuals to focus on in greater detail. Gz also said there were
too many enslaved individuals included in the new tour narrative and she said that the new tour narrative could not lose the basic thread of the tour, the stories of the Duplantier family, which included the legal ownership of MMP. This, Gz explained, constituted the basic facts for the regular tour. Like Gz, Kz explained that the new tour narrative had to include the “basic facts,” which were about the Duplantier’s family, the big house architecture, and the decorative furnishings in the big house.

While I agreed with the team members to edit down the number of enslaved individuals represented in the first draft of the new tour narrative, I was surprised that no one suggested we scale back on the number of Europeans and European Americans represented in the new tour narrative. Apparently, the historical ratio of 5 enslaved residents for every free resident at MMP was not the scale the team used to find a “balance” in the tour narrative.

I found that Dz, Az, Kz, and Gz were committed to the historical baseline of legal ownership of MMP as the root shaping the “basic facts” that supported the traditional meanings of the big house (e.g., IE, p. 15 and IJ, pp. 1 & 30). The big house had traditionally represented the planter family and slave life stories that supported descriptions of the planter’s life style. Their references to the planter’s history suggests that their attachments to the traditional planter focused tour held sway over what should be included in the tour.

Gz explained that docents were expected to include basic facts on their tours:

There are basic facts that [docents] are expected to impart. Other than that each [docent] interprets and concentrates on the aspects of the interpretation which are of particular interest to us and which [docents] might be better acquainted… (IE, p. 15)
For Gz, the basic facts about slave life were work stories that supported the planter’s lifestyle.

Most [docents and tour guides]… do tell the story of the enslaved people as well. You can’t interpret the kitchen without doing so. There are many things that go on in the house itself, that require that we tell this…that this was done by the slaves on the plantation. There would have been servants doing this or that …And so when questions do come up I feel that we have been able to adequately address them. (IE, p. 16)

My analysis of the transcripts showed that the team members’ attachments and loyalties to the traditions and habits for the regular tour helped to maintain the focus in the new tour narrative on the planter. Team members’ resistance to changes to the regular tour, in part, suggested that team members’ felt a loss for the missing cultural stories (from the traditional regular tour) in the new tour narrative. The planter focus was the guiding principle for identifying the basic facts for the new tour narrative for the team. The basic facts supporting the Duplantier planter family’s stories out ranked newly researched stories about slave life, and thus shaped what was considered a “balance” of historical characters in the new tour narrative.

• Separate But Equal: separate slave tour

In the analysis I found that when Az and Kz were engaged in the task of reviewing the history report, their tone for the history report oscillated between enthusiasm and hostility and frustration. Midway through the second team meeting, Kz and Az contended that we should be writing a new tour narrative for a “slave tour,” and not the regular tour. Az voiced her disappointment when she fully realized that the action research team was to write a new narrative for the regular tour, the job she said that belonged to MMP, “in the beginning of the project my understanding was to write a slave tour” (TM2, p. 27).
In the transcripts I found that Az emphasized that expanding slave life representations was not what she thought MMP was especially interested in doing. Az explained that writing a separate “slave tour” would make better use of the history report than adding a “few pieces” of new information to the regular tour. Az asked me, “How are you going to be able to change the tour and say that it was an issue we want to talk about, that we have to talk about…Your research is based on the slavery aspect” (TM2, p. 26). This was a decisive moment for Az in the second team meeting and generally for the action research team. She could have pulled out of the team, which was focused on addressing the regular tour, but she chose to stay with it. It was possible that Az decided to continue as a member of the action research team because she was concerned about the proposed changes to the regular tour, which were a part of Az’s job responsibility.

In the second and third team meetings and in her informal interview Az expressed that she was keen on keeping slave life and planter life stories on separate tours. Az concluded, “But for what it is worth, it is a slave tour. From one direction for what I wish to call is it *Beyond the Big House*” (IB, p. 3). Recall Az had never read or went on the *Beyond the Big House* tour, so her reference to this tour was not grounded in experience.

I needed to keep the team on task to address the fuller representations of slave life for the regular tour, especially when team members called for separate tours. Separate tours, a “slave tour” and a “planter tour,” did not address the harsh criticisms mounted at the ethnocentric interpretations found at historical plantation museums described in Chapter Three. I found that I hit upon a very sensitive issue at MMP; the segregation of slaves’ stories and free stories at this historical site was not coincidental.

I asked Kz and Az how could we address “where we fall short” in representing slave life? Az replied, “But I understand that. I saw the critics. So that is what we are in
the process to change that. We are aware about that. So it is not like we are doing nothing” (TM2, p. 28). I personally believed that MMP was not doing enough to address the critics by maintaining the regular tour of the big house and the Beyond the Big House Tour as segregated tours.

Gz was resisting the slave life stories in the history report by suggesting the information could be used in tours other than the regular tour. After reading the history report, Gz explained that she thought of three applications for the history report: 1) “I can see having a specific place in a tour and adding to it, that it makes it more personal, you have people with whom you can deal” referring to the enslaved cooks, butler, and seamstress; 2) the history report offered an opportunity to develop a separate tour devoted to the slave population that could be an expansion of Beyond the Big House; and 3) the history report could be used to develop a special “work” tour featuring enslaved artisans and field hands” (TME, p. 1).

After reading the history report, Az (like Kz and Gz) cited the 45-minute rule for resisting expanded slave life representations to the regular tour. Az explained:

[I]n the beginning of the project my understanding was to write a slave tour. And I thought that was an outstanding project. Yeah we need that definitely … I really want to be thinking about our tour…Because it is 45 minutes and you cannot expand it…My understanding was a slave tour. (TM2, p. 26-29)

When I read and reflected on the transcripts from the second team meeting, I realized I had to address the team’s concerns that there was too much information that would overwhelm the regular tour. I had to assure the team that we could develop a new tour narrative for the regular tour that would simultaneously expand slave life representations and maintain the planter family’s presence. If the team lost the planter focus for the regular tour, then I believed the team would foreclose midway into the
Based on the above quoted conversations and similar passages in the transcripts, I determined that changes to the regular tour could not be too drastic. I found that the team was willing to “fit in” slave life stories, but not at the risk of losing the Duplantier family’s stories. In the middle of the study, around the time of the second team meeting, the team uneasily concluded that the task for this study was about “fitting in” slave life into the regular tour.

- Losing the Thread of the Story: foreclosure

Gz’s response to the new tour narrative during her informal interview revealed Gz’s resistance to slave life stories, which stirred feelings of loss. Gz was disturbed by the new tour narrative and showed me that she had typed up her response so she would not forget anything. She explained that she could not sleep the night before the informal interview because she was thinking about what she wanted to say during the interview.

Gz explained in a serious voice that the new tour narrative did not reflect her vision for the proposed text,

I will preface this on saying you can approach this in several different ways and my approach for my purposes and your approach for your purposes would be diametrically opposite. (IE, p. 1)

Gz continued to explain that, while the new tour narrative was “excellent for showing both ways of life,” it did not address Gz’s goals for the regular tour. In reading the transcripts I found that, in addition to Gz’s personal attachments to French Louisiana plantation heritage, Gz was also personally attached to the regular tour she had been giving for 15 years.

I find it very heavily slanted toward the stories of the slave population. So that for me the story of the family who owned the house, the house being what we [museum workers] are expected to interpret. I find them lost in the process. (IE, p. 1)
I found that Gz remained loyal to the regular MMP tour and was expressing that she was experiencing loss. Gz felt that the Duplantier family members were lost in the new tour narrative, which caused her observable pain and grief.

Gz read out loud her written response to the new tour narrative and then handed me the four pages. Gz had foreclosed on the project of integrating the regular tour using the information in the history report. From this point on in the study, Gz refused to continue to recognize the new tour narrative as a plausible means to add slave life to the regular tour.

That area [big house] should be devoted to the owner family, just as the quarters, fields, and outbuildings should be to the enslaved population. Those were their domains in which their functions were the more productive and should take precedence. (IE, p. 4)

Gz insisted, “This [new] tour narrative needs to stand alone.” (IE, p. 5) Gz said that the research was excellent and she understood that a separate “slave tour” was not the goal for this study. She suggested that MMP could offer the present regular tour and offer the new tour narrative and explain to visitors that the visitors could choose the tour they preferred to hear.

Gz explained that she was comfortable using the historical names of enslaved carpenters and house servants, but that the new tour narrative gave too much information that would overwhelm visitors with too many dates, names, and slave life stories. I found that the one dimensional representations were not disruptive to Gz’s tour practices. Gz said:

Now if you give them a name. Now you were talking about the parlor. The construction of the house that there were carpenters. Name those carpenters. Don’t in a tour don’t go into their family. It is too much. They [visitors] loose a train of thought. (IE, p. 10)
Gz closed the informal interview explaining she felt the history report was a needed resource that could be a book. Gz expressed her passion for ignorance for interpreting slave life at MMP, an area of history she had little interest in pursuing for her tours. Gz explained:

And that exactly states my reason why I think it would be almost criminal [laugh] to dilute one story with the other…there is too much research here, it is too much valuable. It does not need to be curtailed in any way. It needs to be presented in its own right... I have never had the opportunity to work with Beyond the Big House. I have had a brief glance, only a brief glance of the first few pages of the script for it. I am told it is a longer tour. (IE, p. 12)

I found that Gz was unable, or not willing, to change the planter focus in the regular tour. Gz was not willing to read the Beyond the Big House tour and imagined others who were interested in slave life would use the new tour narrative to enrich a separate “slave tour.”

I contend that Gz likely endured a learning crisis in reading the new tour narrative. She was likely confronted with difficult knowledge presented in the multidimensional representations of slave life. Gz explained she read the first draft of the new tour narrative four times before she could write her response to it (IE, p. 9). In reading the transcripts from this informal interview, I found that it was possible that the pain the new tour narrative imposed on Gz sent her into a melancholic state. She foreclosed on the possibility of imagining the regular tour using slave life stories from the history report.

When it came time for Gz to lead her pilot tour, Gz was composed and dressed in the required 19th century empire waist dress that she wore to lead tours. She held her copy of the third draft of the new tour narrative and welcomed Dz and me. Gz explained that she planned on reading the new tour narrative instead of trying to use her own words. This was uncharacteristic of Gz, who had over 15 years experience leading tours at
MMP. She explained that there was too much new information to remember. Gz asked if this arrangement was alright and we agreed. I wondered how Gz’s tour would have sounded if she had tried to give the new tour in her own words.

Regardless, I found the decision Gz made to read her tour was a signal that she was resisting the new tour narrative and was unable to work through the difficult knowledge contained in the new tour. Gz had foreclosed on the possibilities for interpreting expanded slave life representations in the regular tour and had tightly held onto her loyalties to French Louisiana planter heritage. Gz explained:

As I have told you quite frankly before, I find that the tour leans heavily towards the enslaved population where it was always my understanding that the mission of the Mound and of the big house was to interpret life of the plantation owner planter…I see no way that I could do justice to both by combining or trying to combine because I would dilute both sides too much. (PilotE, p. 2)

I considered that Gz might have been confronted with the possibility of losing the planter focus for the regular tour. The slave life stories in the new tour narrative had exceeded her initial interest in finding out the names and jobs of the enslaved laborers at MMP. I asked Gz at the end of her pilot tour if she would consider using the historical names of the house servants she had asked for at the beginning of the study, “I probably will insert some of them. But there again, I can’t go too deeply because I lose the thread of my story” (PilotE, p. 7).

I asked Az at the end of the second team meeting if she would try out some of the history report information in her tours. Az replied in the negative:

You do what ever you want. I don’t want to block you or anything. I am not sure this is going to be relevant. I am pretty sure you going to see what you already saw. (TM2, p. 51)

I asked this question before I knew we could not try out tours as planned due to impending hurricanes.
After the third team meeting, Az had not reached a point where she could reconsider integrating the regular tour. Az was observably frustrated by the focus of my study and by my presence as an outsider who brought outside criticisms of MMP to the team’s attention. The outside criticisms were directed at Az’s job responsibility to manage the tour interpretation at MMP, which may have contributed to Az’s resistance to my study. I considered the possibility that Az had feelings of loss that were generated by the difficult knowledge she found in the history report that challenged Az’s notions about Armand Duplantier’s moral character. I wondered whether team members felt a loss for what it meant to be a tour guide or docent who gives the traditional regular tour when they were asked to revise the regular tour.

The difficult knowledge in the history report, and the team’s focus on revising the regular tour and not creating a separate “slave tour,” were likely too much for Az to work through in seven months. I found that Az foreclosed on the study when she refused to give a pilot tour and she refused to use any of the information MMP received in the history report in subsequent museum work.

Gz and Az foreclosed on using expanded slave life representations in the regular tour. These team members abruptly stopped considering the slave life stories in the history report as possible information to use in the regular tour.

Theme 3: Repetition - I Need to Read that Again

Resisted knowledge was not necessarily refused by team members. In many instances, team members repeated the resisted information out loud, and re-read the history report, the new tour narrative, and the secondary history sources. For example, Kz’s and Az’s demanding more evidence and repeatedly asking questions about the
context of the historical events related to the 1806 slave auction story and the enslaved family separation stories could have been resistance but also could have been their way of repeating difficult knowledge. I found in the transcripts from the second and third team meetings that, after resisting slave life stories from the history report, Az and Kz were willing to reconsider the possibility of expanding the regular tour. For example, Az and Kz were eager to re-read the history report,

   JR: I am going to borrow your [history reports] I will give them back to you.

   Kz: We want them back. There is stuff I want to use.

   Az: Yeah. …I will want to read this again. It is hard to integrate right away like that, information. (TM2, p. 51)

   Kz explained that she had looked at the Black Code laws, “a zillion times” (TM3, p. 8). Kz spent time reflecting on the law that children under 10-years old could not be sold from their mother. Kz was conflicted by Charlotte’s story about her forced separation from her daughter and another story of two young enslaved siblings, St. Luc and Mary, who were held by Armand Duplantier and sold from their mother (Appendix A). Kz could not accept that the children were separated from their mothers. She argued it was against the Black Code, so how was it possible,

   Page nine brings about a lot of questions for me and it is all about the Code Noir. I think it was when two freed slaves buy a child, I was like OK Code Noir how is the family separated number one, why were the children not with the mom; and so it is all Code Noir questions. (TM2, p. 13)

   Kz repeated the difficult knowledge several more times, for example,

   Kz: Why weren’t the children sold with the mother? It is contradictions to the Code Noir.

   JR: I don’t know.

   Kz: It is contradictions. The children were under ten. Because I made a note! (TM2, p. 13)
Kz was stuck on two points, the story was in opposition to Kz’s understanding of the Black Code and Kz was unable to imagine that the law could have been ignored by Baton Rouge citizens.

Repetition was also evident when team members reconsidered new slave life information. Kz explained she had to read the history report twice saying, “There is some really good interesting information I was trying to find out about” (TM2, p. 1). Post tour conversations included team members repeating new information, sometimes to me and sometimes to themselves. For example, when I asked Gz what information I could find for her she replied:

I would think in telling more about the fact that …the slaves brought in breakfast to the house, not breakfast as we know it, but breakfast like a toddy and the relationship between the mistress of the plantation and the cook whether it was a female cook or a male cook. Whether it be a female cook or a male cook. I am finding that quite frequently they were men. (EPT1, p. 3)

Gz had learned from me that the Duplantiers owned male cooks during an informal conversation. Gz repeated the new “male cook” concept several times. Gz, Az, and Kz picked up on the same small bit of information that I shared at the onset of the study that showed that the Duplantier family owned enslaved male cooks who might have lived at MMP after 1816. This was readily accepted by the team members and used in all the tours I observed. This fragment of slave life history provided a comfortable entrance and a flat one dimensional representation of slave life that fit into the present regular tour.

- Say that again? learning crisis

I found several examples in the transcripts of team members suffering learning crises. Gz expressed a learning crisis in her informal interview after reading the new tour narrative. Gz could not believe, or imagine, that the regular tour of the big house could
elevate the focus of the enslaved population and repeatedly explained that the meanings of the big house were grounded in the legal ownership of MMP. In the second and third team meetings, Az could not bear to know that Armand Duplantier had engaged in slave trading. Kz suffered a learning crisis in the second team meeting when she was confronted with stories about forced family separations at MMP.

Another example of learning crises was when Kz was not able to grasp that an enslaved mother named Joan died at the slave auction block. Kz repeated the story out loud six times, “She just does not sell?” A few minutes later, Kz asked me, “She dies. Right?” I reconfirmed the information for Kz and Kz continued to repeat the difficult knowledge, “I don’t know. I never thought that a slave would go unsold. Like think of her, Joan being sold and then missing and then she doesn’t get sold by the skin of her teeth. She gets to stay. I don’t know how she would have viewed it” (TM2, p. 25).

- Melancholic Hold: traditions and habits, basic facts, attachments and loyalties

Team members relied on interpretation traditions and habits to include slave life on their tours, which in the transcripts appeared to enable a kind of stasis for some team members. Team members could use the cultural stories (e.g., the family bath, the three tiers of slavery, the young enslaved child pulling the cord of the punkah fan, an enslaved woman sleeping on a pallet on the floor) to discuss slave life on their tours without having to discuss the more painful histories of slave life at MMP. I considered the possibility that team members’ responses indicated that they were holding onto the cultural stories as “basic facts” that had to be included in the new tour narrative, which were in peril of being “lost” to the new multidimensional slave life stories.
The act of holding onto lost ideas by repeating what has been lost is suggestive of melancholic actions. The habitual repetition of these particular stories not only established a level of complacency, they provided a level of comfort in telling about slave life. The cultural stories were generic one dimensional representations about slave life that did not disrupt the planter focus of the tour or the traditional meanings of the big house.

For example, in the third team meeting, Gz worked to preserve the traditional tour narrative, “I prefer to see the Duplantier family introduced at the house…The Duplantier family were residents *in* [emphasis in the original] the house. And that was their story. For me, it most comfortably begins on the front gallery” (TM3, p. 14).

The team agreed with Gz that the big house was a symbol for the planter family. Gz repeated this point multiple times, usually coupled with an explanation that a slave’s name was all that was needed in the tour in the big house. The team had few thoughts on how to change the tour when we worked on the tour framework worksheet. The team was not letting go of their attachments to the traditions of the regular tour. The task that evolved in the third team meeting was about how the team could improve the regular tour, not how the team could expand slave life representations on the tour. Dz explained, “Once we get into the house we really start concentrating more on the lifestyle of the family that was in there” (TM3, p. 22). The seemingly melancholic hold on the team’s attachments to the familiar regular tour was surprising to me, given months of effort the team gave to have reached the third team meeting with a focus on slave life at MMP. It was possible that the further the team went into the study to change the regular tour, the tighter team members held onto the tour traditions and habits. It was possible that the
more familiar the team members got with slave life stories at MMP, the more their attachments to the traditional meanings at MMP were vulnerable to loss.

Theme 4: Reflection - We Talked About That

(group dynamics, learning crisis, ambivalence)

I found that the team members reflected on slave life stories throughout the study and in particular team members reflected on the information in the history report that disrupted or changed team members’ prior understandings of slave life at MMP. Az and Kz asked me several times during the second team meeting how I knew the information in the history report, “How do you know that?” (e.g., TM2, p. 16). I believe these discussions offered team members opportunities to repeat and reflect on the history report as part of the process of working through the difficult knowledge.

I found team members reflected on new slave life information presented in the history report outside of the team meetings and interviews. Kz demonstrated she reflected on difficult knowledge in notes I observed Kz kept in regards to the new tour narrative. Gz demonstrated she reflected on expanding slave life representations in the regular tour in her typed notes on the new tour narrative that she shared with me. In the transcripts, I found references to instances when Dz and Az, Az and Gz, and Kz and Az talked outside of the team meetings about the history report, slave life history, and the new tour narrative.

The transcripts from the team meetings and the informal interviews included many examples of team members reflecting on slave life stories from the history report. Kz reflected on the story she initially resisted, the story about the slaveholder’s
objectification of Charlotte as a wedding present. Kz reflected on the difficult knowledge
Charlotte’s story presented,

Not only did Charlotte enter the family as a wedding gift in that weird sense, unusual sense then also you know their lives could be shattered because a family wanted to move... I mean can you imagine being sold as a wedding gift? A person. Do you think of a person as a wedding gift? (IJ, p. 6-8)

Gz reflected on the newly introduced enslaved men and women in the history report, and reflected on the intergenerational relationships among the enslaved house servants,

Who among the slaves was helpful to a new one coming into, say into the home. To show her what the mistress expected done. She surely would not have been left entirely in the hands of the mistress to train these girls. Same thing in the kitchen. (EPT3, p. 3)

In the last few minutes of the second team meeting, Kz and Az reflected on their concerns and resistances towards learning the new information in the history report,

Az: You brought us a lot of information and it is hard to collect information. And when you get your routine on your tour…

Kz: So you will stumble a little bit with the new information.

Az: It is alright when you get a tour you get used to it and you get new information it is hard in the beginning to add it on. I don’t want you to be frustrated because of that. (TM2, p. 52)

Dz spent much time in his informal interview talking about antebellum economics and the politics of preserving slavery in the south. His approach was situated from the perspective of the dominant planter class on why economic and political decisions were made,

My question was why did the French government see the need to create these laws? What was their standing concerning slavery and why did they shape these laws to manage slaves or protect them. I think that is a very interesting question. I think that for me, I like to look at the differences in character in how slaves were regarded legally by the governments and how that varies from region to region….My question is why slave labor? … You know, I mean it is sort of a
foregone conclusion that it made economic sense to the planters because it was a cheap way to get labor and retain labor for years and years. (IC, p. 2)

Towards the end of this discussion, Dz asked a question posed by many visitors, “Was there ever a choice, you have a plantation you can either try to get some slaves or you could pay people to do it?” (IC, p. 5). Dz was reflecting on the difficult knowledge slave life raised for him. Dz repeated the question again, Was there a choice? I considered the possibility that Dz was not able to work through this question to conclude that slavery was not necessary. Dz likely had to first let go of the dominant planter class view of slavery, which was possibly informed by generations of New South collective memory. The discussion was dominated by Dz, who reflected openly about slavery at MMP.

Theme 5: Reconsideration: How Does This Sound?

We have our habits, we have our meanings. We know that this particular big house over the years has traditional meanings and if we add slave life stories that have not been here before, do they change the meanings? Do they expand the meanings? How do we go about making that transition? Are we willing to make some losses? Are we willing to make some sacrifices on those meanings? (JR in PilotE, p. 8)

Team members discussed their ideas and reconsidered how slave life representations could be expanded in the regular tour. When I told Gz that I knew of two sisters who lived at MMP around 1800-1804 and that one was sold away to a neighboring Baton Rouge plantation, Gz reflected on the new information about how we might be able to include the story in the tour. Gz proposed a rich interpretation that we eventually incorporated into the new tour narrative,

E: Now, would they have gotten, how often would they have gotten to see each other?

JR: That is exactly, that is the question. How often did they get to see each other? They were already almost adults, one is 18 and one is 10. But they are not living far apart from each other.
Gz: How fortunate that they were that close. One could have been sold off [farther away].

JR: Even across the river to Pointe Coupee

Gz: That would have been like another world. …Because the chances of ever getting back across the river would have been zilch. They would have had to have passes. (PTE, 2, p. 6)

Gz recognized the human story of two sisters, Venus and Juba, and how their relationship was restricted by their enslavement. In this instance, Gz was thinking of the sisters in multiple dimensions. She thoughtfully contributed to the dialogue. This is a good example of a team member engaging in transformative remembrance learning; Gz pulled together information she knew about the area and slave life history, and was working through the pieces to understand the sisters’ human presence in the context of MMP.

Kz and I discussed Kz’s difficulties in grasping Charlotte’s story of being used as a wedding gift and the family separations Charlotte suffered while at MMP. Kz at first resisted the story,

I would like substantial information to back up if on the tour we talk about the depersonalization of slaves and how they were given away as wedding gifts or used to pay debts that whole idea that they were not human. (TM2, p. 19)

One month later, Kz reflected further on the words “dehumanization” and “objectification,” the words she said she was uncomfortable using on her tour,

I can not imagine my self saying this, ‘This story of using an enslaved woman as a wedding gift and children as property to illustrate the objectification of individuals and the dehumanization of people is inherent in slavery.’… You have to figure out how to say that in people terms, in real terms. Human. Maybe in just telling the story? Is it? Maybe I don’t have to outline an opinion there, we could just say, [sigh] surely people will understand. (IJ, p. 7)
Then one month after she reflected on Charlotte’s story, Kz reconsidered these words, and used both words on her pilot tour when she told Charlotte’s story. Kz had worked through this difficult knowledge over the three month period.

By the end of the third team meeting, Dz, Gz, and Kz were actively engaged in trying to expand the regular tour with slave life stories from the history report. Kz demonstrated that she had reconsidered the information in the history report and demonstrated that she understood how she could help to expand the regular tour with multidimensional representations of slave life. Kz ended the meeting saying, “I mean ideally at the end of the tour [visitors] know Constance but they also know Quashee and his story” (TM3, p. 59).

- This Works for Me: comfortable entrances

Comfortable entrances were the tolerable, or less difficult, references to slave life that the team members chose to include in their tours. Clearly, one dimensional representations (e.g., slaves’ names and jobs) were comfortable entrances for team members. The one dimensional representations did not disrupt the traditional planter focus of the regular tour and could easily fit into the current tour narrative.

I asked the team to think about how we could make the transition from the traditional planter focused interpretation to an integrated interpretation with expanded slave life stories. Team members referred to the cultural stories they had been using in the present regular tour. For example, Az and Kz liked to refer to the interior doorway into the master bedroom as a “slave entrance.” The doorway was actually an exterior entrance before the house was expanded sometime around 1812. Regardless, the fictional interpretation of the doorway as the place an enslaved house servant could have entered
the room enabled the team members to comfortably introduce slave life into the tour. Team members suggested in their post tour conversations that the historical names of the enslaved house servants could be used to describe the slave entrance.

Comfortable entrances did not necessarily have to be physical spaces. Particular life style topics served as comfortable entrances, including health care for the free and enslaved residents. Kz explained, “We stress how her role [plantation mistress] may have been a doctor on the plantation” (TM3, p. 51). Az added, “What is interesting about that was the culture. In Africa, they were using plants that were not naturalized. Maybe they had on the plantation this plant and refer to slaves how to use it…It could be African” (TM3, p. 51).

Gz found it was comfortable to explain that John Joyce was a slave trader. For Gz, the slave trade explains to visitors how enslaved laborers got to MMP (TM3, p. 21). Gz and Kz explained that they refer to slaves at MMP in regards to how the land was cleared and how the big house was built. Az introduced the slave trade into her tour when she discussed the “slave code” (TM3, p. 21). Gz found the girls’ bedroom was where she liked to discuss the plantation mistress’s duties and how enslaved servants assisted her (TM3, p. 21). Kz reflected, “It is funny how we all want to put it [slave life] in” (TM3, p. 21).

- I Can Only Do This Much: one and multiple dimensions

Az was comfortable adding a one dimensional representation, such as the name of an enslaved male cook, to her tour. However, when I asked Az in the third post tour conversation if she would like more information on the enslaved male cooks at MMP, she said no, preferring only the names of slaves and their jobs (BPT3, p. 2). Az’s response
helps to demonstrate that Az was comfortable with one dimensional representations of slave life that did not disrupt the traditional planter focus for the tour.

I found Az’s above responses were both resistance and reconsideration, and illustrates how remembrance learning for team members was nonlinear. Az was changing the slave life stories on her tour “bit by bit.” First, she accepted the new slave life story that MMP held male cooks. Then, Az was only willing to accept a name for one enslaved male cook. She never tried to use the name, but she said in her informal interview regarding the new tour narrative that she liked knowing the names of the enslaved cooks.

In response to my suggestion that the team try to show kinship ties among the enslaved individuals we might describe in the tour Gz said,

> It will be inserting a name into information that we already are giving. It is to my way of thinking a major improvement. But as far as going into any detail what I am seeing of doing is cutting our own tours as they exist now… whatever additions are going to have to be something that will fit in without taking out the points we are going to be left with… (TME2, p. 15)

Three key points were made in this discussion. First, Gz was willing to consider ways to expand the one dimensional representations of historical enslaved individuals, as long as her commitment to the planter focus was not compromised. Second, Gz was already able to imagine ways to “fit in” information from the history report into her tour. Third, Gz was in agreement with the other team members (Kz and Az) that the regular tour had to interpret a set of “basic facts” that were focused on the planter.

I told Kz about the two enslaved sisters, Juba and Venus, who were separated while at MMP in Baton Rouge and shared Gz’s idea that we could interpret the sisters’ relationship in the context of laws requiring slaves to carry passes to travel off plantations. Kz demonstrated her understanding of representing enslaved historical characters in terms of relationships that helped to establish multidimensional
representations, “I said the same thing. Family ties of slaves. Slaves that they could visit each other in town” (TM2, p. 30).

The team discussed the enslaved laborers who were forced to cultivate indigo, corn, cotton and sugar at MMP. Kz shared her ideas for expanding the interpretation of the enslaved field hands by describing the enslaved brothers Harry and Dick and their family’s story. Following Kz’s lead, the team had gained momentum to engage with stories about enslaved families who were field hands and enslaved artisans (TM3, p. 27). However, during the discussion, the team reverted back to a planter focus, editing out the enslaved family’s story and turning the discussion towards the economic reasons for MMP changing from cotton to sugar cane. The slaves’ stories were overrun by the team’s greater interest in the planter’s farming management decisions (TM3, pp. 24-28).

I found that team members were more likely to use multidimensional slave life representations, or add more references to slave life, on their tours after they had opportunities to reflect and reconsider the new information. I found that team members were more likely to incorporate slave life stories into the new tour narrative if they could personally identify a comfortable entrance (a physical space, artifact, topic or phrase) to introduce one dimensional representations of slave life. The method of “fitting in” one dimensional slave life representations did not seem to overwhelm team members in the process of expanding the tour.

• A Revised White Narrative, Slave Life Stories in the Regular Tour: fitting in

The scholars’ reviews of the second draft of the new tour narrative greatly clarified the extent of the changes made to the regular tour by the team members. Briefly, Dr. Durant offered a key observation that the tour was still set in the big house and that
limited the stories told on the tour about life in the slave quarter. Dr. Durant suggested I consider Jean Rahier’s concept of a “reformed white narrative” (Rahier and Hawkins, 1999) to describe the second draft of the new tour narrative. This insight was a boost to understanding how to revise the new tour narrative in the third draft.

Historian Tiwanna Simpson’s review suggested that the second draft of the new tour narrative was quite different from earlier tours she had experienced at MMP. Dr. Simpson was familiar with the regular tour at MMP and was able to compare her tour experience to the second draft of the new tour narrative. Simpson found the new tour narrative “barely resembles the one I received years ago at MMP.” The tour was also vastly different from other plantation tours Simpson had seen. The new tour narrative, Simpson explained, focused on the enslaved community in ways that illustrated how enslaved families’ and individuals’ lives integrated with each other and impacted the history of MMP and how their lives were impacted by the slaveholding families.

Rahier and Hawkins (1999) explain that “reformed white narratives” describe Louisiana plantation tour narratives that include slave life representations, but feature a white planter’s view of the plantation site. I found that the team members were not willing to abandon the 30-year-old traditional meanings for MMP. I found that team members at MMP, when faced with changing the regular tour to include expanded representations of slave life, were unable to make radical changes. Team members were more inclined to maintain the traditional meanings of the plantation big house as the home of the slaveholding planter family and “fit in” slave life stories to augment “the real story” told on the regular tour. I agreed with Dr. Durant’s insights, that the resulting new tour narrative could be viewed as a reformed white narrative.
In this light, I recognized that each new draft of the tour narrative was tied to the planter’s view of plantation life in the regular tour. I considered Dr. Durant’s insights and Dr. Simpson’s comments that the new tour narrative was quite different from past tour narratives, and I decided that continuing the planter focused tour was primary to preserving the team members’ personal attachments and loyalties to MMP. Likely, staying inside this framework would generate more versions of a reformed white narrative. I thought that more radical changes to the tour narrative might cause team members to foreclose. For team members, the method of fitting in slave life stories into the new tour narrative that maintained the planter’s view was tolerable. This would allow slave life representations to be included, but that still preserved the traditional meanings of the big house. This was a key observation that indicated the new tour narrative was elevating the historical presence of the enslaved community in meaningful ways, although was still palatable to the team members because it was still planter-centric.

The new tour narrative developed by the team could be described with Eichstedt and Small’s (2002) slave life interpretation theme, “relative incorporation,” discussed in Chapter Three. This theme describes historical plantation interpretations that represent topics of enslavement and those who were enslaved throughout the museum tour. The team’s new tour narrative raises issues that disturb a positive construction of whiteness and challenges the dominant planter focus by including stories about historical enslaved families and individuals throughout the regular tour.

I used the term “fitting in” in the second team meeting to suggest a process for developing the new tour narrative by integrating stories from the history report into the regular tour (TM2, p. 3). In the third team meeting, Dz realized our method of fitting in
slave life stories into the regular tour to develop a new tour narrative. Dz asked, “Is this information you see fitting into the current tour?” (TM3, p. 18).

Az explained that she was willing to consider fitting in slave life into the tour,

It is where the information can fit in. I think. The link of the use of a room, to say a house slave, to say they were part of the house and it is more interesting to link everything like this, it makes more sense. (BPT, p. 4)

Kz considered fitting in slave life stories a reasonable way to integrate the regular tour,

I add it [slave life] in. I want it to fit into the whole story. For example …a plantation is a farm, of course, the labor is done by the slaves, first room carpentry is done by slave labor, salon skilled craftsmanship, it is tied into that aspect. I try to tie it into each room in some way…You can’t have a plantation and not talk about it. (JPT1, p. 2)

The process of fitting in slave life more often included team members identifying one dimensional representations of slave life that they could imagine using in particular places on the tour. The team worked with the traditional tour route and the historical baseline for the legal ownership of MMP. I found that this approach enabled team members to preserve the traditional collection of “basic facts” and the traditional planter focus for the tour.

Fitting in was a method for team members to negotiate a workable new tour narrative while the team members were grappling with difficult knowledge. The unfolding events showed that adding slave life stories to the tour needed to be gradual, what Dz called “bit by bit” (IC, p. 17). Rapidly adding slave life stories would risk team members foreclosing on the learning. I found that, with enough time, it was possible for team members to reflect, reconsider, and then chose to fit into the tour difficult knowledge such as multidimensional representations of slave life.
Learning Difficult Knowledge: Bit by Bit

Learning difficult knowledge, viewed with a remembrance learning lens, took a long time from the time new information was received by the team to the time it was reconsidered and, in a few instances, relayed as “teachable” in a pilot tour. It took weeks for some team members and months for other team members to work through the new slave life stories. In some cases, team members shut down on the possibility of learning the new information, foreclosing on integrating the regular tour. One team member journeyed through reception, repetition, and reflection on the new information for months until, surprisingly, she foreclosed on the project announcing it just could not be done (PilotE).

I asked Dz during his informal interview how he would approach changes to the regular tour to include expanded representations of slave life. Dz commented that he recognized the resistance some of the team members presented to drafting a revised version of the regular tour. Dz recognized that slavery history could put museum workers and visitors at risk of “feeling bad” (IC, p. 23). He respected museum workers’ loyalties and attachments to the traditional tour and to plantation heritage. He said he would use a team approach to revise the tour to include more slave life stories, but he said he could not “jab” it in all at once. Instead, Dz recommended introducing slave life interpretation “bit by bit” (IC, p. 17). This was an outstanding insight that worked well with my observation that team members were working through the difficult knowledge of slave life at MMP, bit by bit, in a process of learning to live with loss.

I found in my analysis that the themes I have identified appeared as early as the post tour conversations, but that the order in which the five themes appeared was not consistent, nor did all the themes appear for every team member or during every data
generating activity. I found that they appeared in greater variety around the time of the second team meeting, just after I had introduced the history report.

In my analysis I identified six specific ways team members engaged in learning difficult knowledge about slave life at MMP (Table 3).

Table 3. Six ways team members engaged in learning to live with loss.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. The five themes appear in unpredictable sequences and can re-occur.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Themes or stages take varying amounts of time, weeks and months.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Sometimes learning comes to a halt and learners foreclose on engaging with new slave life histories.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Comfortable entrances are mechanisms that help learners to work through difficult knowledge. Comfortable entrances are physical places and verbal expressions that enable museum workers to move closer to shaping and using more multidimensional representations of slave life on their tours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. One dimensional precede multidimensional representations of enslaved individuals and families in a gradual transformative learning process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Fitting in is a method of adding slave life information bit by bit to the present regular tour without radically changing the regular tour and without overwhelming the learner’s status quo.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kz’s participation in the study showed the most variety of themes. Kz was one of the original team members and the only team member to give a pilot tour at the end using her own words to expand slave life representations on the regular tour. Below, I analyze Kz’s pilot tour to illustrate how Kz learned to live with loss incited by working through the difficult knowledge initially presented in the slave life stories in the history report. I briefly contrast Kz’ pilot tour with Gz’s pilot tour, who had foreclosed on using the new tour narrative.

At the beginning of the pilot tour, Kz was enthusiastic and explained that she studied the third draft of the new tour narrative. Kz was the only team member who successfully gave a pilot tour in her own words based on the new tour narrative. Kz
maintained the planter’s view of plantation life but she did give significant time to enslaved residents and occasionally included multidimensional representations. She started her tour stating which free and enslaved families she would talk about. Kz said:

Today on the tour we are going to talk about the residents who lived here and the enslaved residents who lived here…. The families that we talk about when we get out here on the porch are the Hillin family, the Joyce family and the Duplantiers. Then also some of the slave community families that we will be talking about Quashee’s family, Abram, Josephine, and Charlotte. (PilotJ, p. 1)

Some of the stories Kz told were stories she had resisted earlier in the study. These included one woman’s journey through the Middle Passage; multiple stories throughout the tour about Quashee’s family, including his two daughters Venus and Juba who lived on neighboring plantations in Baton Rouge; Harry’s and Dick’s education and their father Abram’s story; and Charlotte being used as a wedding gift. In the context of Charlotte’s story, Kz stated that “This story of using an enslaved woman as a wedding gift helps us to understand the objectification of slaves” (PilotJ, p. 5) Kz said she was nervous. She used about 50 minutes to lead the tour.

Kz fit in expanded representations of enslaved individuals throughout her tour using comfortable entrances, such as the cultural stories like the three tiers of slaves from the present regular tour and the historical names and jobs of enslaved individuals. For example, Kz kept her habit of pointing out a “slave entrance” and added a one dimensional representation of Josephine who was an enslaved house servant,

Back here is our very important door to talk about. We call it our slave entrance. Let us talk about the daily lives of the slaves. At four o’clock in the morning probably Josephine who would have been the house slave, she would have come in the back door and may be enter with water so the family could wash their faces, empty this little pot here, it is, of course, a chamber pot…She would also do the light housekeeping for the family. At MMP we try to teach people about the three tiers of slavery, or types of slaves…House slaves we say were treated the best of all the slaves, but no slaves were treated well, they would have access to information …able to listen to some things being said by the family. Also they
would have been given hand me down clothes to wear from the master and mistress… (PilotJ, p. 6)

Kz described the punkah fan suspended over the dining room table, as she had done on her regular tours, and added that Josephine was an enslaved house servant who had a child that was a likely candidate to be told to pull the punkah fan over the table. The punkah fan provided a comfortable entrance for Kz to use the new multidimensional representation of Josephine as a mother. Kz repeated the historical names of 17 enslaved individuals several times throughout the tour in different stories, often expanding enslaved individual’s presence beyond a single artifact or one room.

Kz also took some unexpected risks trying out the new tour narrative. Kz demonstrated that she was still working through difficult knowledge she confronted about enslaved families’ forced separations,

Finally, I find this the most confusing part of the Black Code, my self, it is widely believed that families should be kept together. Families would not be separated. But what the Black code actually says is that children under ten can not be separated from their mothers. So in reality a father could be sold away from the family such as American Will or a child over the age of 10 could be sold away from their mother. I brought that up so you could think about it. (PilotJ, p. 6)

A few weeks prior to Kz’s pilot tour, Kz told me in the informal interview that she “would probably omit West African Islamic beliefs even though I know this was one of the things I really liked” (IJ, p. 13). Kz also explained in the informal interview that the tour narrative was too cumbersome with the story of Latulipe’s rebellion calling the story “a little aside” (IJ, p. 9). Kz said the slave resistance and religion stories tilted the balance of the new tour narrative. However, in her pilot tour, Kz, included both of these stories (PilotJ, p. 4), and described the West African tradition of day naming (naming a baby for the day he or she was born), citing Quashee’s name as meaning Wednesday and Samedi’s name as meaning Saturday (PilotJ, p. 8).
Kz appeared to be consciously trying to give the same amount of time to free and enslaved residents on the tour. Kz said:

So we started our tour telling you about the enslaved and free people at MMP and talked about the Hillins, the Joyces, the Duplantiers, but also Quashee, Abram, Josephine and Charlotte. We hope you leave here with a better understanding of all the residents who lived at MMP and what their life was like. (PilotJ, p. 10)

For several months during the study, Kz had said there was too much information about slave life that was too unbelievable or too overwhelming for the regular tour, and that time constraints would not allow her to tell about the enslaved community at MMP. Kz repeated the difficult knowledge by rereading the history report and the new tour narrative; she reflected and reconsidered the disruptive information making it possible for her to include expanded slave life representations on her pilot tour.

In contrast to Kz’s pilot tour, Gz’s pilot tour showed how Gz had foreclosed on learning the difficult knowledge that the history of slave life at MMP posed for her. Gz read the third draft of the new tour narrative verbatim, saying she could not learn this tour. Likely Kz had less at stake than Gz in revising the regular tour. Gz had a longer relationship with MMP history and plantation heritage than did Kz. Kz demonstrated in her pilot tour that expanding representations of the plantation’s enslaved community was worthy of risks. Gz demonstrated that the risks were too great.

Summary of Findings at MMP

I found that the tour observations, post tour conversations, team meetings, informal interviews, and pilot tours showed team members in the process of expanding slave life representations at MMP were engaged in remembrance learning. Learning unfolded for team members as a response to learning the difficult knowledge that slave life history presented. Team members were initially receptive to new information about
MMP’s enslaved community, and then showed various combinations of resistance, repetition, reflection, and reconsideration as they changed the regular tour narrative. The new information posed disruptions to the traditional interpretation of MMP and to team members’ personal attachments to plantation heritage. Slave life stories from the history report had to be worked through “bit by bit” by individual team members. I identified six ways of learning to live with loss that emerged for team members (Table 3).

Team members were at first interested in one dimensional representations of enslaved individuals as a means for enhancing the regular tour. One dimensional representations did not challenge or disrupt the traditional interpretive focus on the planter’s family history. One dimensional slave life representations afforded team members comfortable entrances into discussing slave life on their tours. Multidimensional representations (e.g., fuller representations with kinship ties and personal stories) of the MMP enslaved community garnered from the history report and used in the new tour narrative changed the interpretation, bringing the enslaved individuals into focus and providing fuller historical presence to the enslaved families and individuals. Multidimensional representations tended to overwhelm the planter focused tour, disrupting the memory of a harmonious planter family and a complacent plantation community.

Team members could not radically change the regular tour without first working through the multidimensional representations of the enslaved characters. These findings suggest that team members’ personal attachments and commitments to MMP were vulnerable to loss when multidimensional representations of the enslaved community were added to the tour. Change could take place when team members could work from comfortable entrances provided by one dimensional representations of slave life (e.g.,
physical prompts like a doorway called a “slave entrance” or from a job title like an enslaved cook) and then build towards multidimensional representations.

Slave life had not been a traditional part of the meanings of MMP’s interpretation. Team members were faced with painful histories that raised learning crises for the individual team members. At the end of the study, two team members (Az and Gz) with personal attachments to French Louisiana plantation history foreclosed on further engagement with the difficult knowledge slave life presented and the other two team members (Dz and Kz) were able to work through the difficult knowledge slave life presented to them and were willing to add expanded slave life stories to the regular tour.

Analysis: Remembrance Learning and Mourning and Melancholia

Team members demonstrated remembrance learning in a working through that resulted in ways of learning to live with loss. My findings detailed in this chapter show that team members were confronted with feelings of loss that were imposed on them by the “difficult knowledge” (Britzman, 1998) presented in the history report on slave life at MMP. Some team members were able to work through the difficult knowledge, while others foreclosed on learning the difficult knowledge. Remembrance learning is a mournful learning process in that team members exhibited some of the characteristics of mourning and melancholia that have been identified in trauma studies by educational psychoanalytic theorists such as Britzman (1998) and Eppert (2000, 2002a).

When I looked closely at team members’ experiences of loss when engaging with multidimensional representations of the enslaved population, I found the point of loss stemmed from the realization of the Other’s personhood. The impact of the realization disrupted the team member’s self-identity and their personal attachments to the more
neutral impersonal one dimensional representations of slave life. The team members either worked through losses, mourning the changes the new knowledge imposed onto his and her self identity, or team members slipped into a melancholic relationship refusing to face the historical character’s personhood that threatened the team member’s identity and attachments. In this way, the scenario of loss relates to the notions of melancholia and mourning. Melancholia and mourning derive from one’s loss of a love object, whether the lost object was a person or an idea (Eppert, 2002; Freud, 1971a).

Claudia Eppert (2000) contends the radical transformational nature of remembrance learning exceeds learners taking in new information, remembrance learning involves an “ethical learning moment” (p. 217). In order for ethical learning moments to unfold for team members, they had to individually recognize and respect the differences between the past and the present, while at the same time commemorate the continuity of lived experiences into the present. Eppert explains that learners engaged with remembrance learning “fundamentally alter [their] relationship with past events and modes of social interaction” (p. 216). The team members had to empathetically reflect on how the multidimensional representations of slave life changed team members’ relationships to the past and to the historical Other. Eppert (2000) explains in Lévinasian terms, one’s ethical obligation to respond to another person,

the “face” of an other person calls me to attention, summons me to an infinite an absolute responsibility for that person, a responsibility that is always more dire than the other’s responsibility for me. In this respect, we are always already obligated to another before our being in the world. (p. 222)

Eppert (2002a) found that some of her students in a classroom setting who engaged with reading Holocaust testimonies were unable to tolerate what they witnessed in the readings and foreclosed on learning about the victims’ stories. Shoshana Felman
(1992) found her students went through a “learning crisis” when they engaged in reading and viewing Holocaust testimonies. In this study, I found team members who engaged in reading the history report about the MMP enslaved population, in some cases, could not tolerate what they were being asked to witness and in some cases went through a learning crisis in trying to make sense of stories that were contrary to how they understood slave life at MMP.

I further explored what might be underlying team members’ resistances and refusals to expanding slave life representations, when these representations were the very concern that outside critics (e.g., Eichstedt and Small, 2002) and museum workers decided were needed in museums. I considered Anna Freud’s notion (see Britzman, 1998, 2003) of education as interference. The history report contained traumatic histories that were perceived by team members as interference and that posed difficult knowledge. Difficult knowledge could promote internal disruptions that incited feelings of loss. These feelings challenged the team member’s contained good objects, threatening his or her ego, and triggered defense mechanisms against painful knowledge and a refusal to mourn.

The act of learning that instigated the learner’s ego defenses required the learner to work through the new knowledge, to re-organize the learner’s self identity with each new piece of knowledge. The ego’s defense mechanisms, for example refusals and denials, work to stabilize the ego’s status quo. In the case of MMP team members in this study, each member’s ego was engaged in defending itself from interference that the history report and then the new tour narrative presented to individual team members. The team members’ responses were acts of self preservation that manifested the internal challenge posed by the two texts to what team members knew was “right” in the social
order and within the security of his or her ego (see Britzman, 1998, p. 113). How did team members negotiate the slave life stories that appeared to threaten her and his identity and knowing the world? Team members expressed fear, ambivalence, dismay, refusals and denials, which appeared as verbal expressions found in the clusters of data I identified as themes that correspond to remembrance learning: reception, resistance, repetition, reflection and reconsideration. Over several months within the study, team members worked through their relationships to the historical text and to historical individuals. In several instances, team members demonstrated empathetic engagement and productive ethical responses towards historical individuals in the form of reconsidering multidimensional representations of slave life.

Winnicott (1989) explains that traumatic events work to disillusion the child’s feelings of omnipotence (p. 145), and I argue three of the four team members demonstrated their disillusionment of omnipotence with the introduction of the history report and the development of the new tour narrative. According to Eppert (2002a), when learners oppose full engagement with the text they might ask “Why does the text not comfort me?” (p. 57). Reading painful historical accounts can demonstrate to the learner how the learner is related to the world that can be unsupportive and not dependable, a realization that incites feelings of trauma (Winnicott, p. 145; Eppert, 2002a, 2002b, 2003). In reading and learning traumatic histories, what is at stake for the learners (and teachers), “is dissonant, and not just congruent with everything...learned before hand” (Felman and Laub (1992) quoted in Britzman, 1998, p. 113). In reading the history report and the new tour narrative, team members experienced a loss of a past that might have once worked to help maintain the team member’s ego-ideal (see Eppert, 2002a). Team members might have sensed a loss of an idealized account of what it means to be a
tour guide or docent. Team members might have felt their performance as tour guides or docents could be at risk if the traditional interpretation were to change. Their changed performance could alter their role as museum workers who deliver a planter’s view of plantation life.

In addition, team members’ resistances to expanded slave life representations were likely bound up with collective national memory generated from mainstream school and media interpretations, and the New South collective memory of plantation life. The team members’ resistances may point to the origins of collective loss, and to their ancestors’ unresolved traumatic losses when confronted with the task of bearing witness to the Other’s traumatic experience from the slave-plantation era.

The team members’ resistances to knowing more fully how enslaved individuals lived at MMP may have been rooted in the un-mourned collective traumatic losses of previous generations. For example, Gz’s personal attachments to French Louisiana heritage may have been, in part, inherited grief. Peter Homans (2000) asks, “How does one receive the transmission of another’s grief? What is the mechanism or procedure whereby the subjective configuration of one becomes the identity of another?” (p. 45)

Abraham’s (1994) concept of the “phantom,” discussed in Chapter Three, could have been a psychic mechanism that transmitted the 19th century Louisiana plantation residents’ melancholic stasis, the un-mourned repressed memories of traumatic events (e.g., enslavement and planters’ losses in the Civil War), to present day Louisianans. This psychoanalytic view suggests the planter class’ loss of slavery and a way of life could be
passed on as unresolved losses to team members who are today’s generations of planter’s
descendants.\footnote{12 For a historical analysis of New South collective memory and Lost Cause ideology bequeathed to younger generations see David Blight, 2001 and Drew G. Faust, 1988.}

In the course of children assimilating their parents’ worldview, Abraham and Torok (1994) contend the child can introject in himself or herself the emotional attitudes, reactions, rituals and physiological signals of the parents without having undergone the experience that generated the grief (p. 48). I observed two team members refuse the text and foreclose on learning, which was a melancholic response toward the historical Other. Using this lens, I consider the possibility that some team members could have inherited their ancestors’ melancholia that manifested as strong self identifications with the French Louisiana planters described on their tours at MMP. Was Gz’s and Az’s resistance, for example, a reflection of their personal attachments to French Louisiana plantation heritage, which were so strong that the team members were unable to change how they viewed the history of plantation life at MMP? Is it possible that team members were feeling the effects of their ancestors’ phantoms that supported personal attachments to the white ethnocentric interpretations at MMP?

How could team members interpret expanded slave life representations at MMP and not betray the past they understood? Team members’ unknown inherited grief and team members’ knowable historical connections to French Louisiana plantation heritage help to describe how some team members were possibly implicated in the history of the Other’s trauma (see Ellsworth, 1997 and Britzman, 1998). Such an implication could likely disrupt his and her ego boundaries, thereby inciting loss and subsequent resistance to knowing the Other’s traumatic story.
In the regular tour at MMP, generic slave life stories were tolerable for team members, and afforded team members a level of comfort or complacency in interpreting slave life. Disturbing slave life stories about historical families’ and individuals’ captivity were not recalled. This interpretation approach helped team members avoid painful stories about oppression. Engaging in the history report in passive terms and with one dimensional representations allowed team members to keep their identities intact and without feelings of crisis. However, according to Felman (1992), without crisis the learner is not learning from the text (p. 47-56). As shown by Eppert (2002a) and Felman (1992) and as demonstrated in this study, repetitive and reflective assessment of the text would likely begin to move the learner towards working through his or her learning crisis.

Gz’s self identity appeared in jeopardy after she read the new tour narrative. Gz closely associated herself to the historical free MMP residents, the planter family portrayed as slaveholders. From my analysis, I discerned that Gz so closely identified with the Duplantier family that the new stories likely put her ego ideal at risk. The new slave life stories possibly infringed on her understanding of the planter family’s lifestyle and of the complacent enslaved population. Gz’s reading of the new tour narrative provoked a melancholic response; she refused to learn the new tour narrative for her pilot tour. The stories likely imposed on Gz’s ego-ideal what had been otherwise maintained by the traditional regular tour.

I suggest that Gz’s ego was at risk. The contents of the new tour narrative likely wounded her ego boundaries that had served as a defense against pain. Britzman (1998) contends, “To learn from disclaimed history requires a willingness to confront one’s own discomfort, one’s own inadequacy, and the conditions and actions that coalesce to
foreclose the possibilities of self and other as ethical subjects” (p. 39). I suggest that Gz sustained her identification with the planter family, and thus resisted encouragement to take opportunities to enlarge her ego boundaries. Gz’s relationship to MMP appeared to be dependent on an interpretation of the historical plantation that worked to support her self identity and her pride in her French Louisiana ancestry. Gz foreclosed on the new tour narrative in a melancholic response, likely incited by the expanded slave life representations on the regular tour, unable to learn to live with the loss.

Learning Traumatic Histories: The Apparent and the Unapparent

Team members, who expressed resistance to the expanded slave life representations through their accusations that the research was insufficient to validate the slave life stories, demonstrated a passion for ignorance. Felman (1987) called the passion for ignorance a defense mechanism (see Chapter Three). I theorize that the team member’s ego defense mechanisms were likely engaged in defending itself from the interference posed by the new information in the history report, which emerged as difficult knowledge the team members were being asked to learn. Britzman explains that difficult knowledge emerges when, “The clash, where affectivity meets an idea, becomes the means to refuse knowledge; where ‘one cannot bear to know’ ” (1998, p. 88).

It is impossible to fully know about the oppressive history of slave life that is buried within the memories of historical sites. These sites commemorate the planters’ survival and defeat, and their actions as defenders of goodness and as practitioners of oppression. It is possible that when team members engaged in the history report, some team members were confronted with the shock of being implicated in the perpetuation of white ethnocentrism. A kind of shock I think of when I read Caruth’s description of “an
ethical relation to the real”, when readers and writers make deep personal connections to narratives on traumatic histories (1996, p. 93). The tour as a story of planter’s survival was bound up with the marginalized address to the enslaved population. Gz said, “I would find it impossible to tell one without telling the other” (EPT1, p. 2). A sense of responsibility was tied to the impossibility of recognizing the planters as slaveholders and slaves as oppressed by them. For some team members, this demand was impossible. Gz explained, “There was a time when it [slave life representation] was not necessary [on the tour]” (EPT3, p. 12).

The team members’ resistances were not a failure to respond to the historical individuals. The team members’ resistances were more likely aligned to avoid pain in the process of bringing losses to consciousness. The new tour narrative was not fun or empowering; rather the tour with expanded representations of slave life recalled the enslaved population’s oppression that had previously been avoided in MMP’s interpretation of plantation life.

Ellsworth (1997) observes that when learners are challenged by traumatic texts, the learner substitutes more tolerable knowledge for the difficult knowledge because knowing the former makes the learner afraid to know the painful information. Ellsworth explains, “I have a passion to ignore the knowledge and desire I have repressed” and “I don’t want to recognize my own desire- but I can’t live without my desire, so I’ve translated it into something that allows me to have my desire…and deny it too…” (p. 61). Team members’ expressions of an inability to know the history of slave life at MMP were likely self defense mechanisms for self preservation in the face of difficult knowledge.
Transitional Objects: One Dimensional Representations

I considered museum workers’ responses to one dimensional representations of slave life of particular interest. New information containing neutral information, such as slaves’ names and jobs, did not disrupt or challenge museum workers understandings of MMP or plantation life. One dimensional representations provided team members with “comfortable entrances” to talk about slave life in their tours. Once team members were comfortable with new names or jobs that were historically grounded in the history report, museum workers were more likely to add more information to further describe those individuals. They were working towards expanding descriptions of personhood with multidimensional representations.

The one dimensional representations were “transitional objects” enabling museum workers to work through, bit by bit, new information that would build towards expanded representations of enslaved individuals. The transitional object is a concept from object relations theory by Donald Winnicott (1989b). The transitional object is something a child holds onto, like a security blanket or a bedtime story, when he or she is developing towards separating from his or her mother. The transitional object fills that space between the limits of the inner self and the external world. One dimensional representations were safe new information that approximated separation from team members’ understanding of MMP history, that bridged the knowable from the unknowable representations of historical persons at MMP. For example, Gz was willing to use the names of twin boys Harry and Dick to describe enslaved playmates for the planter family sons. Gz was unwilling to use the historically accurate stories about Harry and Dick living at MMP with their siblings and parents. The latter representation was too dissonant with Gz’s understanding of MMP plantation life.
Kz, for example, could not grasp the story of Charlotte, the mother of two young girls, who was once used as a wedding gift to the MMP planter mistress. Kz first repeated Charlotte’s name and job as an enslaved house servant and her family status as a mother multiple times as transitional objects. Months later, Kz was able to tell the story of Charlotte being used as a wedding gift and the use of the words “objectification” and “dehumanization” that Kz had refused to accept earlier in the study. Kz was working through the difficult knowledge and had to separate her pain in learning about Charlotte’s suffering from Kz’s suffering in learning about the slave life story. Kz was able to elevate Charlotte as more than a house servant, to a person who was humiliated and oppressed. Charlotte’s name and job were less painful for Kz to talk about, and only later was Kz able to reconcile the suffering that Charlotte had endured. Kz’s learning experience recalls Eppert’s (2002a) description of remembrance learning as a “just mourning,” the pedagogical project encouraged through self-reflexive moments and reflective conversations when learners take on responsibility to separate her self or him self from the Other in order to respond to the Other.

Towards Developing Multidimensional Representations

Simon et al., (2000) explain that learners faced with traumatic histories struggle to work through their affiliations with, and differences from, the current narrative they are engaged in learning (p. 5). What was contained in the multidimensional representations of the enslaved community that threatened to disrupt team members’ attachments to MMP and French Louisiana plantation heritage? At the heart of the expanded slave life representations were stories selected to commemorate the human lives of the enslaved individuals and families central to the telling of the stories. Simon et al., (2000) explain,
Remembrance here endeavors to bring forth into presence specific people and events of the past in order to honor their names and to hold a place for their absent presence in one’s contemporary life. Implicated in this remembrance is a learning to live with loss, a learning to live with a return of a memory that inevitably instantiates loss and thus bears no ultimate consolation, a learning to live with a disquieting remembrance. (p. 4)

At stake for team members was a confrontation with a past that had not been mourned, a past that was opposed to a past that supported the familiar attachments that maintained his or her ego ideal.

Time and freedom to reflect on new slave life stories were keys to remembrance learning unfolding at MMP. Ample time enabled team members to ask more questions about who these historical persons were and what happened to them. Freedom to reflect on new histories allowed team members to enter a reflexive mode towards interpreting slave life to reconsider their relationship to the historical individuals.

According to Felman (1987), the notion of always working towards interpretation, in the context of education, is a psychoanalytic technique available to educators to develop reflexive teaching practices. Reflexivity is a process through which something turns back upon itself, shifts, displaces, and unsettles the boundaries between self and Other (p. 60-61). This pedagogical method can open up the museum practice of developing exhibit interpretations by giving museum workers access to knowledge previously denied to consciousness. Reflexive practices can potentially reveal to the museum workers the unapparent, denied, or forgotten as meaningful and useful components to the narrative (see Felman, 1987p. 60-61; see also Ellsworth, 1997).

Museum workers at MMP found it necessary to either locate or develop comfortable entrances to begin to address historical enslaved individuals as persons with multiple dimensions. In the context of learners reading a novel about Japanese victims of
a World War II internment camp, Eppert (2000) explains that the learner engaged in remembrance learning can develop necessary terms to address the Other (p. 218). Ellsworth (1997) explores the paradox of “the mode of address” in learning in discussing the psychic dynamics shaping the learner’s terms to address the Other. Learners’ attachments and repressed memories influence his or her responses to the traumatic histories read by the learner, impacting the learner’s address to the Other.

Examples of traumatic histories could be about World War II internment camps or Louisiana plantation slave life. Ellsworth argues that the unconscious makes it impossible to get an exact fit between what is to be learned and the learner’s actual response (p. 15). In this way, remembrance learning is merely an approximation of learning to live with loss.

With each retelling of the stories about slave life at MMP, the team member might become more attached to the historical characters and risk a kind of intimacy that could grow into complacency. However, learners who are learning to live with loss take on the responsibility to respond to human suffering in a kind of learning that “subjectifies” the Other. Morris, in the context of learning about the suffering of Holocaust victims, states that “I suggest that we are always strangers to suffering of others” (2001, p. 22). Also possible, and more desirable, team members might develop empathy for the historical characters that enables the team member to respond by expanding the representations of historical characters’ using multidimensional representations. In the context of teaching and learning about historical oppressions, Britzman describes this mode of address as “conditions of passionate subjectivity” (1998, p. 28).
In recognizing the historical characters’ subjectivity, MMP team members were at times faced with the responsibility to bear witness to the Other’s loss, losses recalled in the traumatic stories of enslavement and stories of losses affecting the planters. LaCapra’s (2001) notion of “empathic unsettlement” can be used to describe a learner’s response that distinguishes ones’ own losses from the losses of the recalled historical individual’s losses (p. 78).

Team members made attempts at empathic unsettlement, but it was a rare response in my study. On a few occasions, Dz, Kz, Az, and Gz independently expressed empathy for historical characters demonstrating that the Other’s pain was meaningful to team members in a larger sphere than their own lived lives. For example, Kz referred to how her parents raised her and how her brothers were important to her after reading about enslaved families’ forced separations. Later in the study, Kz discussed enslaved families and the horrors of family separations that she explained she could not imagine. Kz was working towards empathic unsettlement. Kz demonstrated remembrance learning when she worked through her “relationship” to a historical enslaved mother’s grief. For Kz to grasp an enslaved mother’s losses, Kz had to first mourn Kz’s psychic losses so she could retell the enslaved mother’s stories on the tour.

Team members’ interpretations of plantation life were complex recollections of remembering and forgetting, of knowing and not knowing how life was lived on plantations in freedom and in bondage. Traumatic events are characterized psychoanalytically by the impossibility of the subject ever fully knowing what happened. Freud used the accident, and the unexpectedness of an accident, as the compelling example of a scene of trauma because it helps to explain what is and what is not fully
grasped by the subject, that which conveys the impact of trauma’s incomprehensibility (Caruth, 1996, p. 6).

The traumatic histories in the history report asked team members to bear witness to plantation residents’ lived experiences. The ambivalent character of the team members’ responses to the history report suggested the impossibility of team members fully assimilating the traumatic events described. Cathy Caruth (1996), in the context of historical narratives, explains the complex ways knowing and not knowing are entangled in the language of trauma, “If traumatic experience…is an experience that is not fully assimilated as it occurs, then these texts…ask what it means to transmit…a crisis that is marked…by the ways it simultaneously defies and demands our witness” (p. 5).

Gz and Az may have been faced with traumatic histories that posed dual conundrums. First, the team members’ were faced with their responsibility to respect their French and French American ancestors in how they described French Louisiana plantation life on their tours. Second, the team members were faced with the newly introduced responsibility to develop empathic unsettlement for the historical enslaved population they had not fully recognized.

Team members’ emerging understanding of the history of slave life at MMP necessitated two psychological events. The team member could distinguish herself or himself from the historical characters in an empathetic relationship, which resists narcissistic identification with the represented suffering. Secondly, the team member in time, and with reflection, could form a meaningful relationship to the historical characters that acknowledges the team member’s inability to fully understand the historical traumatic events.
As Eppert (2000) points out, remembrance learning is not a process with closure. Remembrance learning for the team members is ongoing, as team members continue to negotiate their relationships to the historical characters. The internal realities of the team member’s mourning (learning to live with loss) are relative to his or her attachments and the external conditions for him or her to work through his or her losses. Britzman (1998) explains the unconscious is something one cannot know directly, its workings interfere with what is taken as direct experience and with what is valued (p. 7). The team member might have refused information and repressed that which was too much to bear, his or her ego wishing to ignore or forget that which the ego could not stand to know. These findings also illuminate how we can think about commemorative museum pedagogy that can be deployed in other museums.
Chapter Seven: Towards a Commemorative Museum Pedagogy

As errors in understanding are eliminated and as new sources of knowledge emerge, so meaning is a continuing process of modification, adaptation and extension. The hermeneutic circle is never fully closed, but remains open to the possibilities of change. (Hooper-Greenhill, 2002, p. 12)

Attributes of a Commemorative Museum Pedagogy

Commemorative museum pedagogy is a sensitive and workable approach for museum workers to consider as they expand slave life representations at their historical sites. Based on my analysis of the MMP museum workers’ responses and my current thinking, a viable commemorative museum pedagogy includes five attributes:

1.) multidimensionality for historical representations

2.) allowance for the dynamics of remembrance learning

3.) development of interpretation baselines

4.) allowance for ongoing dialogue and awareness of post-modern curriculum insights

5.) commitment to the challenges of expanding slave life representations

I discuss each attribute below. This discussion addresses my second and third research questions posed in Chapter One: what happens when museum workers grapple with difficult knowledge, and what pedagogical strategies can they use.

Multidimensionality for Historical Representations

The content to be learned by museum workers includes the multiple and complex dimensions of slave life experiences. However, the multidimensional slave life stories are not to be merely transmitted from a historical record into the understandings of museum
workers. As shown in my analysis of the MMP team members, museum workers need to develop empathetic relationships with the historical characters to be able to more fully describe the lives of the free and enslaved individuals at their historical site. As museum workers work through the new knowledge, they are more likely able to develop multidimensional representations about the historical individuals.

One dimensional representations, such as the historical names of enslaved individuals, might appeal to a museum worker who has previously refused to engage in changing the traditional site interpretation. Historical names are both commemorative markers and small fragments of historical information that team members can reflect on and that might be bearable for them to (re)consider fitting into their understandings of the site. Key to developing an integrated and expanded site interpretation is allowing team members to first build one dimensional representations on their way towards multidimensional representations. Likely, if the team begins by immediately addressing more complex multidimensional representations that describe personhood and historical relationships, then the team could face overwhelming losses of meanings for the historical site and possibly foreclose on learning how the slave life histories are an integral part of the site’s history. Introducing new slave life history should be done in a gradual manner with an objective of eventually developing fuller multidimensional representations. Museum workers need to ultimately transcend their dependence on one dimensional representations and the approach of “separate but equal tours” in order to more fully represent the historical integrated web of relationships that constituted the community at the historical site.

The interpretation of slave life at different historical sites should not be the same. Using generic slave life interpretations avoids addressing the central purpose of more
fully representing to visitors the historically lived experiences of enslavement. Historical sites often share important historical events, such as political geographies, and colonial, state, or federal laws created and protected by the governments to perpetuate slavery. Historical sites often also share similar period agricultural, medical, and transportation technologies. Museum workers must recognize that the construction of multidimensional representations at their museums needs to account for, and to respond to, the unique lived experiences of the people who lived at their particular historical site. The stories in the history report (Appendix A) are for MMP; other sites will develop their own site-specific historical interpretations. The key is that the stories should be multidimensional representations of the free and enslaved people at their specific site.

Allowance for the Dynamics of Remembrance Learning

As stated in the previous chapter, remembrance learning is central to commemorative museum pedagogy. Commemorative museum pedagogy recognizes that remembrance learning is a kind of learning to live with internal losses. Museum workers who are engaged in developing slave life representations with newly-found histories about oppression might need to work through difficult knowledge in a process of mourning the losses provoked by the new stories. Working through his or her losses in learning the difficult knowledge is a gradual learning process. The learner works through, “bit by bit,” the new pieces of the painful knowledge, ever increasing his or her understandings of the slave life stories.

Museum workers, who are faced with the challenge of learning from difficult knowledge, can be encouraged by fellow museum workers who acknowledge that learning slave life histories is also a psychic event that is charged with the possibility of
the learner’s resistance to knowledge. The museum worker’s psychic energies work towards stability, which can manifest as what the museum worker knows about a particular historical site. Newly introduced texts can interfere with this internal stability that supports the museum worker’s understandings and attachments. The learner is always focused on self preservation. Tasks that disrupt that stability can incite resistances to the new knowledge, generating desires to melancholic stasis to refuse or ignore the new knowledge. Learners who work through losses incorporate the new knowledge into their understandings in processes that expand the learner’s ego boundaries.

Remembrance learning helps to account for learner’s resistances to changing the site’s traditional interpretation of plantation life. Museum workers’ expressed resistances are not a failure to respond to historical individuals, more likely, expressed resistances are responses to avoid one’s discomfort in the process of bringing disparities or losses to consciousness.

The psychic disruptions instigated by the museum worker’s engagement with reading or hearing about particular slave life histories are an opportunity (that can also be perceived as a challenge) to increase his or her capacity to take responsibility to respond to the historical characters as unique persons. Museum workers are encouraged, through self-reflexive conversations and reflective moments, to take an attitude of empathic unsettlement in a mournful process of taking responsibility to separate herself or himself from the Other (see Eppert, 2002a, p. 59).

Museum workers using a remembrance learning lens will likely be more aware and sensitive to their fellow workers’ resistances that are rooted in their personal connections to the historical site. Museum workers, in a team setting, are unlikely to openly reflect on or ask about what prior knowledge or attachments to the historical site
are affirmed or made strange in learning the new histories. Inside and outside of group meetings, museum workers will likely reflect on which parts of the new slave life histories are uncomfortable and comfortable for possible inclusion in a new tour narrative. They might discuss which stories “fit in” to the current site interpretation, or ask what additional research is needed? What stories validate or challenge what is presently understood about life lived at this place? How does the team need to reorganize the current site interpretation in light of newly introduced slave life stories? What historical voices are coming into focus as more information comes to the surface about the enslaved community? How do the new historical voices impact the traditionally known historical characters and the traditional tour focus?

When new historical slave life information is received by team members, they need to have time and opportunities to talk about them, write about them, and ask more questions about them. Psychoanalyst Dori Laub (1992) explains, in the context of listening to the testimonies of Holocaust survivors, that dialogue is a “process of exploration and reconciliation of two worlds – the one that was brutally destroyed and the one that is – that are different and will remain so” (p. 91). For museum workers, dialogue offers opportunities to listen to and to tell others their understandings of the histories of slave life. Laub goes on to explain that for Holocaust survivors giving testimonies is also a process of facing loss, “of going through the pain of the act of witnessing and the ending of the act of witnessing - which entails yet another repetition of the experience of separation and loss” (p. 91). Based on Laub’s analysis of survivors’ acts of bearing witness to testimonies (p. 75), I suggest that museum workers are receiving and giving testimonies, in this sense, on three levels identified by Laub: witness to one’s self; witness to the testimonies of others; and bearing witness to the process of witnessing
itself\textsuperscript{13}. In these ways, museum workers enter into relationships with historical Others when he or she listens to or reads slave life histories, and are party to the creation of knowledge. Laub explains, “The testimony of trauma thus includes its hearer, who is, so to speak, the blank screen on which the event comes to be inscribed for the first time” (p. 57).

Team meetings, informal conversations, and further readings are some examples of opportunities for team members to receive, resist, repeat, reflect, and reconsider slave life histories and the difficult knowledge the histories can present. Museum workers are encouraged to work through his or her personal attachments to the slave life stories on their own terms.

The interminable nature of commemorative museum pedagogy arises in multiple ways. For example, each museum worker who enters into the project of expanding slave life representations comes to the project with his or her unique attachments and with an undetermined store of knowledge about the historical site. Each museum worker will likely respond in personal ways to the difficult knowledge they might encounter. Museum workers, who are not overwhelmed by hearing and reading new slave life histories and are committed to producing interpretations and implementing tours, will continue to work through the difficult knowledge contained in the slave life histories.

It is not in the best interest of a project expanding a site’s interpretation to sacrifice the long-held traditional interpretation by invoking an immediate transition to a radically changed interpretation focus. As tolerable one dimensional representations are identified by the team, the team will likely begin finding comfortable entrances on the

\textsuperscript{13} I use Dori Laub’s (1992) insights into bearing witness to Holocaust survivors’ testimonies to foreground museum workers’ responses to historical traumas in their work to bear witness to the histories of plantation slavery.
tour, on the historical landscape, or in the tour narrative that can be enhanced with pieces
of the new information and that can be built up over time. Museum workers might find
that once they are familiar with some initial one dimensional representations, they
become more interested in researching particular genealogies and biographies, and
consequently continue to extend the remembrance learning moments.

In the process of reflecting on one’s personal relationships to plantation history,
museum workers also embark on a journey of developing deeper empathy for the
oppressed historical individuals. When museum workers find comfortable entrances to
discuss slave life, they likely will be comfortable in the required retelling of stories that
museum interpretations demand. Morris (2001), in the context of reading Holocaust
testimonies, warns that learners should not work towards making the strange too familiar,
“We must never assimilate the memory [of the Holocaust] into our own life world but
perhaps live alongside it: to remain a stranger to it. We must never make the strange
familiar” (p. 101).

With each retelling of the stories about slave life, museum workers risk a kind of
intimacy that could grow into complacency. As Felman (1992) explains, without crisis
the learner is not learning from the text. As shown by Eppert (2002a) and Felman (1992),
and as demonstrated in this study, resistant, repetitive and reflective assessment of
traumatic historical texts can begin to move learners towards deeper engagement with the
texts.

Commemorative museum pedagogy is a gradual and recursive endeavor that does
not necessarily go simply forward. Museum workers may find new stories painful and
enter a learning crisis. Museum workers’ sense of self could wavier or tremble. At times,
museum workers may revert back to a traditional planter focused tour when the task of
increasing and elevating enslaved residents’ historical presence overwhelms their personal attachments. As Dz said in his informal interview, he would not “jab in” all the new information at one time, he would introduce slave life stories “bit by bit.” When museum workers tell new slave life stories on their tours, the museum workers have claimed the stories and have demonstrated that they want to tell those stories in their own way. If the museum worker has not worked through the new histories and is not invested in the slave life stories, then he or she will likely opt for the habits and security of the traditional planter focused tours.

If the museum workers find the new slave life histories are overwhelming, too dissonant with the traditional interpretation of the historical site, or they find the stories are difficult knowledge, then they may resist the new stories and refuse engaging further with the project. Museum workers’ ambivalent responses wanting and resisting new slave life histories might be an indication that museum workers are engaged in remembrance learning. Museum workers who can not reconcile the disruptions new slave life stories can pose to the current site interpretation or to the museum worker’s personal attachments to the site’s traditional meanings might foreclose on the project of expanding representations of slave life.

Learning about slave life will therefore not be conclusive; instead, it will be an opening for contemplation and recursive reflection about our own implications in slave life history. If commemorative museum pedagogy can unfold, then the opening will likely reveal voids in the museum interpretation that museum workers and visitors will notice, question, and evaluate. Museum workers will likely take an active role in demanding to know more. Commemorative museum pedagogy is a means for teaching history as stories we live with. These stories, which are tied to our sense of limits and
possibilities, hopes and fears, and identities and differences, compel us to confront not only stories about the past but also stories within ourselves that reveal to us how we are historically and socially in the present (see Simon, 1992; Rose, 2004b).

Development of Interpretation Baselines

Early in an interpretation expansion project, museum workers should assess the current site interpretation, and note how and where slave life is presently interpreted in exhibits, tours, and programs. Establishing a current interpretation baseline will help museum workers identify what more they want to know about the enslaved community and will help them organize their impending research questions about the particular enslaved community. Can we identify historical enslaved families and individuals who lived at the historical plantation? Does the museum presently interpret stories about the relationships among the free and enslaved residents? Where on the tour are enslaved families and individuals referred to and what kinds of descriptions are used to tell their stories? Are they generic references or are historical names of individuals mentioned? Assessing the current interpretation will help museum workers identify the cultural stories presently used to represent slave life, and museum workers can then begin to sort through their personal attachments to the meanings and history of their historical site.

The team should outline the site’s interpretation baseline (see Irwin-Zarecka, 1994), which is the chronologically organized biographical, political, social, and physical histories of the site, and that is likely the underpinning for the site’s current interpretation. Team members review, discuss, imagine, and debate, in an open and ongoing process, how slave life histories could be elevated and enriched in the context of an inclusive interpretation baseline about the plantation landscape. The guiding principle for
expanding the interpretation to include slave life representations is including stories about
the relationships between free and enslaved residents, and among individuals in the
enslaved community, in the effort to develop multidimensional representations of
historical persons. The interpretation baseline and the stories about relationships and
humanity should be well documented to ensure that the museum workers have confidence
in the validity of the (potential) difficult knowledge contained in the stories.

Copies of historical reports and texts addressing the site’s historical population
should be readily available to the museum workers. Copies of the initial interpretation
baseline should be available to aid museum workers in reconsidering new information.
Museum workers might find a tour template that outlines existing and proposed tour
routes and a copy of the museum mission statement helpful. Drafts of revised or new tour
narratives can be circulated and be made readily available and feedback should be
encouraged.

Allowance for Dialogue and Awareness of Post-Modern Curriculum Insights

I find aspects of a post-modern curriculum (Doll, 1993) that allow for uncertainty
and consideration for the unpredictable, non-linear, and recursive nature of learning offer
a broader context for viewing attributes of commemorative museum pedagogy.
Considering commemorative museum pedagogy with a post-modern public curriculum
lens can also be instrumental to museum workers to recognize that the learning about
slave life is ongoing; museum workers have already been thinking about, learning about,
and possibly have been interpreting slave life when the project formally begins. Doll
explains that a post-modern curriculum has no beginning and no ending (1993, p. 162),
and I suggest that commemorative museum pedagogy has no certain beginnings or endings.

Museum workers, who collectively agree to expand slave life representations at their site, will organize themselves into a team, not different from an exhibit planning or interpretation planning team common in contemporary museum practice (e.g., Ambrose and Pain, 1993). The team approach includes curators, educators, administrators, board members, and frontline workers, who will, in large part, take decisive roles in how current interpretations are expanded and shared with the public. Museum workers should become invested in the ongoing research and reflective activities that will then inform tour writing, exhibit designing, and program planning. Team members’ willingness to negotiate the meanings of the plantation is central to the team’s ongoing dialogue about developing multidimensional representations.

My findings also reveal the need for museum workers to have opportunities for dialogue and play. Doll explains that a post-modern curriculum approaches learning as a reflective transformative process. Those reflective and creative moments of trying out new ideas, asking hard questions, taking risks in changing one’s understandings and in discussing new ideas with others render the work of learning and imagining new ways of interpreting slave life as “play” (see Doll, 1993, p. 156). The transformative nature of new slave life interpretations suggests that the evolving historical site interpretations will reveal partial truths that are contingent on museum workers’ responses.

Doll contends that “through dialogue, conversation and public inquiry” (1993, p. 62) learners can begin to reflect on their tacit understandings in order to bring them to consciousness, and in the process the learners’ can change their understandings. This is similar to the process of working through new and disruptive knowledge. In this light,
commemorative museum pedagogy is a group dynamic in which museum workers share, critique, and possibly change their personal understandings of the historical site’s meanings and recognize how their meaning making informs the institutional meanings for the historical site. Museum workers need to recognize that the meanings will be open to continuous revisions. Revisions will likely be dependent on museum workers’ socio-historical situatedness and reflect the current social context of the present time.

Team meetings, outside conversations, group and individual research efforts, and writing history reports are examples of safe spaces where museum workers should be able to continuously explore and reflect on ways to interpret plantation life. Pilot tours are another venue for museum workers to use to develop multidimensional representations of enslaved residents. Team members who listen to each other give tours that incorporate new slave life stories will likely engage in conversations that critique and reflect on the tour’s contents and effects.

The tensions felt by museum workers, within and outside of the team, in changing museum interpretations to include integrated multidimensional representations of an enslaved population are a productive part of the learning dynamic (see Doll, 1993, p. 157). Tensions are raised at the points of museum workers’ resistances, which demand dialogue, repetition, reflection, and reconsideration. Tensions that emerge have the potential to generate productive and creative thinking to address the complexities of historical characters’ lived experiences in enslavement.

Museum workers share in the responsibility of interpreting the historical site for the public. Frontline workers who are tour guides and docents might feel their performance depends on how they are charged to interpret slave-era plantation life and can feel they risk loss when the focus of the interpretation changes. Commemorative
museum pedagogy allows for both a creative group dynamic and a personally transformative learning dynamic to enable museum workers to self-determine the stories they use to represent the integrated plantation population.

Museum workers’ resolve to stay the course in commemorative museum pedagogy likely involves months and years. My results show that a workable approach to expanding slave life representations requires extended amounts of time. Doll (1993) explains a post-modern curriculum grows over time and with learners’ engagement, “The richer the curriculum, the more points of intersection, the more connections constructed, and the deeper the meaning” (p. 162). Doll describes how a post-modern curriculum is not about learners and teachers transmitting knowledge, but about exploring and “playing” with new knowledge in attempts to find meaningful points of connections (see p. 155). Commemorative museum pedagogy allows museum workers ample time to continue receiving, resisting, repeating, reflecting, and reconsidering bits of slave life histories that go deeper into memory, multiplying the possible points of connection and potentially deepening the museum workers’ understandings of the historical individuals’ lives.

Commitment to the Challenges of Expanding Slave Life Representations

The museum’s commitment to transforming the site’s interpretation towards an integrated historical recollection of plantation life needs to include institutional support. The museum board and administration need to provide museum workers with adequate time and resources to pursue the necessary research and to participate in the project. Museum workers also have to be personally committed to the challenge, and they must recognize the sensitive and disruptive nature of the project.
Museum workers who are trying to bring slave life history into focus at their historical site need to embrace the notion of museum interpretation as an often long ongoing process. The formal introduction of the project to expand the site’s slave life representations lays out a more organized and rigorous plan for the museum workers. The formal introduction of the project should not, however, be an isolated mandate or be presented only as a response to outside critics. The museum’s decision to formally embark on the project should come from within the institution and the decision-making should include the museum workers who will likely implement the project.

Commemorative museum pedagogy engages museum workers in responding to historical reports in a way that empowers museum workers to self-determine how to represent the enslaved population in an effort to expand the meanings of their historical site. It is crucial that museum workers feel invested and committed to the project of expansion. Museum workers should know that expanded interpretations of slave life would serve a greater good towards social justice, and can lead to a broader and more diverse museum audience. The efficacy of commemorative museum pedagogy largely depends on museum workers’ commitment to change, their imagination, empathy, and the breadth and depth of the historical research available, and their relationships to the plantation’s legacy.

Museum workers’ commitments to self-reflective study and to the institution’s greater good, can breed a sense of collaboration, community and collegiality among the museum staff. Lonnie Bunch, in the context of interpreting race relations in museums recommends, “Embracing rather than marginalizing a complex and painful subject…should raise questions that resonate with passion and contemporary context” (1992, p. 292).
The gradual changes museum workers might make to the historical site interpretation will likely first lead to a “reformed white narrative” (Rahier and Hawkins, 1999). This would be an intermediate step towards the development of an integrated interpretation. The team’s challenge to write a revised tour narrative means the team has to account for the slaves’ view of life that is often missing in planter focused tours. It is important that museum workers invite outside scholars, community members with ties to African American history, and individuals from the general community, who can comment, contribute, review and openly discuss the new and proposed slave life interpretations with team members.

Maintaining an atmosphere of respect among team members, other museum workers, and towards historical individuals is imperative for commemorative museum pedagogy to unfold. Museum workers’ willingness to look within themselves and at each other with sensitivity to individuals’ attachments and understandings of slave life history and the historical site is necessary. Team members likely enter the project with fears and feelings of risk that he or she may not articulate, and that can limit the level of engagement museum workers might otherwise offer. Fears and feelings of risk can raise the anxieties of the museum workers, and can contribute to their refusal to participate and to their expressions of resistance. Effective communication can stem the chances of foreclosure.

Current museum practice encourages museum workers not to memorize or use a script to lead tours. Instead, museum workers prefer to be told the acceptable route, time frame and key stories for each tour stop, and prefer to expand their interpretations with information that interests them and their visitors. Commemorative museum pedagogy encourages museum workers to continue learning new information about the historical
site that is meaningful to them, however challenging. As new slave life information surfaces museum workers must continue to ask: What do I know about the history of slave life that will further enable me to answer “Who lived here?”

Commemorative museum pedagogy gives museum workers time, opportunities, and encouragement to engage in new information about slave life history in a learning environment that respects the museum worker’s internal world. Museum workers should recognize that both the learning and the development of new tour narratives using new slave life histories will likely unfold in unpredictable ways over long periods of time. Museum managers, museum patrons, and fellow museum workers, who put demands on museum workers to pursue their engagement with historical texts on slave life, need to take into consideration these conditions for commemorative museum pedagogy to unfold.

Finishing Remarks

Scholars in curriculum theory, and museum educators in practice, stand to share in learning how commemorative museum pedagogy further informs education in schools and in museum settings. Educators in both disciplines are regularly confronted with the responsibility of teaching and learning the traumatic history of American slavery, which raises challenges for educators. The history of American slavery includes a collection of painful stories of oppression that are not easy to learn or teach.

Formal educators can use commemorative museum pedagogy in classroom learning to provide a sensitive learning environment that includes time and space for reception, resistance, repetition, reflection, and reconsideration. Formal educators can consider introducing one dimensional representations with students, on their way to developing more complex multidimensional representations.
Commemorative museum pedagogy illustrates the necessity for museum workers to acknowledge the significant role they play in constructing narratives for the public that address histories of social violence. When museums do not more assertively address the void in multidimensional representations of slave life on their historical landscapes, they are perpetuating biased histories about who we are as Americans.

My notion of commemorative museum pedagogy is grounded in concepts generated by curriculum theorists and offers museum workers a critical theoretical approach to developing museum interpretations of slave life, which continue to slowly and awkwardly dot the historical plantation landscape. As responsible pedagogy (see Eppert, 2000), this approach demands that the museum worker develop a relationship that obligates him or her to acknowledge the historical individual’s personhood and challenges him or her to respond justly to the historical persons and events in the site’s interpretation.

The action research study described here addresses how museum workers can begin to help implement social change. As forums for social change, history museums have the capacity to instigate and channel social transformation (Munley, 1995; Crane, 2000; Hooper-Greenhill, 2002) in carrying out the things they are designed to do - collect, preserve, and interpret history. My study demonstrates how learning by museum workers is a major part of implementing social change in the context of historical plantation museums. Museum interpretations are the grounds for analysis and the sites for political critique and intervention.

Walter Benjamin’s (1968) prophetic advice, and later Roger I. Simon’s (1992) urging to educators, to brush history against the grain, suggests that museum workers should take risks by challenging the dominant narrative by disrupting the long-held
interpretations at historical site museums to reveal museum workers’ own complacencies and positions of authority to themselves. Carey Carson (1981) observes that his curatorial colleagues at living history museums are historians and social activists. From this lens, museums are capable of interpreting forms of injustice and solidarity rooted in commitments to democratic access and representation.

The project to elevate and integrate enslaved African American’s historical presence is a work-in-progress. I have endeavored to better understand how museum workers engage in slave life history as a small step towards remembering the millions of enslaved individuals who contributed to the nation’s story. Commemorative museum pedagogy is just a piece in the much larger challenge to more fully interpret the historical plantation landscapes.
Chapter Eight: Concluding Remarks

Bogdan and Biklen (1998) suggest that action researchers ask themselves whether the research they conducted stimulated changes (p. 209). To what extent has my study at MMP impacted the possibilities of incorporating an expanded interpretation of slave life at MMP? Did the study initiate workable innovations? The findings from my study indicate that some team members at MMP became more aware of the limited representations of slave life at the historical plantation, and some members expressed interest in continuing the process of expanding the regular tour narrative.

What needs to happen now? A follow up study would be helpful to continue to record and analyze ongoing remembrance learning among the museum workers at MMP. The follow up study could investigate how the emerging slave life stories come to form in the regular tour, and possibly in other programs at MMP. In a follow up study, it would be especially revealing to follow the particular histories that the original team members resisted in my study as difficult knowledge, to see how team members work through their resistances and if they integrate these new stories into the regular tour. I would be interested in tracking over a longer period of time which slave life stories the museum workers develop from one to multidimensional representations. A separate study could also be implemented to look at the impact my action research study may have had on MMP’s special tour Beyond the Big House.

I am also interested in the results obtained by other museums as they consider commemorative museum pedagogy to address slave life interpretations at their sites. Such information would encourage further study of the pedagogy as a workable approach to addressing the documented void in American slave life representation among the
nation’s historical sites. A formal study of other museums that consider commemorative museum pedagogy as they expand slave life representations would be an outstanding opportunity to attempt to document the emergence of remembrance learning themes at other sites. Researchers could experiment more deliberately with introducing one dimensional and multidimensional representations and they could study the museum workers’ responses to help further test my theory that remembrance learning is encouraged by a progressive introduction of slave life stories that respect learners’ resistances to difficult knowledge and learning crises.

Extending the action research study at MMP to explore how slave life representations are received by visitors would be another dimension to further studying commemorative museum pedagogy. I imagine that visitors would express their responses to slave life history differently than how I found museum workers expressed loss in learning. Visitors are informal learners who typically come only one time to the museum and have limited interactions with the history shared at the museum. Visitors come to MMP for many different reasons, and they come with a diverse collection of expectations for their museum visit. I wonder how visitors would engage in slave life stories on guided tours and on self guided tours. How would visitors respond to the slave cabin exhibit before or after they took a regular tour of the big house? Would visitors have opportunities to express resistance to slave life stories and would they have opportunities, in the time frame of their museum visit, to repeat, reflect or reconsider the slave life stories they heard on the tour? How would these learning moments unfold after visitors leave the museum?

Museum workers around the country are more seriously researching and studying how to expand slave life representations at historical sites. The trend in larger history
museums, as described by Julia M. Klein (2004), is to interpret the enslaved populations’ record for adaptability and resilience over historical circumstance. The trend incorporates personhood, showing enslaved individuals’ relationships. Smaller museums are participating in workshops, such as “Telling the Tough Stories” sponsored by the American Association of State and Local History, to discuss new research about enslaved populations and in projects to increase the historical presence of enslaved communities on the historical landscape through exhibits, tours, programs, and publications.

Historian Joyce Appleby (2006) explains that over the past 40 years, history studies of ordinary men and women documenting the actual experiences of everyday Americans are slowly appearing in historical scholarship. Historians are now discussing slaves and workers instead of labor movements. Slowly, “book by book,” Appleby observes Americans are “recovering the suppressed story of how Southern planters and their enslaved men and women lived together” (p. 9).

Site by site and worker by worker, museums are slowly and mournfully recovering the silenced stories of how free and enslaved residents lived together on plantations. Bit by bit, museum workers are learning more about plantations’ social networks bringing into focus, name by name, the enslaved families and individuals. However, museums need more than fresh research on enslaved communities. Present generations of museum workers need to try new approaches, like the commemorative museum pedagogy proposed here, to begin to more seriously and more personally face the changing ways slave life histories are recalled, which can incite internal losses that compel museum workers to learn to live with loss.
References


255


Unpublished References


Spanish West Florida Records, 1782-1816, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collection, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge.

Study Transcripts Unpublished Raw Data

BPT1, 2, 3 Post Tour Conversations with Az July through August 2005
EPT1, 2, 3 Post Tour Conversations with Gz May through August 2005
JPT1, 2 Post Tour Conversations with Kz July through August 2005
TM1 First Team Meeting July 8, 2005
TM2 Second Team Meeting September 7, 2005
TM2E Second Team Meeting with Gz September 9, 2005
TM3 Third Team Meeting September 28, 2005
IB Informal Interview with Az October 19, 2005
Dz Informal Interview with Dz October 25, 2005
IE Informal Interview with Gz October 18, 2005
IJ Informal Interview with Kz October 25, 2005
PilotE Pilot Tour with Gz November 30, 2005
PilotJ Pilot Tour with Kz December 2, 2005

Online Resources

Ancestry.com
Library of Congress American Memory Collections. www.loc.gov
Appendix A

History Report

History of Magnolia Mound Plantation’s Enslaved Residents: 1786-1827*

Julia Rose

October 25, 2005

DRAFT TWO

Louisiana State University

*This document was specifically prepared for the Action Research Team

Julia Rose
LSU College of Education
Introduction

Who lived in bondage at Magnolia Mound Plantation (MMP) in the first quarter of the 19th century? In my year-long study, I have identified over 300 names of enslaved individuals who lived at Magnolia Mound Plantation or were affiliated with the plantation’s owners, Hillin (1786-1791), Joyce (1792-1802), Duplantier (1802-1841), and Hall (1849 -1869) families. While hundreds of enslaved people were affiliated with these slaveholding families and MMP, this brief report will focus on those enslaved individuals, families, and artisans who were at MMP for some time between 1786 to around 1820.

Records show that many enslaved individuals and families were at MMP for only a short period of time, while other enslaved individuals and families stayed with the Duplantier family for several generations, sometimes at MMP and at other times at other Duplantier home sites. The purpose of this brief report is to recall the enslaved community that peopled MMP during the time period the current museum-tour addresses. The interpretation time-period appears to begin when Hillin received a Spanish land grant in 1786 and tends to end around Armand Duplantier’s death in 1827, with narratives about the Duplantier’s MMP household and plantation in full operation through the 1810s. Therefore, I have focused this report on those enslaved individuals, families, and artisans who were at MMP as early as 1786 to as late as 1820, with anecdotal links that extend to the 1870s.

The report is not a tour narrative. It is a historical report to describe the names and lived experiences of the enslaved population at MMP, circa 1786 -1820. The tour narrative is our final goal. The report is just one step towards that goal. The report is organized to inform our work to draft a tour-narrative that brings the enslaved population
into focus and uses the Duplantier family story as the framework to interpret a fuller story about the MMP big house.

**Hillin Period, 1786-1791**

In 1782, the Louisiana colonial census for Baton Rouge states that James Hillin and his wife Jane had five sons and one daughter and did not own any slaves. According to this record, Hillin was a yeoman farmer growing tobacco and corn\(^{14}\). Bannon, Yancy and Edwards (1984, p. 19) add that Hillin also grew indigo. The Spanish government encouraged settlers to grow tobacco and indigo for the mother country. Hillin, like many settlers, was growing corn for local consumption.

James Hillin was working towards becoming a planter. On December 12, 1786 Hillin acquired a land grant for 1054 arpents (948.6 acres) in Baton Rouge from the Spanish government, land that became MMP\(^{15}\). In the 1780s, slave traders Lachson McNell, Archibald Thompson, and Donald Campbell from Kentucky and Tennessee were bringing slaves to sell in East Baton Rouge\(^{16}\). Israel Dodge, from Kentucky, was also a slave trader in Baton Rouge\(^{17}\). The newspaper, *Louisiana Gazette*, regularly published announcements of ships arriving at New Orleans with African slaves for sale. Planters in East Baton Rouge also traveled to New Orleans to buy slaves. On July 28, 1788, Hillin purchased at least one female slave in New Orleans from the merchant Captain Domingo Mayronneella. This woman was 18-years old and from Chamba, Africa. Chamba is in present day northwestern Nigeria near the border of Cameroon. She is described in the sale records as “Brut”, a French term meaning newly arrived or untrained slave. She

---

\(^{14}\) 1782 Census, Ardon (ed.) (1977) p.196  
\(^{15}\) SPWF v. 2, p. 424-5  
\(^{16}\) SPWF v. 6 p.129, p.144  
\(^{17}\) SPWF v. 1, p. 301
traveled the middle passage and went to Martinique before arriving in Louisiana aboard a slave ship called, *Le Joven Felicianna*. Captain Miller sailed the brigantine (a ship with two masts) for Mayronneella that departed with 55 slaves, including this 18-year old woman, and arrived with only 50 slaves, all who were destined for the New Orleans slave market. Captain Miller’s voyage, might have originated in England or Spain and went to Senegambia on the West Coast of Africa to collect a “cargo of Negroes” and sailed through Martinique and then onto New Orleans, Louisiana. The complete voyage typically took nine months.

Hillin brought the 18-year old woman to Baton Rouge to join his new plantation community of 9 Hillin family members and a slave community of at least 6 people. The woman was given a European name, likely, Jenny (born 1770). Likely, by time Jenny arrived at MMP, she was faced with having to learn to speak English and Spanish. Jenny spoke either a Leko or Daka dialect from Chamba. The slave community at MMP included other African slaves, who probably did not speak Jenny’s native language. In 1788, the MMP slave community likely included Thomas (born about 1750), a 30 to 40-year old man from the Coromanti nation in the Gold Coast region in Africa; John (born about 1769) who was about 19-years old from Africa; Catherine or Caterina (born about 1768) a 20-year old woman from Apa nation in Africa; Lucia from the African Ashanti nation; Ana (born about 1769) from the Mina nation in the Bight of Benin region in

18 Captain Domingo Mayronneella owned *Le Joven Felicianna* and likely routinely imported slaves to New Orleans from Africa.
19 Leglaunce (2005) p. 219; Afro-Louisiana Database document no.106; LSU Special Collections Cuba 5A folio 865
20 LSU Special Collections Cuba 5A folio 865
21 The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database (1999)
22 In 1789, Jane Stanley Hillin’s succession records include a slave woman “Chiny” aged 20 of the Chamba nation. The age given, the African heritage, and the similar name on this record, and the age and “Jenny” on Hillin’s wife’s succession suggests ‘Chiny’ is ‘Jenny’ who was held by Hillin for many years in Baton Rouge.
Africa. Together this plantation community of 9 white planter family members and at least 6 enslaved African men and women established an indigo crop, tobacco crop, and corn crop. Only one year after Jenny arrived at MMP, 1789, Jane Stanley Hillin died leaving behind a record of six slaves at MMP. Those six enslaved residents at MMP were: Thomas, Lucia with her two month old daughter, Catherine, Anna, and Jenny now 20 years old\(^{23}\).

The slaves at MMP were left to tend to the corn, tobacco and indigo. James Hillin rented out MMP and left the plantation in the hands of Charles O’Reilly and his wife Nancy Dunn. They were to oversee the farm and care for the Hillin children. The slaves, the Hillin children, and the O’Reillys milked cows, tended to the hogs, and made a crop of provisions and clothing for themselves\(^{24}\). They kept the fences and levee in good repair.

In March 1790, shortly, after the plantation management arrangements were made, Hillin sold six slaves from MMP. On March 8, 1790, Hillin sold Catherine to John O’Connor and Ana and John were sold to John Cole\(^{25}\). That left at least Jenny, Lucia with her daughter, and Thomas at MMP. Then on March 10, 1790, Hillin sold three slaves to Jacob Stampley\(^{26}\). Stampley may have purchased Lucia and her daughter at this time. Hillin remarried and settled on another tract of land in Baton Rouge with Winifred West Russ with their combined family of children and slaves. Hillin sold Thomas in 1794. Jenny may have been held by the James Hillin for years after in Baton Rouge\(^{27}\).

\(^{23}\) SPWF v. 1, p. 204
\(^{24}\) SPWF v. 1 p. 235
\(^{25}\) Perkins, (2004), p. 3
\(^{26}\) Perkins, (2004), p. 3
\(^{27}\) SPWF v. 4 p. 48 and p. 54; see Winnifred West Russ succession records for 1799 in SPWF v. 4, p. 48. Both Jane Hillin and Winnifred Russ succession record list Jenny age 30.
One year later, at the end of 1791, James Hillin sold MMP to John Joyce of Mobile. Hillin did not leave any of the slaves he owned at MMP. Joyce acquired the plantation officially on June 2, 1792, and operated it as an absentee plantation with a new community of slaves. In all, Jenny likely lived at MMP for four years (August 1788-June 1792).

MMP Slaves during Hillin Period 1786-1791

Thomas (as early as 1786 to as late as 1791)
John (as early as 1786 to as late as 1790)
Catherine (as early as 1786 to as late as 1790)
Jenny (as early as 1788 to as late as 1791)
Lucia (as early 1786 to as late as 1791)
and her daughter (1789 to as late as 1791)
Ana (as early as 1786 to as late as 1790)

Please keep in mind, that it is possible that there were other individuals held as slaves by James Hillin from 1786-1791 at MMP.
Joyce Period, MMP 1792 – 1802

John Joyce, an Irishman, (born 1752) owned land in Baton Rouge on the north boundary of MMP\textsuperscript{28}. Joyce expanded his holdings when he bought MMP from Hillin on December 23, 1791. It is possible that Joyce had slaves living on his first piece of property in Baton Rouge and planned on enlarging his plantation operations by adding more slaves to the total property\textsuperscript{29}. At the time MMP was a cotton and indigo plantation.

A census for Mobile, Alabama for 1787 states that John Joyce was 34-years old and that he owned 10 slaves for a total of 11 individuals in his household\textsuperscript{30}. Joyce was a successful businessman and went into partnership with John Turnbull on February 24, 1798. They described their enterprise as “Trade, Plantations, Negroes, Cattle, etc.”\textsuperscript{31} Nearly half of their assets ($26,530) were listed as slaves. In April of that year, John Joyce gave a loan to William Conway for “a Plantation tract of Land at the Houmas” mortgaging the following 12 slaves\textsuperscript{32}. It is possible that several of these slaves (those marked *) later landed up at MMP in Baton Rouge as part of the Joyce household and later as part of the Duplantier household when Constance Rochon Joyce Duplantier inherited slaves from the division of Turnbull and Joyce partnership around 1804\textsuperscript{33}.

Naas 32 years old
*John Louis 31 years old
*Baptiste 21
Cesar
*Alexander Cook
Nancy
Marianne

\textsuperscript{28} SPWF v. 2, p. 424
\textsuperscript{29} LSU Special Collections, Survey Collection. A January 31, 1793 map shows 1,000 arpents owned by Juan Joyce with two adjacent properties with small frontage on the Mississippi River extending eastward that appear to be the site of MMP.
\textsuperscript{30} Afro-Louisiana Database, Mobile Census 1787
\textsuperscript{31} Perkins (2004), p. 11
\textsuperscript{32} LSU Special Collections, Turnbull Allain Family Papers box 1 folder 5
\textsuperscript{33} SPWF v. 4, pp. 342-343
The partnership ended in 1798 when Joyce died in May and Turnbull died in September. Joyce’s death at sea on May 10, 1798 was witnessed by his enslaved servant, James. James, a black 24-year old man and a practicing Catholic, gave a lengthy testimonial to the Spanish court in Baton Rouge detailing his master’s death. According to James’s testimony, John Joyce gave James orders to bring Joyce’s bedding to the deck of the schooner *The Mobilian* during the stormy night when Joyce was lost at sea. James spoke English in the courtroom and likely understood some French being part of the Joyce/Rochon household.

John Joyce married Constance Rochon, the French Creole daughter of a wealthy Mobile family, on October 23, 1788. They had two children, Josephine (born 1790) and William (born 1794). Joyce purchased MMP and other lands in Baton Rouge as investments; likely his young family did not reside in Baton Rouge. But Joyce held slaves who did live at MMP since as early as 1792.

When the Joyces married in 1788, Constance’s mother, Louise Rochon, gave her daughter a wedding gift, an enslaved woman named Charlotte. Charlotte (born 1768), who likely spoke French, was a Creole of Mobile and her parents were from Africa. She was 20-years old when she became the legal property of Constance Rochon Joyce, and was pulled from the Rochon’s Mobile slave community of about 39 slaves. Charlotte stayed with Constance and she probably labored as a house servant, a domestic. Charlotte did not marry but had two children: a daughter Frosina, a black child born in Baton

---

34 SPWF v. 2 p. 287  
35 Afro Louisiana Database Mobile 1787 census
Rouge in 1790; and a daughter Rosette, a mulatto child, born in 1795, likely in Baton Rouge, as well. The slave sale record explained that Frosina was “a native of this province”\textsuperscript{36}. This suggests that Charlotte was in Baton Rouge as a slave for the Joyce family as early as 1790.

It was the law in Louisiana that enslaved children under age ten could not be sold separately from their mothers\textsuperscript{37}. Records indicate that Baton Rouge’s slaveholding citizen’s abided by this law. A small receipt documents Mrs. Joyce was living in Baton Rouge on October 18, 1800, so it is possible Charlotte and her two daughters were with Constance at that time\textsuperscript{38}.

In 1803, Charlotte’s family was permanently severed. First, on September 24, 1803, Armand Duplantier (Constance’s second husband) sold his wife’s slaves, Charlotte, who was 35-years old, with her younger daughter Rosette, who was 8-years old, to Josef Reynes of New Orleans\textsuperscript{39}. The sale was completed in Baton Rouge\textsuperscript{40}. Then two months later, on December 6, 1803, likely from MMP, Constance sold Frosina, who was 13-years old, to Eustace Ambroise Longue-Epee in Baton Rouge\textsuperscript{41}. The young Frosina possibly never again saw her mother or sister who moved to New Orleans. This family’s story of using an enslaved woman as a wedding gift (and other stories of using slaves as collateral for mortgages or as valuables to bequeath in a will) is useful to illustrate the objectification of individuals as a form of oppression and dehumanization inherent in slavery.

\textsuperscript{36} SPWF v. 7, p. 54
\textsuperscript{37} Taylor, (1963), p. 123
\textsuperscript{38} Constance purchased goods in New Orleans and sent them by freight to Baton Rouge. Turnbull-Allain Family Papers box 1 folder 6
\textsuperscript{39} Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 0; SWPF v. 17, p. 256
\textsuperscript{40} SPWF v. 6, p. 256
\textsuperscript{41} SPWF v. 17, p. 54
The year her husband John Joyce died, Constance was living some months in New Orleans where she cared for her son and daughter who were attending school in the city. Constance’s accounts show she purchased an enslaved woman named Pelagie in November 1798. On March 14, 1800, Constance paid for Pelagie in silver. The name Pelagie will show up much later in the Duplantier family records as an intimate female household member and a free-person-of-color (fpc). Constance sold six slaves on her own in Baton Rouge on September 9, 1800 but she did not pen their names and her legal representative Charles Norwood oversaw the sale in Baton Rouge.

After John Joyce and John Turnbull died in 1798, the slave community at MMP plantation was drastically changed. The widows divided the slaves and claimed certain individuals and families as part of their inheritance from their husbands’ property. The following list is the combination of two inventories taken in Baton Rouge, May 5 and May 7, 1800, of the slaves held by the Turnbull and Joyce partnership. The two inventories in their original English translation from the Spanish West Florida Records are in Appendix 1.

The list below features those individuals and families who lived in Baton Rouge and were claimed by Constance Joyce and were likely at MMP. This list provides a framework to describe the majority of the individuals and families who lived in bondage at MMP (1800-1820) for the bulk of the planned MMP-tour narrative. The family members are grouped together:

Nat, Negro, native of the Carolinas, around 40-years old

---

42 LSU Special Collections, Turnbull-Allain Family Papers, box 1 folder 15
43 SPWF v. 3, pp. 311-332
44 The Turnbulls and the Joyces each had plantations in Baton Rouge in 1798. Turnbull’s land was one half league north of the Fort of Baton Rouge. MMP was south of the fort. The May 15, 1800 inventory of slaves included slaves specifically at MMP that Constance Joyce claimed, for a total of 53 enslaved individuals. SPWF v. 3, p. 327-332
Joan his wife, native of the Carolinas around 35-years old
Jim, their son about 12-years old (not on May 5 1800 list)
Hannah their daughter around 10-years old

Sally from the Coast of Guinea, around 30-years old
Charlotte her daughter, a native Louisiana around 8-years
Madeline her daughter about 2-years old
(Coffe, son born by 1804)

Basheba a native of Louisiana around 20-years old
(Wife of Guy, mother of Joseph)

Abram, of the Coast of Guinea about 50, having a hernia
Fanny is wife of the Coast of Guinea about 40-years old
Clarissa her daughter about fifteen-months old
Harry her son Creole about 9-years old
Dick her son, Creole about 9-years old
Patty about 3-years old
(Catherine her daughter who is older than Patty and who is on the May 5, 1800 list.)

Tony, a man of the Coast of Guinea about 55-years old
Cumba his wife of the Coast of Guinea about 40-years old
Toby her son Creole about 13-years old

American Will of the Coast of Guinea about 36-years old a good carpenter
Minta his wife Creole about 35-years old without good sense 150(CRT indicates person
was claimed by Catherine Rucker Turnbull)
Tom her son Creole about 10-years old (CRT)
Catiche her daughter about 8-years old (CRT)
Poll her daughter about 6-years old (CRT)
Alexis her son about 2-years old (CRT)

Quashee of the Coast of Guinea about 60-years old
Take/Kate his wife of the Coast of Guinea about 50-years old
Juba her daughter Creole about 16-years old
Venus her daughter about 8-years old

Sampson of the Coast of Guinea about 35-years old
Jude, his wife Creole of Carolina about 25-years old
Esom/Gersom about three-months, her suckling baby
Chloe her daughter Creole about 8-years old
Hetty her daughter about 5-years old
Billy her son about 2-years old
(Cato infant son noted in April 1804)

John, a man of the Coast of Guinea about 35-years old
Celia his wife Creole of Jamaica 35-years old
Neptune about fourteen-months old, her suckling baby  
Jacob, her son Creole about 6-years old  

Douglas of the Coast of Guinea about 35-years old  
Celia his wife of the Coast of Guinea about 35-years old  
Hannah/Ana her daughter about one year old  

Boyer, of the Coast of Guinea about 45-years old  
Mirah his wife of the Coast of Guinea about 50-years old  

Mahomet of the Coast of Guinea about 35-years old  
Peggy his wife of the Cost of Guinea about 45-years old  

Boatswain of the Coast of Guinea about 40-years old  
Harriet his wife of the Coast of Guinea about 35-years old  

Cato, a man Creole of Jamaica, about 40-years old, “a good carpenter”  
Bess, his wife, Coast of Guinea about 45-years old  

Sam, a man of the Coast of Guinea, about 45-years old  
Bella, his wife of the coast of Guinea about 45-years old  

Clarinda around one-year old  
(dtr of Judith, around 14-years old)  
(Note: Judith’s mother, Charlotte, age 60 of Coast of Guinea, and Judith’s sister, Linder 18-years old and her dtr. Aimee, age 10-months old, went to Catherine Rucker Turnbull)  

Bungey a negro man, a Creole about 20-years old (He took an alias Auguste, by 1814)  
Sally, a woman of the Coast of Guinea about 35-years old with costiveness (obstructions)  

Sambo, a man of the Coast of Guinea about 28-years old  

Benjicha, one-legged man of the Coast of Guinea about 60-years old  

Jenny native of Louisiana around 16-years old  

Nancy, a woman of the Coast of Guinea about 70-years old (Likely, at Big Black)  

On the same day, May 5, 1800 inventory the following slaves were inventoried in New Orleans. These individuals included:  

Tom, 30-years old  

45 SPWF v. 4, p. 333
Sam, 35-years old, carpenter and rope maker
Nancy, 16-years old (360 pesos) (She was likely from Mobile.)
Jenny, 35-years old, mother (She and her children were likely from Mobile.)
Lucy, 12-years old, Jenny’s daughter
Baptiste, 3-years old, Jenny’s son (Constance claimed “Baptiste son of Jenny” in 1804)
Charles, 18-years old, rope worker
Catherine, 15-years old (350 pesos)

On March 30, 1804, Constance Rochon Duplantier petitioned the courts in Baton Rouge before the final division of property was made between the widows. Constance asked the court to keep the following 17-slaves in Baton Rouge as part of her claim. By that time, Constance had married widower Armand Duplantier (married on January 2, 1802) who held property in Baton Rouge and in Pointe Coupee, on the west bank of the Mississippi River. (Armand Duplantier’s slave holdings will be discussed in the next section.)

Constance likely spent more time residing in Baton Rouge after her marriage to Armand. These 17-individuals were all listed as Baton Rouge-held slaves in April and May 1800 and are from several different enslaved families. I have included the pesos value on those slaves who have common names to further identify certain individuals.

Nancy (360 pesos, from Mobile to New Orleans to Baton Rouge), who could have been around 24-years old 16-years old in 1800
Venus who would have been around 15-years old
Joseph (120) who would have been around 4-years old, if son of Basheba
Harry who would have been around 13-years old
Dick who would have been around 13-years old
Judith (400) who would have been around 18-years old
Clarinda, Judith’s daughter, who would have been around 5-years old
Charlotte, who would have been around 12-years old (possibly daughter of Sally)
Bungey, who would have been around 24-years old
Guy, who would have been around 51-years old (possibly Joseph’s father)
Basheba, who would have been around 24-years old (Joseph’s mother)
Samson, (450) Jude’s husband who would have been around 39-years old
Jude, who would have been around 29-years old

46 SPWF v. 4, p. 350
47 SPWF v. 4, pp. 340-348
and her suckling baby [Emson] who would have been around 4-years old
Chloe, Jude’s daughter who would have been around 12-years old
Hetty, Jude’s daughter who would have been around 9-years old
Billy, (100) Jude’s son who would have been around 6-years old

The kinship relationships were as follows among these 17-slaves living at MMP

on March 30, 1804\textsuperscript{48}:

Sampson, husband and father, 39-years old
Sude/Jude, wife and mother, 29-years old
Esom/Germson, son and brother, 4-years old
Chloe, daughter and sister, 12-years old
Hetty, daughter and sister, 9-years old
Billy, son and brother, 6 years old
Cato, son and brother infant

Twin brothers without their parents (Fanny and Abram) or siblings
Harry, 13-years old
Dick, 13-years old

Single man
Bungey, 24-years old

Alone without her family
Charlotte, 12-years old

Alone without her family
Venus, 12-years old

Guy, husband and father, possibly 51-years old
Basheba, wife and mother, 24-years old
Joseph, son, 6-years old

Single woman
Nancy, 20-years old and likely from Mobile

Constance used a teenaged slave woman named Jenny, whom she inherited from
her husband’s business, to pay a debt. Jenny, at age 16 at MMP, was sold to George

\textsuperscript{48} SPWF v. 4, pp. 340-341
Turnbull (fpc), a son of the deceased John Turnbull, living in Baton Rouge for 650 pesos\(^49\).

Other individuals, not on the above list, who were also part of the Turnbull and Joyce estate spent some time at MMP. These included those slaves Constance had inherited from the Turnbull and Joyce estate who were scheduled to be sold on April 5, 1804 by Armand Duplantier and Ricard de Rieutord (curator of the Joyce minor children, William and Josephine)\(^50\). The MMP enslaved individuals and families the Joyce minor children sold included:

- Cecilia with her five year old daughter, Anna, sold to Paulain Allain
- Sally with her daughter five year old daughter Magdalene and one year old son Coffe sold to Francois Daigre
- Quashee, his wife Kate, and their daughter 11-year old daughter Venus sold to Dr. Michel Mahier
- Tony/Toby, his wife Cumba, and their 14-year old son Toby sold to Simon Allain
- Charles, a young shoemaker sold to Garrett Rapalje
- Sally, an older woman sold to Robert Jones
- Peggy, an older woman sold to Felix Bernard du Montier
- Boyer, an older man sold to Armand Duplantier (possibly Armand Duplantier, Jr.)

There are many historical people to follow and it is likely to be confusing for my readers. The following narratives are brief stories of each of the MMP enslaved families that were inventoried as part of the Turnbull and Joyce partnership and claimed by Constance Rochon Joyce Duplantier as MMP slaves by 1804, and in some cases the stories go beyond 1804.

In 1800, Boatswain, who was about 30-years old (born 1760-1769), and his wife Harriet/Henrietta, who was about 25-years old (born 1765-1775)\(^51\), were from the Coast of Guinea. Boatswain may have been born in Nago/Yoruba\(^52\). Harriet was born on the

\(^{49}\) SPWF v. 1, p. 233
\(^{50}\) SPWF v. 4, p. 354
\(^{51}\) Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 176
\(^{52}\) Afro-Louisiana Dababase document no. 176
coast of Senegal\textsuperscript{53}. The couple stayed together and had a son by 1804. Constance’s children, Josephine and William Joyce, inherited Boatswain, Harriet and their son in 1804. The curator of the minor Joyce children decided to sell Boatswain and his family from MMP on April 28, 1804 to Michel Bethancourt\textsuperscript{54} of Baton Rouge. This Baton Rouge enslaved family might have lived at MMP for 12 years (1792-1804).

In 1800, Douglas was 35-years old (born 1765) and his wife Celia was 35-years old (born 1765) living as husband and wife in Baton Rouge at MMP. They were both originally from the Coast of Guinea. Douglas and Celia had one child, Ana a suckling baby girl in 1800. A discrepancy appears in the records on the fate of this young family. The Spanish West Florida Record (SPWF) volume 4, page 340 documents on May 15, 1800, Constance claimed this family as her property. However, the SPWF volume 4, page 354, documents that “Cecilia with her daughter about five years old named Ana were the property of the Joyce minors and were sold to Paulain Allain”. If the family did remain with Constance and Armand Duplantier, the following story is possible.

The young family remained with the Duplic t iers at MMP until around 1804-1806, when Armand Duplantier sold Douglas and his family, which had grown to include at least one more child. Armand sold the enslaved family to his brother-in-law, Pierre-Joseph Farvot. Favrot settled in Baton Rouge around 1779 as a commandant of the fort in Baton Rouge for the Spanish government when the British were expelled from Louisiana.

On May 5, 1806, Favrot wrote in his personal accounts, “I owe Duplantier for the Purchase of his Negro Doglise and Doglise’s wife and Children, as well as Mr. Nicolet’s note for 1024 [piastres]. The said Negro, his wife and child cost me 1064 [piastres]. I still

\textsuperscript{53} SPWF v. 3, p. 314
\textsuperscript{54} SPWF v. 8 p. 176
owe.” Douglas and his family might have remained in Baton Rouge as property of Favrot in 1806. This Baton Rouge enslaved family may have lived at MMP for 14 years (1792-1806).

In 1800, Sampson, 35-years old (born 1765), and Jude, (born 1775) possibly spelled Sude, 25-years old, were living as husband and wife at MMP with their four children. Sampson was originally from the Wolof nation in Senegal, Africa. Jude was born in the Carolinas and her parents were from Africa; she was a Creole of Carolina. Their eldest child was their daughter Chloe (born 1792) who was 8-years old in 1800. Their daughter Hetty (born 1795) was 5-years old, and their son Billy (1798) was 2-years old. Their son Emson, sometimes referred to Gersom, was a suckling baby boy in 1800. All their children were likely born in Baton Rouge. Sampson’s family became the legal property of Constance Duplantier in 1804. That same year on April 7, Armand Duplantier sold the family, which had grown to include another son, Cato (born 1802) and an infant one-month old on the date of sale, to Dr. Jacques Raoul. Dr. Raoul served as an alcalde of the first division of New Feliciana, which included Bayou Sara. He was also a surgeon employed by the King of Spain. Sampson’s family left MMP in Baton Rouge and moved to New Feliciana where Dr. Raoul lived near Bayou Sara and Thompson’s Creek. This enslaved family might have lived at MMP for 12 years (1792-1804).

In 1800, Abram was 50-years old and had a hernia. Abram’s name may be an indication that he was Muslim/Islamic. Abram was married to Fanny who was 40-years

---

55 Meneray, (2001), v. 5 p. 223
56 Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 150 and SPWF v. 4, p. 348
57 SPWF v. 8, p.150
58 Ibid
old. Both husband and wife were from the Coast of Guinea. Fanny had five children. She had Louisiana Creole twin sons, who were 9-years old, Harry and Dick (born 1791), a daughter Catherine (n.d.), a daughter Patty (born 1797) “mulatto Rouge” 3-years old, and a daughter Clarissa (born 1798) “mulatto Rouge” who was 15-months old.

This family was not able to stay together after they were inherited by Constance Duplantier in 1804 from the Turnbull and Joyce estate. Catherine (born 1785), age 15 (350 pesos) was listed with 7 other slaves on May 5, 1800 as part of the Turnbull and Joyce estate in New Orleans (It is not yet confirmed that Catherine designated by 350 pesos was the daughter of Abram and Fanny.) Harry and Dick were claimed by Constance in 1804. By 1803 or possibly 1811, Fanny remarried Nat (born 1760) who was another member of the MMP enslaved community. (By April 1804, Nat’s wife Joan had died.) Fanny at age 50, along with her daughters Patty, about age-10, and Clarisse, about age-8, became part of a blended family with Nat and his children from his first marriage. Nat’s children from his first wife were his daughter Hannah 17-years old (born 1790) and his son James (born 1796), who was sometimes referred to as Jim, “mulatto Rouge” and was around 15 years old.

A small receipt detailed Armand Duplantier sold a family of slaves to Catherine Turnbull in Baton Rouge on May 23, 1803. The family included Matt, Fannie, Anna, James, Patty and Claris. Coincidently, these names resemble the blended family Nat.

59 SPWF v. 3, p. 314 and pp. 327-328
60 Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 110
61 SPWF v. 3, p. 314 and pp. 327-328
62 SPWF v. 4, pp. 340-341 and p. 348
63 Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 110 indicates that Nat is “mate” to Fanny, the ages match these MMP individuals
64 SPWF v. 4, p. 346 and p.355
Fanny, Hannah, James, Patty and Clarissa. Even more puzzling, the family was sold by Armand one more time in 1811. Perhaps, Catherine Turnbull did not accept the sale in 1803. On March 21, 1811, Constance and Armand Duplantier sold the blended enslaved MMP family of 6 to John Towles in New Orleans, as a group of six slaves.

Abram and Fanny’s family with children Harry, Dick, Patty, Catherine and Clarissa might have lived at MMP in 1800 but after that year the family was forced to change. Fanny might have lived at MMP for 19 years (1792-1811). Harry and Dick lived at MMP since they were born in 1791 and possibly remained there until at least 1813.

Bungey (born 1780) was born in Louisiana and his parents were African. He was 20-years old and living in Baton Rouge as a single man at MMP by 1800. Bungey’s name is unusual. In West Indies dialect, ‘bungy’ means crudely made. Perhaps Bungey had some physical features that earned him this negative name.

Sometime between 1800 and 1806, Charles Norwood, the executor of the Turnbull and Joyce estate wrote a letter from New Orleans to widow Catherine Turnbull in Baton Rouge regarding delivery information and a few personal anecdotes. In that rather long letter, Norwood wrote Catherine,

...the disagreeable affair with the auditor has detained the Negroes longer than I could have wished or expected I have done nothing with him tho’ have been waiting on him several times and at last took Bungey and Renty to deliver him but neither would stay on any account and Renty’s father insisted on his being permitted to return to Baton Rouge to his mother for her peace of mind even if he should be sent back again...foresaw much trouble in this affair and I suppose continue yet some time before it is determined...I will be oblig’d to you to give each of the seven Negroes which came down on the raft a check shirt which I promised them having none here as I expected (the boy Renty expected)...

---

65 Turnbull Allain Family Papers, box 1 folder 6
66 Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 110
67 SPWF v. 3, p. 314 and pp. 327-328
68 Turnbull-Allain Family Papers, box 2, folder 4
69 Turnbull-Allain Family Papers, Box 2, folder 4
This letter gives us a glimpse into the interpersonal dynamics among the slaves, slave holders, and business associates. Bungey and Renty were both slaves included in the Baton Rouge May 1800 inventories for the Turnbull and Joyce estate. Bungey was claimed by Constance Joyce and Renty and his family were claimed by Catherine Rucker Turnbull. Clearly the slaves from both slave-holding households in Baton Rouge, Joyce and Turnbull, were near each other and worked together and likely socialized together. Renty was only 13-years old in May 1800. His mother was Rose, of the Coast of Guinea and 35-years old, and his father was Hector. This family had six children, all claimed by Catherine Turnbull. Renty’s parents were clearly able to make demands from the slave holders in the interest of their children, and the slave holders apparently respected their demand to bring Renty home between multiple day-long errands. Rose and Hector’s concerns for their son were honored by Norwood, as was the slaves’ request for checkered shirts. Renty, in particular, voiced his desire for a checkered shirt and was taken seriously by Norwood, who expected Catherine Turnbull would also honor the slaves’ requests.

By April 27, 1814, Bungey changed his name to Auguste, when he was still living in Constance Duplantier’s household in Baton Rouge. Two relevant church records show two Duplantier-held slaves were baptized in Baton Rouge; first, Auguste was baptized in 1826, and then ten years later, in 1836, a young 13-year old named Auguste was baptized in the Baton Rouge Catholic Church. In 1841, Auguste, age 18, was listed on Constance Duplantier’s probate record. The 18-year old Auguste was listed with

70 SPWV v. 3, p. 316
71 Perkins, (2003), p. 16
Poupine/Pompee 16-years old who was with her one-year old child named Auguste. This may indicate that Bungey, by age 43, had a child who remained with MMP to the end of the Duplantier era at MMP. Bungey, alias Auguste, was likely at MMP from 1792 to 1814, for at least 22 years.

Historian Herbert G. Gutman (1976) explains the African rooted naming tradition among African Americans in slavery. Parents commonly named their children for their fathers and mothers and other kin. This naming pattern is not clearly evident in the available MMP documents, however, it is possible that Bungey’s alias Auguste was carried on by following generations. One could theorize that Auguste (born 1823) was Bungey’s son, and his grandson was Auguste (born 1840), both of whom were at MMP in 1841.

Nat’s family was described in part above in regards to Abram’s family. Nat’s family included his first wife, Joan (born 1770), a native of the Carolinas who was 30-years old in 1800. Their daughter Hannah (1790) was 10-years old and their son James or Jim (born 1788) was 12-years old. Constance inherited this family as part of her inheritance from the Turnbull and Joyce estate. In 1804, Armand tried to sell Joan but was unsuccessful. Joan died. Nat, who was 45-years old, was sold on March 21, 1811 with his two children, Hannah and Jim as a group with Fanny and two of her daughters, Patty and Clarissa. Her twin sons, Harry and Dick, remained with Constance at MMP. The blended family was sold as a group to John Towles of New Orleans and Feliciana. Towles was a physician and a planter. In the U.S. Death Records, Clarise Duplantier

---

72 Perkins, (2004), p. 91
73 SPWF v. 3, pp. 311-320
74 SPWF v. 4, p. 346 and p. 355
75 Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 110
76 Advocate-Baton Rouge, December 5, 1971 p. 3f
died on March 13, 186777 in New Orleans. This Clarise was likely Fanny and Abram’s daughter. It is possible that Clarise was owned by Guy Duplantier. He lived in Algiers across the river from New Orleans78.

Cato (born 1760), a 40-year old Creole man from Jamaica, was married to Bess (born 1755), a woman from the Coast of Guinea, who was 45-years old around 180079. Bess had a Creole daughter named Nancy (born 1792). The name Cato is a common West African name and likely the name of his African father or grandfather. This couple was included in the group of slaves at MMP that the Joyce minors inherited. Cato was a carpenter with some exceptional skills. However, when the Turnbull and Joyce estate was divided all the carpentry tools went to Catherine Rucker Turnbull. It appears that Constance Duplantier and her children were not very interested in Cato’s carpentry. On April 27, 1804, the couple was sold to George Garig in Baton Rouge80. George Garig owned an 800-arpent plantation (1794-1825) near Magnolia Mound Plantation on Highland Road. Garig was a German settler from Maryland who built cotton gins and presses for the territory81. Perhaps Cato’s carpentry skills were attractive to Garig for his gin and press-building business in Baton Rouge.

In 1800, Sally (born 1770) who was from the Coast of Guinea, was 30-years old. According to the Afro-Louisiana database, she was Islamic. That year her small family was inventoried as part of the Turnbull and Joyce estate in Baton Rouge82. Sally had two daughters, Madeline/Magdalene (1798) 2-years old, and Charlotte (1792) 8-years old. Sally and her daughters were claimed by Constance in her inheritance from the Turnbull

---

77 New Orleans Death Record Index 1804-1949, v. 36, p. 233
78 New Orleans Death Records v. 36, p. 233
79 SPWF v. 3, p. 314
80 SPWF v. 8, p. 170
81 ftp.rootsweb.com/pub/usgenweb/la/e-batonrouge/cemeteries/highland.txt, accessed June 1, 2004
82 SPWF v. 3, p. 311
and Joyce estate. In 1804, the Joyce minors were authorized to sell Sally and her
daughter Madeline, 5-years old, and her newest child, one-year old son Coffe.

Charlotte was claimed by Constance in 1804 as “a negro girl.” Charlotte may
have stayed with the Duplantier household for many years, and possibly she adopted the
master’s surname after Emancipation. In the 1870 United States Census, a Charlotte
Duplantier was listed as age 75-years old (born 1795), an African living in East Baton
Rouge Parish, Ward 9 (Ward 9 is in the same region MMP is located). She could not read
or write and she was living close to Catchie and Narcisse Duplantier, two more familiar
enslaved MMP residents’ names from the MMP Duplantier era.

Another enslaved woman at MMP was named Sally, according to the Turnbull
and Joyce estate inventories in 1800. The older Sally was 35-years old and also from the
Coast of Guinea. The older Sally was noted on the inventory as, “with obstructions.”
Sally became the legal property of the Joyce minor children who sold the older Sally as
“elderly” in 1804 to Robert Jones.

In 1800, Quashee (born 1740) was a 60-year old man from the Coast of Guinea.
His wife Take/Kate (born 1750) was 50-years old. They had two daughters, Juba (born
1784) who was 16-years old and Venus (born 1792) who was 8-years old when the
Turnbull and Joyce estate inventory was taken at MMP. Both Quashee and Juba are
traditional West African names.

83 SPWF v. 3, p. 327
84 SPWF v. 4, p. 354
85 Perkins, (2004), p. 34; SPWF v. 4, p. 340
86 SPWF v. 4, p. 354
87 SPWF v. 3, pp. 327-328
In April 1804, the Joyce minors sold Quashee, Take, and Venus, age 11, to Dr. Michel Mahier who lived on his plantation in present day Port Allen. Michel Mahier (born 1757, died 1810) a native of France, was a physician who did business with Armand Duplantier. However, on March 30, 1804, Constance claimed Venus “a negro girl”, without her sister or her parents, as property she wished to have at MMP. There is a discrepancy as to whether Venus stayed with Constance or went with her parents to Dr. Mahier. A woman named Venus was included on Michel Mahier’s probate record dated June 6, 1810. However, Venus was described as 55-years old.

Juba was inherited by the Joyce minors without the rest of her family, as an individual. Juba was around 18-20 years old when she was sold on April 27, 1804 to a German settler, Joseph Sharp. Juba was listed as a Creole single slave woman age-35 on the succession of Joseph Sharp in 1819. Joseph Sharp had a 400-acre plantation on Highland Road called Mount Hope Plantation. By 1820, the plantation had been expanded to 1,200-acres and was then sold out of the Sharp family.

If Venus did stay with Constance, all four family members were still in the immediate vicinity of Magnolia Mound Plantation and could have managed visits to each other. Quashee and his family lived at MMP, possibly from 1792-1804, and Venus may have been there a few years after the rest of her family was sold.

In 1800, Boyer (born 1755), from the Coast of Guinea, was 45-years old. Mariah (born 1740) his wife, was 60-years old and from the Coast of Guinea. It is

---

88 SPWF v. 4, p. 354; SPWF v. 3, p. 317
89 SPWF v. 3, p. 125
90 SPWF v. 4, p. 340
91 Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 9
92 Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 175; SPWF v. 8, p. 174
93 SPWF v. 3, p. 319
94 SPWF v. 3, p. 319
possible that 16-year old Jenny, who was sold to George Turnbull, was their daughter.

The individual names of family members are grouped together on the 1800 inventories. Jenny is grouped with Boyer and Mariah. In 1804, Armand Duplantier sold Boyer as “elderly” from the Joyce minor children’s inheritance for 88 pesos, possibly to Armand Duplantier, Jr.

John (born 1765), a native of the Coast of Guinea, likely Congo, Africa, was 35-years old in 1800 when he and his family were inventoried as part of the Turnbull and Joyce estate at MMP. His wife, Celia (born 1765) was 35-years old and a Creole of Jamaica. They had three young sons; Neptune (born 1798) who was described as a suckling son, 14-months old, and Jacob (born 1794), a Creole, who was 6-years old, and Coachi (1802). John, Celia and Coachi were claimed by the Joyce minor children and Jacob and Neptune were claimed by Constance. Celia and her 2-year old son Coachi were sold to Julia Guedry April 28, 1804 in Baton Rouge.

It is possible that the John, who was the father and husband of this young family, was sold by the Joyce minors. John was listed as a 30-year old African-born man on the April 27, 1804 sale record to Alexandre Daigle. The Daigle plantation was two leagues south of the Baton Rouge fort, likely near MMP. Alexander Daigle was the tutor, or curator, of the Joyce minor children at the time of the sale.

The two young boys were sold by Armand and Constance Duplantier on April 28, 1804. Jacob was 10-years old and his brother Neptune was around 4-years old when they

95 SPWF v. 3, p. 328; SPWF v. 4, p. 231
96 SPWF v. 4, p. 354
97 SPWF v. 3, p. 328; SPWF v. 3, p. 319
98 SPWF v. 8, p. 166
99 Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 178
100 Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 166
101 SPWF v. 9, p. 274
102 SPWF v. 8, p. 166
were sold to Isidore Tullier of Baton Rouge\textsuperscript{103}. Of interest, on the same day, the Joyce minors sold Tamba, who was described as a black 30-year old man who was sold to Isidore Tullier\textsuperscript{104}. (Tamba is not a name on the 1800 inventories. However, the name could be a poor transcription of Sambo, which is a name on the inventories.) John’s young family lived at MMP possibly from 1792-1804, while the boys were not there longer than 10 years, Celia possibly remained at MMP.

Tony, who was 55-years old (born 1745), and his wife Cumba who was 40-years old (born 1760), were both from the coast of Guinea when they were included in the May 1800 Turnbull and Joyce estate inventories\textsuperscript{105}. They had a son, Toby (born 1787), who was listed as a 13-year old Creole on the inventory with his parents.

Cumba was a popular Wolof female name. Cumba refers to the second-born female child in the Fulbe language\textsuperscript{106}. Cumba’s ancestry originated from the Wolof, a large ethnic group located mainly in the western part of the former French West African colony of Senegal. In April 1804, the Joyce minor children inherited this family from the Turnbull and Joyce estate, and Armand sold the family to Simon Allain\textsuperscript{107} in Baton Rouge. Tony’s family could have been at MMP from 1792 to 1804, no more than 12 years.

In 1800, Sam (born 1755) and his wife Bella/Belle (born 1755), both from the Coast of Guinea, were 45-years old\textsuperscript{108}. In 1804, Sam and Bella were listed among the group of slaves Constance inherited from the Turnbull and Joyce estate. No records have yet been found that describe what happened to this couple. It is possible they remained at

\begin{footnotes}
\item[103] SPWF v. 6, p. 350
\item[104] Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 178
\item[105] SPWF v. 3, p. 328
\item[106] Afro-Louisiana Database, African Names
\item[107] SPWF v. 4 p. 354
\item[108] SPWF v. 3, p. 314 and pp. 327-328; SPWF v. 4, p. 340
\end{footnotes}
MMP. A mulatto man named Sam (1765), 35-years old, who was skilled in carpentry and rope making was included in the Turnbull and Joyce estate inventory in New Orleans May 5, 1800\textsuperscript{109}.

Mahomet, 30-years old (born 1730), and his wife Peggy, 45-years old (born 1755), were both from the Coast of Guinea. Mahomet was a name that was likely derived from Islamic culture. On April 15, 1804, the Joyce minor children had inherited the couple from the Turnbull and Joyce estate. Armand Duplantier sold Peggy, who was listed as “elderly,” for 64 pesos to Felix Bernard du Montier\textsuperscript{110} of Baton Rouge. Armand was unsuccessful in selling Mahomet who died that year\textsuperscript{111}. On June 15, 1801, Armand Duplantier brought his slave Louise to be baptized in the Catholic Church in Baton Rouge. Louise’s god parents were Louis and Mahomet\textsuperscript{112}. This suggests that Mahomet held a popular and respected position in that plantation community among free and enslaved residents.

On the May 5 and May 7, 1800 inventories, Basheba, a 20-year old native of Louisiana, was listed as a single woman\textsuperscript{113}. On May 15, 1800, Basheba was listed in a group with her husband Guy and son Joseph at MMP as part of Constance Joyce’s claim from the Turnbull and Joyce estate\textsuperscript{114}. In March 1804, Basheba is listed with her husband Guy and son Joseph among the slaves Constance inherited from the Turnbull and Joyce estate\textsuperscript{115}. Guy, a 45-year old field worker, was listed as one of 30 slaves held by the

\textsuperscript{109} SPWF v. 4, p. 333
\textsuperscript{110} SPWF v. 4, p. 354
\textsuperscript{111} SPWF v. 4, p. 346
\textsuperscript{112} St. Joseph Church Archives, Baton Rouge, Book 9
\textsuperscript{113} SPWF v. 3, p. 314
\textsuperscript{114} SPWF v. 3, p. 328
\textsuperscript{115} Perkins, 2004, p. 34; SPWF v. 4, pp. 340-341
Turnbull and Joyce estate in Mobile in November 17, 1798\textsuperscript{116}. In 1814, Constance petitioned the courts to separate her property from her bankrupt husband Armand, and she included Basheba as one of four slaves she inherited from her first husband, John Joyce. These four were Basheba, Lucile, Clarinda, and Auguste\textsuperscript{117}. These four will be discussed in more detail in the Joyce Duplantier era at MMP, 1802-1827. Basheba was likely separated from her son and husband and remained with Constance at MMP for years. Basheba possibly lived at MMP from as early as 1792 to at least 1814, around 26 years.

Judith (born 1786) was a young teen when she became a mother around age 12-14. In 1800, Judith was listed as the mother of one-year old Clarinda (born 1799). Both were inventoried as slaves at MMP\textsuperscript{118}. Judith was likely the daughter of Charlotte, 60-years old from the Coast of Guinea, and sister to Linder an 18-year old Creole woman with her own daughter Aimee, who was 10-months old\textsuperscript{119}. This whole family was included on the Turnbull and Joyce inventory. However, Judith and Clarinda were claimed by Constance Joyce\textsuperscript{120}, while the rest of the family was claimed by Catherine Rucker Turnbull\textsuperscript{121}. On March 30, 1804, when Constance received her inheritance from the estate of her husband’s partnership with Turnbull, Judith and Clarinda were included as her property at MMP\textsuperscript{122}.

Ten years later, April 27, 1814, when Constance petitioned the court in New Orleans for separation of property from her husband Armand Duplantier, Constance

\textsuperscript{116} Afro-Louisiana Database CD-ROM for Mobile data, and *** and Elaine Favre’s source
\textsuperscript{117} Perkins, 2003, p. 45
\textsuperscript{118} SPWF v. 3, p. 314
\textsuperscript{119} SWPF v. 3, p. 314
\textsuperscript{120} SPWF v. 3, p. 328
\textsuperscript{121} SPWF v. 3, p. 327-330
\textsuperscript{122} SPWF v. 4, p. 340
stated she would “take the following property viz a plantation in Baton Rouge...and the following slaves.” Ten slaves were named, including Judith and Clarinda. Therefore, by the spring of 1814, Judith at 24-years old and Clarinda at 11-years old were still living at MMP. Judith possibly lived at MMP from as early as 1792 to as late as 1814, around 22 years. Clarinda might have lived at MMP her entire life, at least from 1799-1814, around 15 years.

There were three single adults included towards the end of the inventories of the Turnbull and Joyce estate listed at MMP (May 5 and May 7, 1800). First, was a man named Sambo (born 1772) who was 28-years old from the Coast of Guinea. Next was a woman named Sally (born 171765) who was 35-years old and listed with an internal ailment described “with obstructions”. Third, was a disabled man named Benjicha (born 1740) who was 60-years old from the Coast of Guinea. Benjicha was described as “being one-legged.” Armand Duplantier sold Sally in April 1804. Records have not yet been found to describe Sambo and Benjicha after the inventories were taken in May 1800 at MMP. Perhaps they remained in Baton Rouge.

Nancy was in Mobile, Alabama on November 21, 1798 when an inventory was done for the slaves held by the Turnbull and Joyce estate. Nancy (1782) was 16-years old and given a monetary value of 360 pesos. This value in pesos has been helpful in tracking Nancy’s movement to MMP in 1804. Nancy was listed on May 5 and May 15 1800 with the slaves held by the Turnbull and Joyce estate in New Orleans, still marked

123 Perkins, (2003), p. 16
124 Perkins, (2003), p. 16
125 SPWF v. 3, p. 311-320
126 SPWF v. 3, p. 328
127 SPWF v. 4, p. 343
128 Afro-Louisiana database/ GET CITATION SEE actual CD ROM with Mobile info
with 360 pesos\textsuperscript{129}. On March 30 and April 21, 1804 when Constance Duplantier claimed 17 slaves from the Turnbull and Joyce estate she included “Nancy 360 pesos” as one of the slaves at MMP\textsuperscript{130}. Nancy was likely held by Constance Joyce Duplantier prior to 1798 in Mobile and remained with Constance to at least 1804. Nancy would have been 22-years old when she was living at MMP in 1804.

The appraisers accounted for 30 slaves held by the Turnbull and Joyce estate on November 17, 1798 in Mobile\textsuperscript{131}. They included Jenny, (1763) 35-years old, and her daughter Lucy, (born 1786) 12-years old, and son Baptiste (born 1796) 2-years old. The appraisers accounted for 8 slaves held by the Turnbull and Joyce estate in New Orleans on May 5 1800\textsuperscript{132} including Jenny, 35-years old and her two children, Lucy 12-years old and son Baptiste three years old. In 1804, young Baptiste appeared on a list of 9 slaves that Constance Duplantier claimed along with the land in Baton Rouge, “Baptiste negro boy of Jenny.”\textsuperscript{133} Jenny was at MMP as well by this time. However, in 1804, Armand Duplantier sold 10-year old Baptiste on April 27 to Janvier Longuepee\textsuperscript{134} in Baton Rouge. In 1814, Armand Duplantier’s creditors inventoried slaves in Baton Rouge and included Lucy who was a seamstress. May be Jenny’s daughter Lucy, who would have been around 28-years old, was the Duplantier’s enslaved seamstress at MMP. Jenny at age 50 in October 1813 was sold by Armand to Fergus Duplantier during his impending bankruptcy. There were 17 slaves in this conveyance\textsuperscript{135}. Perhaps the Duplantiers were

\textsuperscript{129} SPWF v. 4, p. 329 and p. 333  
\textsuperscript{130} SPWF v. 4, p. 340-342 and p. 352  
\textsuperscript{131} Afro-Louisiana Database  
\textsuperscript{132} SPWF v. 4, p. 333; SPWF v. 3, p. 310  
\textsuperscript{133} SPWF v. 3, p. 314  
\textsuperscript{134} SPWF v. 8, p. 168  
\textsuperscript{135} Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 656
attempting to keep Jenny with the family in this time of crisis. Jenny (born 1763) was likely at MMP from 1800 to at least 1813, and later within Duplantier family households.

Slaves that belonged to Constance and John Joyce would not have been included by the appraisers of the Turnbull and Joyce estate in 1800. Armand and Constance, described as residents of Baton Rouge, sold Diana,(born 1768) a 35-year old native of Baton Rouge, to Pierre Allain on May 2, 1803. This enslaved woman was evidently the property of John Joyce being Constance Rochon Joyce Duplantier signed the act as a vendor. It is possible that Diana was at MMP as early as 1792 to 1803, 11 years, and, until the sale in 1803; she was in Baton Rouge her entire life.

In 1800, American Will, (born 1764) who was 36-years old was either from the Coast of Guinea or he was a Creole of Jamaica. He was listed as the husband to a Creole woman, Minta (born 1765) who was 35-years old. The name, “American Will,” might indicate that this carpenter came to Louisiana from the American states. The couple had four children: Tom (born 1790) a “Creole” boy who was 10-years old, Alexis a 2-year old son (1798), and two girls Catiche (born 1792) 8-years old, and Poll (born 1794) 6-years old. These names might indicate the family’s regard for their kin and African heritage. American Will was noted on the inventory as a good carpenter. Minta is described as “without good sense.”

American Will was a runaway slave by 1804, described “in the state of a fugitive” and noted as one who “helps runaways.” His wife and family were claimed by Catherine Rucker Turnbull, who likely went to a cotton estate.

136 SPWF v. 6, p. 177
137 SPWF v. 6, p. 252 and SPWF v. 3, p. 316
138 SPWF v. 3, p. 314, May 7 1800 inventory
139 SPWF v. 3, p. 314
140 SPWF v. 8, p. 187 and SPWF v. 6, p. 252
plantation in Baton Rouge or on Bayou Sara. American Will was inherited by the Joyce minors and Constance Duplantier. On September 17, 1803, American Will was found around the St. John’s Plains. John Almond was on his way to Baton Rouge to the house of “Mr. Duplantier” (possibly Pointe Coupee or MMP) to inform Armand that American Will was found and that Almond intended to buy the fugitive slave. On September 21, 1803, Armand and Constance Duplantier sold American Will, the runaway carpenter, to John Almond a resident of Galveztown. On May 9, 1804, Armand Duplantier received payment from John Almond for American Will, still in Galveztown. It is likely that American Will and/or his family spent less than 8 years (1792-1800) at MMP, if at all.

**Armand Duplantier Slaves, 1781-1802**

Armand Duplantier arrived in Pointe Coupee, Louisiana on May 21, 1781. He married his first wife, Augustine Gerard that year. Armand and his wife lived on their cotton and indigo plantation in Pointe Coupee with 60-70 slaves for 18 years. Part of the enslaved population came from Armand’s uncle, Claude Trénonay, who had an indigo plantation in Pointe Coupee, and from slave markets in New Orleans, and slave sales in the district of Baton Rouge.

Trénonay was murdered by his slave, Latulipe who was an Ibo African. Latulipe was accused of stealing and Trénonay put him in stocks and flogged him. Latulipe retaliated by shooting his master on July 9, 1791 and then hung himself on July 14, 1791.

---

141 SPWF v. 3, p. 377
142 SPWF v. 6, p. 252
143 SPWF v. 6, p. 253
144 Perkins, (2004), p. 2
145 Perkins, (2003), p. 65
146 According to Hall (1992), Claude Trénonay was one of the largest slave holders in Pointe Coupee. He purchased 40 slaves ages 16-22, “right off the slave-trade ship from Africa” in 1785. They arrived at his plantation on March 1, 1786 (p. 252).
Armand became intimately familiar with slave resistance and became the executor of this estate and absorbed some of the slaves from Trénonay’s plantation.

For example, On March 20, 1794, Armand inventoried 33 slaves in his uncle’s estate who were to be sold. One slave in particular, Charlot Négre Créole, who was noted as a witness in the death of Latulipe in 1791, was described as the first commander or overseer at Trénonay’s plantation. Armand inventoried the estate including Charlot, as a 40-year old Louisiana Creole. On December 6, 1803, Armand sold his own Pointe Coupee plantation to William Wikoff with 15 slaves, including Charlot and his wife Magadelaine. Charlot was noted as a 46-year old Louisiana Creole and commander or foreman. Magadelaine (born 1745), described as a “grif” woman around 49-years old, was also included in the inventory of Claude Trénonay’s estate in 1794.

Several slaves Armand inventoried from his uncle’s Pointe Coupee plantation in 1794 appear in later records of the Armand and Constance Duplantier household in Baton Rouge, at MMP. These include André (born 1755) 39-year old “an indigo maker” and Négre Créole in 1794; Charlot (born 1754) a 40-year old Louisiana Creole in 1794; Henry (born 1778) 16-years old in 1794; Hubert (born 1785) who was 9-years old in 1794; Francoise (born 1772) 22-years old and her son Celestin in 1794; Jean Louis (born 1755) 50-years in 1794; Narcisse Bacoco; Pelagie (born 1762) who was 32-year old

---

147 Hall, (1992), p. 252-255
148 Hall, (1992), p. 255
149 Perkins, (2003), p. 10
150 SPWF v. 7, p. 51
151 Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 656; SPWF v. 7, p. 51
Louisiana Creole woman; and Simon Négre who was described as second in command or driver\textsuperscript{152}.

In 1800, two men named André were included on the 1794 inventory of the Trénonay estate. André (born 1755) was described as a Louisiana Creole and the other André (born 1762/1763) could speak French and the African language, Gur\textsuperscript{153}. African born André was purchased from Claude Trénanoy’s estate in Pointe Coupee by the first Mrs. Duplantier who died in 1799 and he likely remained with Armand Duplantier. On October 29, 1813, Armand Duplantier sold African born André, at age 50, to his son Fergus Duplantier\textsuperscript{154}. In the sale, André was described as a commandeur, mayoral, majordomo (commander, plantation manager, or a driver). African born André was with the Duplantier family until at least 1821\textsuperscript{155}. Being the Duplantiers kept André in the Duplantier family his story can be traced. In 1819, Fergus and his siblings sued their father for part of their inheritance from their deceased mother, Augustine Gerard Duplantier\textsuperscript{156}. Their claim included the following slaves at MMP\textsuperscript{157}:

- André (60 years and more)
- Pompee (dead by 1821)
- Batiste
- Celestin (32-years old)
- Louise
- Josephine
- Modeste
- Henry
- Aveline
- Onezime
- Celeste (70-years old)
- Lucie (35-years old)

\textsuperscript{152} Hall, (1992), p. 253-254 and Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 1800, no. 1799, no. 1767, no. 1761
\textsuperscript{153} Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 1799
\textsuperscript{154} Perkins, (2003), p. 45, p. 66
\textsuperscript{155} Perkins, (2003), p. 67
\textsuperscript{156} Armand and his first wife Augustine married in 1781.
\textsuperscript{157} Perkins, (2004), p. 20
Recall from page 32, the partial list of slaves inventoried from Claude Trénanoy’s estate in 1794, and see how it compares to the list of slaves claimed by the Duplantier siblings in 1819: André (1755) would have been 64-years old in 1819; Henry (1778) would have been 41 years-old; Celestin who was a child in 1794 and likely was 32-years old in 1819.

In 1821, Mr. Favrot and Mr. Simon gave testimony in court to help settle a case for the children of the first Mrs. Duplantier. The witnesses explained that Armand Duplantier purchased André from Trénonay’s estate around 1796. This date suggests André was the African born man who was 60-years old at the time of the trial. During the 1821 trial, André was still held by Armand Duplantier until the courts found that André was the property of his children from his first wife. Interesting to note that Fergus had legal rights to André based on the 1814 sale noted above. In 1832, when André would have been 65-years old, a record was made at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Baton Rouge that André Duplantier died as a free man of color. André was with the Duplantier family as early as 1794 until as late as possibly 1831, around 37 years.

Pompey/Pompee (born 1760) was no longer alive in 1821 when the trial was held to ascertain property rights to slaves held by Armand Duplantier, whom his children from his first wife were claiming in court. Pompey was inventoried in 1791 and in 1794. He was listed as one of several slaves who were “unsold” from the sale of deceased Claude Trénonay in Pointe Coupee. Pompey was born in Calabar, Africa and spoke French and Kwa. Pompey went with Armand to his plantations for the remainder of his life.

---

159 Catholic Life Center Archives, Archives Diocese of Baton Rouge
161 Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 1800
162 Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 1800
First, he lived and labored in Pointe Coupee, and after 1803, Pompey most likely lived and labored at MMP. Pompey was listed as “ouvrier” in Baton Rouge, not a field hand as other slaves were listed in the inventory taken by Armand Duplantier’s creditors in February 14, 1814. He was an industrial worker listed with an extraordinarily high value, $1,500. Perhaps Pompey worked the gin press, understood the production of indigo, or became skilled in the sugar mill. (MMP was a sugar producing plantation by 1824.) Another unique aspect of how Pompey was described by Armand’s creditors in 1814; he was the first listed with the highest monetary value and as an industrial worker. The courts found that Pompey was a slave that belonged to the first Mrs. Duplantier and should have been the property of her children. Pompey was likely with the Duplantier family from as early as 1794 to his death before 1821, for about 27 years.

Celestin was named as one of seven slaves in a 1819 court case stating Armand Duplantier held slaves from his first wife’s estate who rightfully belonged to Duplantier’s children. In the 1819 court record, Celestin was noted as 32-years old. (The list of slaves included Modeste, who later named her son Celestin.) It is likely that the 6-year old boy, Celestin (born 1788), who was the son of Trénonay’s slave Francoise (born 1767) and brother to Eugenie, and who was mortgaged by Armand Duplantier the executor of the Trénonay estate in 1794, was the same Celestin named in 1819. It is likely that Celestin who was named as the second overseer on Armand’s New Orleans

164 Perkins, (2003), p. 22
165 Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 112
166 Perkins, (2003), p. 67 and p. 74
167 Afro-Louisiana Database
creditor’s list of slaves composed on February 14, 1814 was the same Celestin (1788); he would have been around 26-years old.

On January 18, 1827, Modeste’s 11-month old son, Celestin, was baptized in Baton Rouge. The adult Celestin was recorded as the godfather and Julienne served as godmother and both were described as slaves owned by the widow Constance Duplantier. On January 18, 1829 Celestin was recorded as the godfather with Julia the godmother to Pierre, a child of Anna a slave of Duplantier in the Catholic Church records in Baton Rouge. Celestin was a slave associated with the Duplantier household from as early as 1794 to 1814, and possibly to 1829, for about 35 years. Anna could have been the “seller” listed among Armand’s slaves by his creditors in 1814 in New Orleans, suggesting Anna was held by the Duplantiers for at least 15 years, 1814-1829.

Hubert (born 1785) was a 9-year old boy listed on the inventory of the Trénonay estate. Armand Duplantier probably sold a different man named Hubert (1768), who was 45-years old to Fergus Duplantier on October 29, 1813. Armand Duplantier’s creditors on February 14, 1814 described a man owned by Armand Duplantier named Hubert as a field worker valued at $600. On July 17, 1814, Constance Duplantier purchased Hubert from Armand for $100 likely to keep Hubert in the Duplantier household in Baton Rouge. Armand’s creditors, Paul Lanusse & Alexandre Choppin, sold the MMP house, slaves, animals, furniture, etc. to Constance Rochon Duplantier.

---

168 Perkins, (2003), p. 41
169 Julienne had a daughter Isabella who was baptised in 1818 in Baton Rouge, both mother and daughter were listed as slaves held by Fergus Duplantier. Julienne was listed as a slave belonging to Fergus Duplantier in 1826, with slaves Auguste and Rose. Apparently the enslaved population held by Constance and Fergus were overlapping. Julienne served as godmother to Silverster in 1831, the son of Marie Therese another slave woman held by the Duplantiers. See church records.
170 Catholic Life Center, Archives Diocese of Baton Rouge
171 Catholic Life Center, Archives Diocese of Baton Rouge (p. 87, #5)
172 Perkins, (2003), p. 45; Afro-Louisiana Database
173 Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 656
Onesime/Onizim/Onesine (born 1781) was claimed by the children of the first Mrs. Duplantier in 1821\(^{174}\). The siblings claimed that Onesine was one of the slaves from their deceased mother’s estate from Pointe Coupee (1799). The 1819 court records show that Onsine and André were purchased at the same sale from Trénonay’s estate around 1795-6\(^{175}\). (The name Onesine relates to the Igbo nation in Africa, where Kwa is the regional language\(^{176}\).) Still held by Armand Duplantier, African born Onesine, 42-years old, was purchased by Fergus Duplantier on October 29, 1813 with 16 other slaves from Armand Duplantier\(^{177}\). He is listed as one of 17 slaves on a court document dated February 14, 1814 stating Armand Duplantier sold these enslaved individuals, one family of three and 14 individuals, to Fergus\(^{178}\). Onesine remained at MMP for many years. In 1836 and in 1839, when Constance Duplantier sold and then re-purchased MMP from John Dawson\(^{179}\), Onesine was listed as being 55-years old at MMP on the conveyance records. In 1841, in Constance Duplantier’s Probate record, Onesine was listed at MMP as 75-years old. Onesine was at MMP from as early as 1803 to 1841, for at least 39 years, and was associated with Armand Duplantier from as early as 1798 to 1827, for at least 29 years.

Pelagie (1763) was included as one of the 17 slaves Armand sold to his son Fergus. In the October 29, 1813 sale, Pelagie was described as a 50-year old black woman\(^{180}\). Earlier, another woman named Pelagie (born 1762) was listed in the 1791

\(^{174}\) Perkins, (2003), p. 66
\(^{175}\) Perkins, (2003), p. 66
\(^{176}\) Afro-Louisiana Database, African Names
\(^{177}\) Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 656; Perkins (2003), p. 45
\(^{178}\) Perkins, (2003), p. 45
\(^{179}\) Conveyance Records, Archives East Baton Rouge Parish Courthouse, Doc. NI419
\(^{180}\) Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 656
inventory of Claude Trénonay as a 32-year old Creole woman of Louisiana. In 1794, Pelagie was listed as one of the “unsold” slaves from the Trénonay estate in Pointe Coupee. The Pelagie born in 1762 and part of Claude Trenonay’s estate was likely the same woman sold to Fergus in 1813. Pelagie was listed in the records at St. Joseph Church in Baton Rouge on November 11, 1821. The record states that Armand Duplantier paid for “the internment of a female Negro Pelagie $2.50.” Later in the church records, a free woman of color, Pelagie Allain died at about age 70 in 1827. Was this the same woman? Armand cared enough about her to plan a proper church burial. Did he see to her freedom? In the 1820 U.S. Census, Armand Duplantier’s household included three free females of color, one girl under 14-years old and two women over 45-years old. Favrot wrote to Armand Duplatnier in 1816 and reported, “Pelagie is asking me to tell you and Titine [Augustine Duplatnier] so many things that I do not have enough space for everything. She does not like it here at all...” If this is Pelagie born in 1763, she was 54 years old and with Favrot in Baton Rouge in 1816. The nickname “Titine” suggests Pelagie had an intimate relationship with Armand’s daughter, perhaps she was the slave who nursed Augustine in 1799 when her mother died in New Orleans (see March 5, 1801 letter Armand to his brother). Also recall, Constance purchased an enslaved woman named Pelagie in New Orleans.

Josephine (1789), 32-years old, was an enslaved woman claimed by the Duplantier children in the 1819 court case against their father, Armand Duplantier. The courts found that Augustine Gerard Duplantier acquired Josephine before her death in

---

181 Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 656
182 Catholic Life Center, Archives of the Diocese of Baton Rouge
183 Favrot Papers, V.5, p. 365.
184 LSU Special Collections Armand Duplatnier Letters, Misc. D.
Josephine may have been less than 10-years old. Likely, Josephine had been with Armand Duplantier’s household all those years. Josephine was described as a “house servant” and “domestic” on Armand’s creditors’ lists in 1814\textsuperscript{186}. Josephine was also a mother of at least one child by 1814\textsuperscript{187}. She would have been around 25-years old at that time.

When widowed, Constance Duplantier sold MMP with slaves to John Dawson in 1836; an enslaved woman named Josephine, listed as 35-years old, was one of several mortgaged slaves included in the sale\textsuperscript{188}. If 35-year old mortgaged Josephine was the same woman claimed by the Duplantier children in 1819, she was very young when the first Mrs. Duplantier acquired her or she was the child of one of Augustine Gerard Duplantier’s slaves. The same discrepancy appears in the records for another Duplantier house servant, Modeste. It is likely that Josephine listed by Armand’s creditors in 1814 served as a house slave at MMP in the years following Armand’s bankruptcy case. Josephine was part of the Duplantier household since at least 1798 to at least 1814, and possibly to around the 1836, likely for 38 years.

On July 22, 1833, Josephine (44-years old), identified in the Catholic Church records as the slave of Duplantier, was the godmother to Josephine Bienville, a child born a free person of color\textsuperscript{189}. The child was born November 1830 to St. Luc Bienville and Ann Mather Bienville, free-people-of-color. St. Luc was once a slave held by Armand Duplantier. St. Luc was a mulatto 8-year old boy in 1803 when his father or uncle, Julian

\textsuperscript{185} Perkins, (2004), p. 61
\textsuperscript{186} Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 112; Perkins, (2003), p. 42
\textsuperscript{187} Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 112; Perkins, (2003), p. 42
\textsuperscript{188} Conveyance Record, 1836, Archives East Baton Rouge Parish Courthouse
\textsuperscript{189} Catholic Life Center, Archives Diocese of Baton Rouge
Bienville, fpc and his mother Charlotte Bienville, fpc, bought St. Luc and his sister Mary, 5-years old from Armand\textsuperscript{190}. Julian Bienville gave both children their freedom\textsuperscript{191}.

Recall Armand Duplantier owned plantations on the west bank that were adjacent to a plantation owned by a free man of color Jean Baptiste Massy. Josephine, a domestic slave who served the Duplantier family, spent her whole life intimately related to slaves and free-people-of-color in and around Baton Rouge.

Modeste was named in the claim of the Duplantier children in 1819 against Armand Duplantier, stating Modeste was a slave of their mother, Augustine Gerard Duplantier before her death in 1798\textsuperscript{192}. The court settled in their favor\textsuperscript{193}. Modeste was a house servant listed as one Armand’s slaves on February 14, 1814 in New Orleans with Josephine, named above. These records suggest that Josephine and Modeste, both house servants, were with Armand’s household since at least 1799. If Armand was living in New Orleans, (records suggest he was living in New Orleans around 1809-1816), the bankruptcy case in 1814 likely required the aging Armand to settle at MMP. The creditors did not foreclose on Armand, and his slaves appear to have stayed with the Duplantier household. The court ordered that the 7 slaves who belonged to the Duplantier children “be delivered to the petitioners, they being entitled to them by inheritance from their mother, whose property they were”\textsuperscript{194}.

Modeste had her infant child, Pierre baptized on April 15, 1827 at the Catholic Church in Baton Rouge. In that record, Modeste is described as “the slave of the older

\textsuperscript{190} SPWF v. 6, p. 208
\textsuperscript{191} Julian Bienville was listed in 1810 as a slaveholding free-person-of-color. Bienville’s household included 5 people-of-color and 15 slaves. ( Roux and Roux, 1995, p. 7)
\textsuperscript{192} Perkins, (2003), p. 61
\textsuperscript{193} Perkins, (2003), p. 42
\textsuperscript{194} Perkins, (2003), p. 20
Duplantier.”¹⁹⁵ That was the same year Armand Duplantier died. Two years later, Modeste had another child baptized at the same church. On January 18, 1827, Modeste’s 11-month old child, Celestin, was baptized in Baton Rouge. Slaves owned by the widow Constance Duplantier served as godparents, Celestin and Julienne. It is likely that Modeste was a house servant at MMP since as early as 1798 to 1814, and possibly to the 1820s.

Frontin (born 1788), 25-years old, was one of 17 slaves Armand sold to Fergus Duplantier on October 29, 1813¹⁹⁶. Frontin was later recorded as the husband of Jane (born about 1806/1809) who had a 4-month old baby girl baptized at St. Joseph Church in Baton Rouge on September 24, 1831. The baby’s name was Marie Henreitta. All were recorded as slaves belonging to Constance Duplantier. At St. Joseph Church on May 19, 1836, Jane’s new daughter, Adelle 18-months old, was baptized. Both mother and daughter were described as Duplantier slaves. That same year, Frontin and his young family were sold with MMP to John Dawson¹⁹⁷ and then bought with the plantation by Constance in 1839¹⁹⁸. Frontin and his growing family included Frontine who was listed as 45-years old, Jane as 27-years old, Molise (born 1826) as 10-years old, Henrietta (born 1830) as 6-years old, and Adel/Adele (born 1833) as 3-years old. Constance Duplantier’s probate record in Baton Rouge, dated 1841, documented this growing family at MMP: Florentin/Thorntin, 55-years old and Jane, 35-years old, with their children, Adele, Harriet/Henreitta, Moline (born 1825/1826,16-years old), and Chicot/Chloe (born 1830, 11-years old)¹⁹⁹. In 1849, the Duplantier heirs sold MMP to George Otis Hall. The sale

¹⁹⁵ Catholic Life Center, Archives Diocese of Baton Rouge
¹⁹⁶ Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 656
¹⁹⁷ Conveyance Records, East Baton Rouge Parish Courthouse
¹⁹⁸ Conveyance Records, East Baton Rouge Parish Courthouse, Doc. NI419
¹⁹⁹ Perkins, (2004), p. 87 and p. 90
included 54 slaves. Frontine, was listed as 60-years old with his wife Jane, 43-years old, and Adele/Adello, 15-years old. Frontine and most of his family were at MMP from at least 1813 to 1849, 36 years. Jane was associated with the Duplantier Baton Rouge household since as early as 1831 to at least 1849, for at least 18 years. Adele was born into the Baton Rouge Duplantier household, around 1833 and was still at MMP in 1849, for at least 16 years.

When Armand Duplantier inventoried the slaves at Claude Trénonay’s estate in Pointe Coupee in 1794, an African-born 22-year old man named Isaac (born 1770) was included on the list of “unsold” slaves. On June 25, 1803, Armand sold an African man named Isaac, who was 36-years old, to Thomas Aillet. This may have been the slave from the Trénonay estate. Isaac (born 1779) was a 34-year old man who was sold with 16 other slaves held by Armand Duplantier to Fergus Duplantier on October 29, 1813. The younger Isaac may have been the enslaved man associated with the Duplantier household for a long period of time, it is not clear. In 1836, when Constance sold MMP with slaves to John Dawson, Isaac, 45-years old, was included in the sale. Three years later when the sale was reversed, Isaac was listed again as 45-years old. When George Otis Hall purchased MMP in 1849, a man named Isaac (born 1825) who was 24-years old, with his wife Jelly, 21-years old, and their one-year old child Elijah were included in the sale by the Duplantier heirs.

Jean/John Louis is another familiar name among the Duplantier held slaves. John Louis (born 1775) was a slave Armand Duplantier inventoried among the Claude

---

200 Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 1799 and document no. 1800
201 Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 656
202 Conveyance Records, East Baton Rouge Courthouse
Trénonay estate in Pointe Coupee in 1794\textsuperscript{203}. In 1793, Armand Duplantier sent his slave John Louis to bid on his behalf at a public auction. John Louis bid and purchased a mare for 15 pesos and 4 reales for Duplantier in Baton Rouge\textsuperscript{204}. This was a significant record. It demonstrates that John Louis was educated in math and business trading. It all shows that Armand Duplantier trusted and held some respect for John Louis. In Baton Rouge in 1801, Armand Duplantier saw that his slave John Louis (1759), who was 42-years old, was baptized on June 15 at St. Joseph Catholic Church; and his god parents were Louis and Julian (possibly Julienne), also slaves owned by Armand Duplantier\textsuperscript{205}.

John Louis (born 1767), 31-years old, was at a plantation at the “Houmas” mortgaged by William Conway to John Joyce in April 1798\textsuperscript{206}, one month before Joyce died. In 1814, an enslaved man, John Louis was included among the 10 slaves Constance Duplantier claimed she brought into the marriage with Armand Duplantier\textsuperscript{207}. Earlier that same year, Constance listed the same 10 slaves including Jean/John Louis as her property in court during Armand’s bankruptcy trial\textsuperscript{208}.

Later, John Louis (born 1801) was listed with the 18 slaves who were mortgaged when Constance Duplantier sold MMP in 1836. John Louis was listed as 35-years old. Either John Louis was the child of one of the Rochon/Joyce slaves or John Louis was acquired after Constance married Armand Duplantier. In 1841, John Louis was listed as 40-years old and married to Molly about 25-years old. The youngest John Louis who was at MMP in 1836 was likely the same man held by Constance Duplantier in 1841. John

\textsuperscript{203} Afro-Louisiana Database, Document no. 1800
\textsuperscript{204} SPWF v. 2, p. 151-3
\textsuperscript{205} Catholic Life Center, Archives Diocese of Baton Rouge
\textsuperscript{206} LSU Special Collections, Turnbull Allain Family Papers box 1 folder 5
\textsuperscript{207} Perkins, (2003), p. 16
\textsuperscript{208} Perkins, (2003), p. 45
Louis likely lived and labored at MMP possibly earlier than 1836 to no later than the early 1840s.

Narcisse was a name that appeared for nearly a century within Duplantier related households. As early as 1791, a slave named Narcisse, identified by the courts as Narcisse Bacoco\textsuperscript{209} was a slave held by Claude Trénonay in Pointe Coupee. Narcisse was a witness who testified at the Trénonay murder trial. In 1791, Armand Duplantier inventoried Narcise (born 1766), 25-years old, as Bococo, born in Moko Africa\textsuperscript{210}. In 1795, a boy was born in Louisiana who was named Narcisse Duplantier\textsuperscript{211}. Could this boy have been the son of Narcise Bococo?

Narcisse Duplantier married Catchie, who was born around 1800 in Louisiana. By 1870, the married black couple lived near Charlotte Duplantier in Baton Rouge. Charlotte Duplantier was born in 1795 in Africa\textsuperscript{212}. These neighbors, and likely relatives, were living in Baton Rouge, Ward 9, which was in the same area as Magnolia Mound Plantation.

On February 14, 1814, Narcisse was one of ten slaves listed belonging to Constance Duplantier and who were not assets in Armand Duplantier’s bankruptcy case\textsuperscript{213} but were property Constance claimed\textsuperscript{214}. On April 27, 1814, Constance Duplantier petitioned the courts in New Orleans outlining her claim on those 10 slaves, one of whom was Narcisse\textsuperscript{215}. In 1836, when Constance sold MMP with slaves to John Dawson, Narcisse (born 1823), 13-years old, was listed as one of the 18 slaves who was

\textsuperscript{209} Hall, (1992), p. 254
\textsuperscript{210} Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 1761
\textsuperscript{211} U.S. Census, 1870 Louisiana roll M593_512 page 158
\textsuperscript{212} U.S. Census, 1879, Louisiana roll M593_512 page 158
\textsuperscript{213} Perkins, (2003), p. 45
\textsuperscript{214} Perkins, (2003), p. 45
\textsuperscript{215} Perkins, (2003), p. 16
mortgaged. “Punk (or Narcisse)” was listed as about 17-years old on Constance Duplantier’s probate record in 1841. Narcisse alias Punk was born around 1824. He could have been the son of Narcisse Duplantier who lived to be at least 75-years old in East Baton Rouge. In the 1870 U.S. Census, a listing for a Punk Narcisse, 44-years old, was listed with his wife, Luke Narcisse, living in Ward 9 of East Baton Rouge.

It is possible that over three generations of black men named Narcisse lived and/or labored in Duplantier households, before and after Emancipation. One obituary states, that on September 24, 1870 Punk Duplantier died of a gunshot wound. He was the house servant of Alfred Duplantier in Baton Rouge. Alfred Duplantier was the second child from the marriage between Armand and Constance Duplantier. Narcisse and his descendents had been enslaved residents at MMP, an enslaved family line that might date back to 1814, or earlier to 1794, through to at least 1841, and possibly until Emancipation, and remarkably to the end of the 19th century in Baton Rouge.

Recall Mahomet from Constance Joyce’s inheritance. A curious record was included in the baptism records for slaves at the St. Joseph Church in Baton Rouge. In April 15, 1801, a two-month old child named Zeno was baptized and recorded with his mother as slaves belonging to both Mr. Duplantier and Mr. Marshall, neighbors in Pointe Coupe Parish. Armand Duplantier’s slave named Mahomet was listed as the child’s godfather.

Zeno was a slave name that continued in the Duplantier enslaved community for many years. Beginning when Zénon Mulâtre who was listed as a domestic slave in

---

217 U.S. Census 1870, roll 593_512 p. 158
219 Catholic Life Center, Archives Diocese Baton Rouge, p. 270

310
Claude Trénonay’s household in 1791\textsuperscript{220}. Zenore and the derivations of this name does not appear to be a common name in the Afro-Louisiana database. This finding suggests that this was a family name attached to slave communities held by the slaveholding Duplantier family.

In 1841, Rhina, (1815) who was 26-years old and her two children, Zinon 6-years old and Frances 4-years old and one child unnamed, were recorded as property of the deceased Constance Rochon Duplantier at MMP. (Reina, 26-years old, and her 5-year old daughter Henrietta were identified as slaves of Fergus Duplantier in 1816 \textsuperscript{221}. ) In the 1870 U.S. Census, Zenore Duplantier and his son Zenore Duplantier were living in St. James Parish. The older Zenore was listed as a cooper. In the 1880 U.S. Census, Zenore Duplantier (born 1839) was a mulatto cooper living in East Baton Rouge with his wife Elsey.\textsuperscript{222} By 1906, Zeno Duplantier was a carpenter who owned his own home in Baton Rouge\textsuperscript{223}.

Constance Joyce Duplantier and Armand Duplantier era, 1802-1820

Before Armand Duplantier married Constance Joyce in 1802, he already had ginned cotton that was grown at MMP. He was ginning two crops of cotton, about 80 to 100 pounds of seed, from the preceding years that belonged to the succession of John Joyce\textsuperscript{224}. The 58 slaves named in the May 1800 inventories above (pages 9-11) were likely laboring and living at MMP at this time. In 1800, appraisers noted there were many tools and equipment at MMP. These included 6 spinning wheels, a weaver’s loom, four axes, sixteen pickaxes, twenty shovels, two long saws, two compass saws and coopers

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{Hall, (1992), p. 253}
\footnote{SPWF v. 19, p. 777}
\footnote{1870 U.S. Census, 1880 U.S. Census}
\footnote{1906 Baton Rouge City Directory}
\footnote{SPWF v. 3, p. 368}
\end{footnotes}
tools 225. These indicate cotton production and possible lumber work were in progress at the time. Magnolia Mound Plantation was certainly a cotton plantation since 1798, and was producing saleable amounts of indigo dye stuffs. Charles Norwood saw to the delivery of cotton bagging, used for collecting picked cotton, to MMP in 1801226.

Included in the 1800 inventories were a few “sundry slaves.” Appraisers accounted for Turnbull and Joyce slaves held in New Orleans. These included Jenny (born 1765), 35-years old; her daughter Lucy (born 1788), 12-years old; and her son Baptiste (born 1797), 3-years old; Nancy (born 1784), 16-years old (assigned value 360 pesos)227. As described above, in the Joyce era section, more than half of the slaves included in the Turnbull and Joyce estate claimed by Constance and her children were sold in 1803 and 1804.

Charles Norwood was extremely busy sorting out the complicated Turnbull and Joyce estate and had to deal with Armand Duplantier in order to execute the many transactions on Constance Joyce Duplantier’s behalf. Records indicate there was friction between Norwood and Armand Duplantier, as soon as Duplantier assumed control of Constance’s inheritance, exemplified by the numerous sales of slaves in 1802 to 1804228. Reasons to explain Armand’s actions to rapidly collect cash during these early years of their marriage are hard to confirm. However, some clues exist. Letters Armand Duplantier wrote to his family explain how Armand was planning to return to France with his new young family229. He was selling slaves and other property in order to secure

225 SPWF v. 3, p. 312
226 Turnbull-Allain Family papers box 1, folder 6
227 SPWF v. 3, p. 310 and p. 329
228 SPWF v. 3, p. 410; Perkins (2003) p. 7 and p. 9
229 LSU Special Collections, Duplantier Letters MISC D
a new home in France near his father and brothers and to terminate his residency in Louisiana. He wrote in 1803,

I only sold...my property, my wife’s property left and some land, still some Negroes and my domestics. I prefer not to sell the land that I have left for the moment, possessions can only gain in value under the American government and if things are going well as I hope so, selling my land will compensate the loss of money with my slaves²³⁰.

Armand also explained that due to the complicated political environment caused by the transitioning colonial governments in Baton Rouge, (Spanish, French, and American), there was a severe shortage of hard cash and the economy was depressed. This strained political and economic situation is also described by modern historians²³¹. Armand suffered financial losses due to poor crops, loss of goods at sea²³², and other investment decisions.

This report is not about the slaveholding Duplantier family. The important point regarding the Duplantier’s financial crisis, which came to head in 1814, is to describe the very volatile environment the enslaved population faced as a result of the Duplantier’s life style choices. Historians Herbert G. Gutman (1976) and Ann Patton Malone (1992) explain that slaves’ lives were directly impacted by the crises in their masters lives.

On March 30, 1804 the colonial Spanish courts confirmed that Constance Joyce Duplantier was the owner of Magnolia Mound Plantation and the owner of the following slaves. The document stated, including the 1939 translator’s comments, that Constance Rochon was residing at MMP,

...she is authorized to take possession of the effects that have been delivered to her...which effects she desires to take possession of, which property is herein specified to be the plantation in which she resides [appears to be the present

²³⁰ January 20, 1803. MMP Collection, Duplantier Family Letters
²³¹ Meyers, (1976) and Taylor, (1963)
²³² SPWF v. 17, p. 227 Conception loss of cotton cargo seized by the British
Magnolia Mound Plantation in this post in its present state, for the price and sum of seventy-six hundred hard columnar pesos.\(^{233}\)

Nancy, (possible first in Mobile, to New Orleans, to Baton Rouge by 1804, based on 360 pesos assigned value\(^{234}\))
Charlotte, (12-year old daughter of Sally, based on 200 pesos assigned value)
Venus, (daughter of Quashee and Kate)
Bungey, (will take an alias Auguste)
Guy, (Husband to Basheba, father to Joseph)
Basheba, (Wife and mother)
Joseph, (their son)
Harry, (twin brother to Dick, around 13-years old)
Dick, (sons of Abram and Fanny)
Jude or Judith, (mother to Clarinda)
Clarinda, (daughter to Judith)
Samson, (father and husband to Jude)
Jude and baby [son Emson]
Chloe, (daughter)
Betty/Hetty, (daughter)
Belly/Billy, (son)

Of these individuals, only Basheba, Judith, Clarinda, Nancy, and Bungey likely remained at MMP after 1804. In 1814, Constance petitioned the courts to separate her property from her bankrupt husband Armand, and she included four slaves she inherited from her first husband, John Joyce. These four were Basheba, Lucile, Clarinda, and Auguste\(^ {235} \).

By 1814, when Armand Duplantier was facing bankruptcy\(^ {236} \), Constance had successfully secured MMP and at least ten slaves in her claim against Armand for separation of property that year\(^ {237} \). The first four slaves, noted above, were important to Constance, “she guards them”\(^ {238} \). The list of the ten slaves varied slightly from the April 27, 1814 court document and the February 14, 1814 court document. (See figure one.)

\(^{233}\) SPWF v. 4, p. 348
\(^{234}\) SPWF v. 4, p. 329 and p. 333
\(^{235}\) Perkins, (2003), p. 45
\(^{236}\) Perkins, (2003), p. 45
\(^{237}\) Perkins, (2003), p. 16
\(^{238}\) Perkins, (2003), p. 45

314
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>February 14, 1814</th>
<th>April 27, 1814</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lucile</td>
<td>Judith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basheba</td>
<td>Basheba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarinda</td>
<td>Clarinda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auguste</td>
<td>Bungey alias Auguste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexandre</td>
<td>Alexandre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louis</td>
<td>Louis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jean Louis</td>
<td>John Louis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narcisse</td>
<td>Narcisse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pussal [could be Purrot]</td>
<td>Pierre alias Pedro or Purrot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lundy [could be Sandy]</td>
<td>Alexander alias Sandy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1. Slaves Constance Joyce Duplantier claimed as her property separate from Armand Duplantier, her husband.

The following slaves who may have been at MMP after the bankruptcy case of 1814 may have included the 17 slaves Fergus purchased from Armand in October 29, 1813:

André black male 50 years old, commander
Onesine African male 42-years old
Gaspard black male 25-years old
Frontin black male 25-years old
Peter black male 30-years old
Edouard black male 34-years old
Isaac black male 34-years old
Hubert black male 45-years old
Cesar black male 25 years old
Thom black male 50-years old
Aveline African female 40-years old, mother
Magdeline her daughter 6-years old
Lauritte her daughter 4-years old
Atala her daughter 2-years old
Jenny black female 50-years old
Pelagie black female 50-years old
Simon black male 14-years old

Aveline (born 1773) was the 40-year old mother of three daughters in 1813, all of whom Armand sold to Fergus. This was the only family Armand Duplantier sold to

---

Perkins, (2003), p. 45
Perkins, (2003), p. 16
Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 656; Perkins (2003), p. 45
Fergus on October 29, 1813. The daughters included Magdeline 6-years old, Lauritte 4-years old, and Atala 2-years old. Edward/Edouard was one of the 17 slaves Armand Duplantier sold to Fergus. Edward (born 1784), 55-years old, was included on the list of slaves conveyed with MMP in 1836 and 1839 from John Dawson. It is possible that Edward was at MMP for at least 26 years.

In February 14, 1814, creditors in New Orleans ordered appraisers to inventory Armand’s property including slaves in New Orleans and Baton Rouge. One such list is especially revealing. The list named the enslaved individuals and described the work they performed (see pages 55-56). Although places of residency were not noted for these enslaved individuals, the land holdings Armand held at this time were primarily in Baton Rouge and New Orleans. After the creditors’ assessment of Armand’s desperate financial situation, they chose not to foreclose on him. This meant that the enslaved population remained in Duplantier households.

The February 14, 1814 inventory provides a glimpse of the individuals who served as slaves for Armand and Constance. It is possible that some of these slaves came to reside at MMP in Baton Rouge. The February 14, 1814 list of 36 slaves who were likely in New Orleans included:

Mansfield, horse groomer
Paul, field hand
Collin, field hand
Lindor, field hand
Morcan (African), field hand

---

242 Aneline/Aveline (born 1779), a 16-year woman was included without a price value assigned to her on the 1794 inventory of Claude Trénonay’s estate (Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 1800). The name is only slightly different for the enslaved mother, Aveline, who Armand sold to his son Fergus in 1813. It is remotely possible this is the same individual.
243 Afro-Louisiana Database document no.656
244 Conveyance Records, Archives East Baton Rouge Courthouse
245 Perkins, (2003), p. 41-42
Cook, field hand (Possible, Cook was “Cusinier” 38-years old in 1798 from Mobile)²⁴⁶
Panjon, (African), field hand
Etienne, field hand
Soaris, field hand
Mathurin, field hand
Sam, field hand
Francq, field hand
Hubert, field hand
Lucas, a child, cowboy
Josephine and child, domestic, housekeeper
Marcellite, domestic, housekeeper (listed two times)
Marcellite, domestic, housekeeper
Alcindor, male, Cook
Jacques, miller
Anna, seller
Pompee, industrial worker
Celestin, industrial worker
George, cooper
Jacques, blacksmith
Lucy and her child, seamstress
Modeste (woman)
Samedi (African) woman
Francoise, girl
Charles, boy
Dombote (man)
Jean Pierre
Thereze
Marie and her infant son, Gilbert
Milando (man)

Armand Duplantier's creditors, Paul Lanusse & Alexandre Choppin, sold “the house, slaves, animals, furniture, etc. to Constance Rochon Duplantier, wife of Armand Duplantier”²⁴⁷. Constance purchased several of the inventoried slaves in July 1814 at depressed prices. For example, in February 1814, Samedy, an African born man was appraised for a relatively low value, $300, on the creditors’ inventory²⁴⁸. In July 17, 1814, Constance Duplantier purchased Samedy for 5 pesos. Milando was appraised for

²⁴⁶ Afro-Louisiana Database, Turnbull and Joyce Estate in Mobile, November 7, 1798
²⁴⁷ Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 380
²⁴⁸ Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 112.
$800 and Constance purchased him for 480 pesos. Hubert, a field worker, valued by the creditors for $600, was sold to Constance for $100. Marie and her baby were appraised for $900 and were sold to Constance for 550 pesos. Marcelitte, a house servant, appraised at $600, was sold to Constance for 590 pesos; Oddly, Jean Pierre, a field worker appraised at $400 was sold to Constance for 600 pesos; Etienne, a field worker appraised for $800 was sold to Constance for 510 pesos; Paul, a field worker, appraised at $800 was sold to Constance for 500 pesos; Charles, who was around 12 to 13-years old, was listed as a child by Armand’s creditors for a value of $500 and then Charles was listed as an adult for a selling price of 455 pesos when Constance purchased him from Armand in July 1814; the same kind of age valuation took place in the records for female Francoise, who was around 14-years old. She who was listed by Armand’s creditors as “Negritte” or black girl appraised for $400. When Constance purchased Francoise in July 1814, she was listed as a woman and assigned the same value.

Other slaves on the February 14, 1814 creditors’ list were not immediately sold, if ever. It is likely they remained in Duplantier households as well. These included Pompee, an industrial worker or possibly an overseer, who was listed for a very high value, $1,500; Celestin, an industrial worker or an overseer, appraised for a high value, $1,200. Both men were listed at the top of the creditor’s list. Francq, a field worker; Sam, a

---

249 Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 112 and no. 380
250 Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 380
251 Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 380
252 Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 380
253 Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 112 and no. 380
254 Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 112 and no. 380
255 Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 112 and no. 380
256 Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 112 and no. 380
257 Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 112 and no. 380
258 Perkins, (2003), p. 41
field worker\textsuperscript{260}; Jacques a miller\textsuperscript{261}; Alcindor, the cook\textsuperscript{262}; Mansfield, a horse groomer\textsuperscript{263}; Lucas, a “Negrillon” or little black boy described as a cowboy\textsuperscript{264}; Anna, a market woman or seller; Paujon a field worker\textsuperscript{265}; Dombote, a man\textsuperscript{266}; Moran, a field worker\textsuperscript{267}; Lindor, a field worker\textsuperscript{268}; Samedi\textsuperscript{269}; Lucie, a seamstress, and her child\textsuperscript{270}; Modeste\textsuperscript{271}, likely the same Modeste discussed above; and Josephine, a house servant (discussed above) and her child\textsuperscript{272}.

Some slaves listed by Armand’s creditors were sold to other slave holders. On June 16, 1814, Armand sold George, a cooper or barrel maker, to Crisostome Lupe in New Orleans\textsuperscript{273}. On August 18, 1814, Armand sold Sam, a 25-year old field worker, Cook, a 30-year old field worker and Jacques, 45-year old a blacksmith, as a group to Etienne Mazureau for 1260 pesos\textsuperscript{274}.

The February 14, 1814 inventory is helpful in several ways. It lists slaves owned by Armand Duplantier with descriptions of their skills and duties as laborers. The enslaved served as house servants, field hands, a cooper, a blacksmith, miller, overseers, a seamstress, a horse groomer and a cowboy. While it is difficult to confirm which of these individuals labored as slaves at MMP, it is of extreme interest to our project to

\textsuperscript{259} Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 112
\textsuperscript{260} Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 112
\textsuperscript{261} Perkins, (2003), p. 42; Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 112
\textsuperscript{262} Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 112
\textsuperscript{263} Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 112
\textsuperscript{264} Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 112
\textsuperscript{265} Perkins, (2003), p. 42
\textsuperscript{266} Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 112
\textsuperscript{267} Perkins, (2003), p. 42
\textsuperscript{268} Perkins, (2003), p. 42
\textsuperscript{269} Perkins, (2003), p. 42
\textsuperscript{270} Perkins, (2003), p. 42
\textsuperscript{271} Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 112
\textsuperscript{272} Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 112
\textsuperscript{273} Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 346
\textsuperscript{274} Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 426
know about the kinds of work Armand and Constance required of their enslaved population.

Because the New Orleans creditors did not foreclose on Armand Duplantier, it was possible that some of these slaves remained with the Duplantier household, which was likely at MMP after 1814\textsuperscript{275}. The following analysis is based on the list of enslaved individuals named in the February 14, 1814 inventory and on at least one other document that indicated the likelihood that those individuals lived at MMP some time after the inventory was concluded. Mentioned above, Constance purchased several of the enslaved on the list from Armand on July 17, 1814\textsuperscript{276}. The creditors arranged the group sale. The complete sale included 20 slaves:

- Jack, blacksmith with a hernia (about 45-years old)
- Charles about 13 years old
- Franc/ Francq
- Paul, a field worker
- Etienne, a field worker
- Lindor, a plowman about 19-years old
- Milano (a woman)
- Souri/ Soaris (male)
- Moman/ Morcan (male)
- Mathurine/ Mathurin
- Therese
- Colin
- Paujon/ Paujon, a field worker
- Jean Pierre, a field worker
- Marie with son Gilbert an infant
- Francoise (female about 12-years old)
- Marcelitte, a house servant
- Samedy (male, African) sold for only 5 piastres
- Hubert, about 48-years old

While it is possible that the above named slaves who Constance bought from Armand might have lived at MMP, a sub-set of them was sold in a group of 30 slaves to

\textsuperscript{275} Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 112
\textsuperscript{276} Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 380
Valerin and Sosthene Allain in February 1816 in New Orleans\textsuperscript{277}. These slaves were sold by Armand and Fergus Duplantier with a sugar plantation, equipment, and land for $100,000\textsuperscript{278}. Recall, the following enslaved individuals sold in 1816 were also included on the February 14, 1814 inventory:

Charles 15-years old  
Paul 24-years old  
Etienne 30-years old 
Lindor 27-years old 
Moreau/Morcan 26-years old 
Mathurin 28-years old 
Thereze 23-years old 
Collin 30-years old 
Panjou 35-years old 
Jacques 28-years old (a miller) 
Marie 23-years old and her son Gilbert, one year old 
Francoise 14-years old 
Mercidite 18-years old and her one year old daughter Celestine (could be the 2\textsuperscript{nd} Marcellite listed in 2/14/1814) 
Samedi 55-years old 
Hubert 50-years old 
Lano/Milando 21-years old 

According to a MMP overseer’s, J.B. Kleinpeter, testimony given in a Baton Rouge court, Armand Duplantier took up his residence on the plantation in 1816 or 1817. Constance Duplantier was already living at MMP when Armand settled there\textsuperscript{279}. Consequently, after the sale in 1816, the most probable group of slaves who moved from New Orleans to MMP in 1816, when Armand most likely settled at MMP as his permanent and final residence\textsuperscript{280} were as follows:

Mansfield, horse groomer  
Lucas, cowboy  
Josephine and her child, housekeeper or house servant  
Alcindor, cook

\textsuperscript{277} Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 119  
\textsuperscript{278} Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 119  
\textsuperscript{279} Perkins, (2003), p. 96-97  
\textsuperscript{280} Perkins, (2003), p. 96-97
In the 1820 U.S. Census, Armand Duplantier’s Baton Rouge household at MMP held 27 agricultural workers. Not all of these agricultural workers were enslaved. The census recorded 50 enslaved residents, 3 free women of color, and 8 free white residents\textsuperscript{281}.

Recall, the 12 enslaved individuals who were named in 1819 and 1821 court cases held in Baton Rouge when Armand’s children from his first marriage sued him for property from their deceased mother’s estate. These included, André, 60-years old; Pompee deceased by this time; Celeste, 70-years old; Celestin, about 32 years old; Lucie, about 35-years old; Batiste; Louise; Josepshine; Modeste; Henry; Aveline; and Onezime\textsuperscript{282}.

In 1819, it is likely that MMP was changing over to cultivate sugarcane. In 1819, Constance went to New Orleans and purchased a group of ten slaves\textsuperscript{283}. Court testimonies stated that by 1824, Armand Duplantier had sugar mill cylinders in Baton Rouge\textsuperscript{284}. The ten slaves Constance purchased from Robinson and Lecesne included:

George, a mulatto 21-years old
Samson, 40-years old
Betsy, a mulatto woman, 18-years old
Meria (African name) a mulatto woman, 17-years old (listed twice)
Meria, a woman, 17-years old

\textsuperscript{281} U.S. 1820 Census, December 31, 1820 roll M33-32, p. 5
\textsuperscript{283} Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 247
\textsuperscript{284} Perkins, (2003), p. 22
After Armand’s death in 1827, Constance continued the tradition of baptizing children born to enslaved women at MMP. Two entries in the St. Joseph Church records show Catherine was a slave who belonged to Constance Duplantier in Baton Rouge. She was first mentioned in 1828 as a slave of Widow Duplantier, and then, in August 1829, Catherine was recorded as the mother of Artemise, who was baptized in August 1829\(^{285}\).

It is possible that Catherine was the daughter of Abram and Fanny who was listed with the family in the 1800 inventories noted above. If this was the case, Catherine would have been around 44-years old. Her mother (Fanny) and sisters (Clarissa and Patty) were sold to John Towles in 1811\(^{286}\). Her brothers Harry and Dick were claimed by Constance in 1803. Catherine could have been the 15-year old listed for 350 pesos in New Orleans with the “sundry slaves” included on the Turnbull and Joyce estate inventory in 1800\(^{287}\).

On June 8, 1836, Constance Duplantier sold MMP to John W. Dawson including 52 slaves, 18 who were mortgaged\(^{288}\). The following list names all the slaves conveyed with MMP to Dawson. The names in bold refer to slaves who more likely lived at MMP during the Constance and Armand era 1802-1827:

**Onizim**, 55-years old  
**Frontin**, 45-years old, husband to Jane, father to Henrietta, Adelle, Molise  
**Sandy**, 45-years old (Could be alias for Alexander or Alcindor born 1781)  
**Alexander**, a cooper (42-years old)  
James, 25-years old  
Willis, 25-years old  
Charles, 27-years old

---

\(^{285}\) Catholic Life Center, Archives Diocese of Baton Rouge  
\(^{286}\) Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 110  
\(^{287}\) SPWF v. 3, p. 310  
\(^{288}\) East Baton Rouge Courthouse, Conveyance Records 1836
Little Sandy, 27-years old
Jean Pierre, 35-years old
Jesse, 17-years old
Jack, 19-years old
Robertson, 6 or 7-years old
**Isaac**, 45-years old
Lawrence, 45-years old
**Edward**, 55-years old
Fanny, 34-years old
Mary Ann, Fanny’s her daughter, 18-years old
Caroline, 13-years old
Maria, 30-years old
Ellen, 35-years old
**Jane**, 27-years old, wife to Frontin, mother to Adelle, Molise, Henrietta
Henrietta/Matilda, 25-years old
Little Fanny, 10-years old
**Henrietta**, 6-years old
**Adel/Adelle**, 3-years old
Rose, 18-years old
Sarah, 13-years old
Louisa, 7-years old
Lucinda, 17-years old
Adelaide, 18-years old
Precilla, 19-years old
Angel, 18-years old with her infant

**Jenny**
H...of being understood that the slaves **Sandy** 45 and Adelaine 18 are sick warranted against ..disease;

Moreover, 300 shares of capital stock of Union Bank of Louisiana now owned by said vendor deceased by mortgage in favor of said bank on the land and some of the slaves above auction which the vendor obligates herself [Constance Duplantier] to transfer said vendees.
Now whereas a mortgage exists in favor of said bank against the aforesaid vendor on the slaves:
Olfman, 40-years old
Pierre, 35-years old
**Josephine**, 35-years old
Betsey, 28-years old
Eloise/Elavon 45-years old
Stepeny, 18-years old
Joseph, 16-years old
**Narcisse**, 13-years old
Bazile, 13-years old
**Molise**, 10-years old (daughter of Jane and Frontin)
Prissey, 7-years old
Auguste, 13-years old
Vincent, 5-years old  
Lafayette, 5-years old  
Julienne, 12-years old  
Resse, 9-years old  
Sanco, 14-years old  
**John Louis**, 35-years old

Conveyance records documenting Constance Duplantier’s decision to buy back MMP on May 25, 1839 included the same 34 slaves listed in the 1836 sale above\(^\text{289}\). However, the list of 18 mortgaged slaves was not included in the conveyance record.

Many other enslaved individuals were enslaved at MMP but fewer records have been found to examine their stories. For example, the Catholic Church baptism record in Baton Rouge included a small entry in Spanish that read, (loose translation):


The names Charles and Hortense have shown up in earlier records however, they do not seem to correspond to this church record. Florida/Florruda was a mother and slave in Constance’s household in 1827 but her name has not surfaced anywhere else to date.

The young boy Robertson’s story (born 1830), while not part of the interpretation period of MMP museum tour, is of particular interest because he was born at MMP and was their until the last slaveholders before Emancipation, the Halls. He was owned by Duplantier, Dawson, and Hall, not having left MMP. Robertson appeared on the MMP conveyance records in 1836 at 6-years old and then in 1839 at 9-years old. Robertson appeared on Constance Duplantier’s 1841 Probate record at 11-years old. Eight years

---

\(^{289}\) East Baton Rouge Courthouse, Conveyance, Doc. NI 419  
\(^{290}\) Catholic Life Center, Archives Diocese of Baton Rouge
later, in 1849, Robertson appeared at 19-years old on the MMP conveyance record from Duplantier heirs to George Otis Hall291.

Resistance and Freedom Stories within the MMP Slave Community

Recall the runaway slave American Will292 from Constance Duplantier’s inheritance from the Turnbull and Joyce estate. He was sold to a slaveholder in the district of Galveztown, near where Bayou Manchac and the Amite River meet. Galvez Town was inhabited by Canary Islanders who were Spanish speaking people from the northwest coast of Africa, west of Morocco, sometimes referred to as Los Isleños. The town was deserted by 1810, and was a spot where other runaway slaves went to begin their journey north. This was a place to gather supplies and leadership for the dangerous journey along the Mississippi, Amite, and Red Rivers to the Ohio or Tennessee Rivers to Ohio.

In a Baton Rouge court in April 1803, an enslaved 26-year old man, Jean Baptiste, told the court how slaves in the area were being coaxed to runaway293. Jean Baptiste had lived in Baton Rouge for 14-years and was owned by Joseph Martinez. He told the governor presiding that an American named James John Lieux, an employee of Mr. Miller of Baton Rouge, had repeatedly proposed to Jean Baptiste and other “negroes” to take them to the United States of America, implying to free states in the north. What is especially informative in this particular deposition is the description Jean Baptiste recalled of the runaway-route out of Baton Rouge. The American James proposed:

291 East Baton Rouge Courthouse, Conveyance records 1849
292 SPWF v. 6, p. 252 and SPWF v. 8, p. 187
293 SPWF v. 6, p. 167
to bring him [Jean Baptiste] to the Ohio River promising him his freedom after
serving him for only two years, stating that this escape would be sure and that he
would take horses, guns, and ammunition going around Galvez-town or any other
deserted place up to the swamps and from there to pass through the territory of
Natchez going through places not thickly populated and continuing across the
Mississippi River across the “Post of Walnuts [now Vicksburg] so to go into the
Red [Colorado] River, continuing on that side until they arrive at the Ohio River.

While Galvez-town was south of Baton Rouge, the deserted town was a covert refuge for
runaway slaves to prepare for the long journey north via river routes.

Runaway slaves were advertised in the Baton Rouge newspaper the Gazette. A
letter from New Orleans, dated June 13, 1799, to Armand Duplanter reported that two of
his slaves Anthony and Cesar had run away294. The author of the letter continued to
explain that Isam, a slave of Mr. Joyce who ran away that February was seen and was
probably in Baton Rouge or Natchez. The author offers to advertise the escapees in the
Gazette.

Patrollers searching the Baton Rouge area for runaway slaves did not likely use
dogs until summer 1808. The transcribers note in the SPWF explained that a Manchac
murder case held in a Baton Rouge court showed the first use of dogs to trail a criminal in
Baton Rouge295. Captured runaway slaves were incarcerated in the jail in Baton Rouge296,
referred to by some as a dungeon that was dangerously unhealthy297.

Only one record is included in this report of a slave Armand owned and freed by
his own will while associated with MMP. The other freedom stories that follow in this
report recall individuals who were associated with Armand and/or Constance who were
freed by sale to other slaveholders.

294 LSU Special Collections, Turnbull-Allain Family papers box 1, folder 3
295 SPWF v. 13, p. 229
296 SPWF v. 8, p. 247
297 SPWF v. 4, p. 324
Joseph, a 19-year old Louisiana Creole and described as a mulatto slave owned by Armand Duplantier, was “freed by living master. The manumission did not involve a cash payment”\textsuperscript{298}. Joseph was manumitted in New Orleans on January 11, 1809. Armand purchased 18-year old Joseph on November 14, 1808 in New Orleans from Jean MaCarty\textsuperscript{299}. MaCarty was a prominent New Orleans politician. This was unlike any other freedom story associated with Armand and Constance Duplantier. All other manumissions required cash payments to the Duplantiers.

Two years later, in 1811 Armand Duplantier purchased another young man named Joseph, who was 14-years old at the time. Joseph, who was from Africa, was brought from Baltimore and sold in the New Orleans slave market on January 8, 1811\textsuperscript{300}. This slave sale demonstrates two historical events. It shows Armand Duplantier was selling older slaves and purchasing younger and less costly enslaved individuals. This sale illustrates the movement of slaves from Maryland and Virginia at the time when tobacco agriculture went bust and Piedmont planters were selling slaves further south, especially to the New Orleans market\textsuperscript{301}.

Armand Duplantier sold Frosine to Hypolite Tivollier on March 15, 1810 with the condition that she could earn money to purchase her own freedom from Tivollier\textsuperscript{302}. Frosine was described as a mulatto woman who was sold to Tivollier for 800 pesos. Frosine put up the first 200 pesos and all parties agreed that she would work for Tivollier to earn the remaining 600 pesos that would be given to Armand to pay the remaining balance on her sale. At that time, Tivollier promised he would free her. This transaction

\textsuperscript{298} SPWF v. 15, p. 72  
\textsuperscript{299} Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 480  
\textsuperscript{300} Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 3  
\textsuperscript{301} Berlin, (1998)  
\textsuperscript{302} SPWF v. 18 p. 188
took place in Baton Rouge. In the 1820 U.S. Census, Hypolite Tivollier was listed as a resident in West Baton Rouge303.

In December 1799, Armand was the executor of the estate of deceased planter Adam Boyd. In his will, Boyd instructed Armand to manumit Armand’s slave Charlotte, described as “a griffe” and her mulatto son Robert, 3-years old, and each be given 1,000 pesos304. Charlotte was described as a good washer woman and seamstress and “a very good maid.”305 On May 19, 1800, Armand followed Boyd’s will and freed Charlotte and Robert and gave each money from the estate. However, Charlotte was given 100 pesos and Robert was given 1,000 pesos306.

Julian Beinville, a free mulatto, purchased the freedom for three slave children from Armand Duplantier on June 7, 1803 in Baton Rouge307. Two of the children were the offspring of Charlotte, the slave who was freed with her son Robert from Adam Boyd’s estate on May 19, 1800 by Armand Duplantier. The children were St. Luc, an 8-year old mulatto boy and Mary, a 5-year old mulatto girl. The third child, Eulalie, a 7-year old mulatto girl was the daughter of Avelina, possibly kin to the same woman named Avelina in the 1836 MMP conveyance records. All these transactions were not associated with MMP. Armand Duplantier still owned his Pointe Coupee plantations on the west bank at this time, and the families who were gaining freedom for their relatives were also most likely living in Pointe Coupee.

The summer of 1803, was an important year for more slaves held by Armand Duplantier, likely in Pointe Coupee. On July 11, 1803, Armand sold three slaves to Jean

303 U.S. 1820 Census, Roll M33-31, p. 81
304 SPWF v 3, p. 244
305 SPWF v. 4, p. 188-203
306 SPWF v. 3, p. 254
307 SPWF v. 6, p. 208
Baptiste Massey, a free man of color\textsuperscript{308}. Massey was a neighbor and business associate of Armand Duplantier, when they both lived in Pointe Coupee. In 1799, Massey’s plantation was adjacent to the southern border of Duplantier’s plantation on the west bank of the Mississippi River\textsuperscript{309}.

Massey purchased Helen, 45-years old and her daughter Marietta, 26-years old, and Clara/Claire, “griffe” 13-years old, who was Marietta’s daughter. All three women were natives of Louisiana. The sale was transacted with a mortgage and emancipation for Marieta and Helen. Clara would gain her freedom on March 13, 1807 from Massey\textsuperscript{310}.

Claire, listed as a mulatto 14-years old and a native of Louisiana, was emancipated by Jean Baptiste Massey\textsuperscript{311}. Massey (sometimes spelled Marsie/Massie) asked the Baton Rouge court to give him “a copy of the act of emancipation of his niece, named Claire, Called LaFille, passed today by Cupidon Masse...” in Baton Rouge, March 13, 1807\textsuperscript{312}. Claire’s mother, Marrietta, by this time a free woman of color, was a sister to Jean Baptiste Massey. Claire, with her mother and grandmother, Helen (born 1758) and Marreetta (1777) who Armand sold to Massey four years earlier, were all free women of color living in Pointe Coupee or Baton Rouge as a family by 1807\textsuperscript{313}.

Recall Armand witnessed the violent resistance of Latulipe, the slave who murdered Claude Trénanoy in 1791 in Pointe Coupee. Armand was aware of the slave rebellion in Santo Domingo, Haiti\textsuperscript{314}. Constance and Armand were affected by slaves running away and likely aware of violent forms of slave resistance in Baton Rouge.
reported in newspapers and circulated by town talk. One particularly long attempted-murder trial took place in Baton Rouge when in November 1806 seven slaves owned by George de Passau were accused of poisoning their master\textsuperscript{315}. The accused, and later convicted “faithful servants” included, Nancy, Bill, Caesar, and Edmond (who belonged to Joseph Sharp at Mount Hope on Highland Road), Abraham (who belonged to Captain Elias Beauregard of Beauregard Town), and an elderly free woman of color was who was blind, Glascoe.

In the depositions taken that fall, George de Passau explained that “Mr. Gemmil and myself went off in the evening to Mr. Duplatnier’s (October 15, 1806)”\textsuperscript{316} The de Passau plantation was in the Highlands, near Joseph Sharp’s plantation. Slaves from neighboring plantations supplied advice, materials, and decoys to develop the murder plan.

A witness to planning the poisoning was Eve, a resident of de Passau slave quarter. Eve quoted her own words to the would-be assassins, “By God you are after your freedom and you think if you can kill Master you will get back to the States and travel where you please?”\textsuperscript{317} The overseer from this plantation, George Course recalled, “The slaves there has always as much corn as they chose without any stint; and meat twice a week till they were detected in killing their master’s hogs after which they had no regular allowance of salt meat given”\textsuperscript{318}. These examples from the court case illustrate how tumultuous life was on plantations in Baton Rouge, despite the seemingly mechanistic and aesthetic view of plantation life otherwise painted without slaves’ stories.

\textsuperscript{315} SPWF v. 10, p. 193-223
\textsuperscript{316} SPWF v. 10, p. 194
\textsuperscript{317} SPWF v. 10, p. 194
\textsuperscript{318} SWPF v. 10, p. 210
Nancy received three lashes from the whip administered by de Passau for mischief\(^{319}\). (This is the only record in this report of whipping.) Forty-year old Abraham, Sharp’s slave, spent 13 months in prison before he was cleared of murder charges. However, he was badly treated in prison in Baton Rouge. The jail was an unhealthy “calabosse”, and Abraham left in a poor state of health, “his body swollen and half crazy”. Captain Beauregard sued for damages\(^{320}\) after his slave Edmond testified that he confessed under the threat of the whip\(^{321}\) in prison.

**Enslaved Artisans and House Servants**

Armand Duplantier owned an enslaved cooper, a barrel maker, named George (1786). In 1808, Armand sold George, 22-years old with a hernia, to Elie V. Jourdain in New Orleans\(^{322}\). It was either a coincidence or evidence of a cancelled sale when Armand Duplantier’s creditors inventoried George, a barrel maker, in 1814\(^{323}\). Perhaps George’s hernia effected a cancellation of the 1808 sale. George would have been 28-years old if and when he went to MMP with the 35 other slaves on the 1814 inventory. However, on June 16, 1814, Armand sold George to Crisostome Lupe in New Orleans\(^{324}\). It is unlikely that George joined the MMP slave population. (An 18-year old man named George was listed in Mobile on a 1798 Turnbull and Joyce estate inventory\(^{325}\).)

After Armand Duplantier died in 1827, MMP continued to be Constance’s official residence, and it appears that Josephine and Fergus helped to manage MMP. Constance

---

\(^{319}\) SPWF v. 10, p. 228  
^{320}\) SPWF v. 10, p. 228  
^{321}\) SPWF v. 10, p. 247  
^{322}\) Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 2  
^{323}\) Perkins, (2003), p. 42  
^{324}\) Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 346  
^{325}\) Afro-Louisiana Database Turnbull and Joyce estate November 7, 1798 Mobile inventory
sold MMP in 1836 to John Dawson with 53 slaves (18 who were mortgaged) as discussed above, and in 1839, purchased the plantation back with 35 slaves. Among the MMP slave community that was conveyed over the course of these three years, only one individual, Alexander (1791) 45-years old, was identified by his skill. Alexander was a cooper326. He was listed as about 60-years of age on Constance Duplatnier’s Probate record, which suggests Alexander likely lived and labored at MMP for at least five years. The name Alexander appeared on many earlier documents (e.g. April 27, 1814), however these could be confused with Alcindor or another man named Alexander from Constance’s earlier property claims of MMP slaves, especially being there was no mention of Alexander the cooper prior to 1836.

Recall in 1814 Constance made a claim against Armand for ten slaves (see p. 53). It is possible that Alexander was inaccurately transcribed and should have been Alcindor. Alcindor may have taken on the alias of Sandy. That being suggested, in 1836 Sandy at age 45 was noted to be in poor health327, and was still associated with MMP. Readers should be aware that in 1809, Alcindor was 28-years old, born in 1791, while Sandy was 45-years old in 1836, born in 1791.

Before Armand or Constance made MMP their permanent residence they likely spent time living at Armand’s Pointe Coupee cotton and indigo plantation on the west bank. Armand sold the plantation on December 6, 1803 to William Wikoff with 15 slaves328. Among those enslaved at Duplantier’s west bank plantation was Pierret, a 55-year old African-born carpenter. Pierret could have done work for the Duplantiers at

---

326 East Baton Rouge Courthouse, Conveyance Records 1836 and 1839, Doc. NI 419
327 East Baton Rouge Courthouse, Conveyance Records 1836
328 Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 51
MMP, being Constance did occasionally use MMP as a residence by 1803, as evidenced by the May 1800 inventories discussed above.

Recall Cato, the Creole of Jamaica who was described as “a good carpenter” on the Turnbull and Joyce estate inventories in Baton Rouge. It is likely that Cato worked as a carpenter for the Joyces at MMP from as early as 1792 to 1804, as discussed above. American Will was also described as a carpenter, who could have worked at MMP for no more than 8 years, 1792-1800. And a mulatto man named Sam (1765), 35-years old, who was skilled in carpentry and rope making was included in the Turnbull and Joyce estate inventory in New Orleans May 5, 1800329.

In 1802, Armand Duplantier planned on building a house in Baton Rouge and sold his own carpenter to go towards the payment. Instead Armand loaned his enslaved carpenter, John Thomas [or Thomas] a native of Jamaica about 35 years old330, to his hired builder Pierre Plé. After Armand decided to postpone construction because he was planning to travel to Europe in 1803, he allowed his enslaved carpenter to continue working for Plé331. Armand arranged to sell Thomas to Plé and negotiated the selling price to Plé to include the back rent payments due towards the purchase balance.

Armand wrote asking for the passing of the act of sale:

of a negro named John Thomas, whom I have sold to him in the past year, and whom he has had in his possession all this year. When I sold him the negro I had intentions of building and he was to pay me part of the negro’s sale price with his Ple’s work. Sometime afterwards I changed my mind and decided to take a trip to Europe and I advised him by letter that if he found somewhere to work his trade to go ahead because it was not my intentions at the time to build, and that he could make other arrangements concerning his employ but that he could nevertheless keep the negro and that we could make other arrangements instead of the agreement entered into on account of the sale which I am today executing in

329 SPWF v. 4, p. 333
330 Armand Duplantier purchased Thomas the carpenter in New Orleans in 1800 from Mr. Lynd for 600 pesos. SPWF v. 6, p. 212
331 SWPF v 6, p. 212
his favor. The negro being in his possession for over a year, I beg to inform you
that in the sale which was made to his satisfaction I did not warrant the absence of
disease or defects I will be honored to pass and sign the act of sale before if you
will have the kindness of executing it. Forgive me if I cannot go to your house
with him
Your most humble obedient servant June 3 1803 AD332

The SPWF transcribers note ‘The above letter is written by Duplantier to Grand
Pré and is the first which has been found in these records. He expresses the intention of
making a trip to Europe. This may explain the reason for the series of slave sales found in
this volume.’

Recall that Armand likely resided in New Orleans from around 1809 to around
1816. While living in New Orleans, Armand rented three domestic slaves, Louise 20-
years old, Annette 20-years old and Juliette 24-years old, from Pierre St. Pé from around
1811-1813. In August 13, 1813, St. Pé sued Armand for non-payment for renting these
three young women333. The original agreement was for Armand to pay $15 per month for
using the three domestic workers. In January 1814, St. Pé made his claim in court again
and then sold the three women in New Orleans334. (Where were Josephine and Modeste,
the two domestic slaves Armand held since his first wife’s death in 1799?)

Over the years, during the Duplanitier era at MMP, the enslaved house servants
likely included Judith (born 1786), Basheba (born 1780), Clarinda (born 1798), Venus
(born 1792), Josephine (born 1789), Modeste, Louise, Marcellite, Charlotte (born 1792),
Nancy (360 pesos), Charlotte (born 1768), Jenny (born 1763), and possibly Julian and
James. James was the enslaved servant assisting John Joyce in 1798 when they traveled
from MMP to Mobile.

332 SWPF v 6, p. 212
334 Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 32
Armand purchased a male butler in New Orleans named Julian\(^{335}\). However, Julian’s name has not shown up in later documents to ascertain if he in fact came to live at MMP with Armand by 1816, however it is possible that he did live and labor at MMP. By 1816, Josephine, Modeste, Marcellite, and Lucy were likely laboring as house servants at MMP.

Armand Duplantier left a record of buying male African slaves to serve him as cooks and two male bakers. In 1814, Alcindor (1781), about 33-years old, was listed as the cook. Alcindor was an African man, 28-years old, who Armand purchased in New Orleans on October 21, 1809\(^{336}\). Jean Baptiste Baquier brought Alcindor from Santiago, Cuba to the New Orleans slave market and sold him to Armand as a cook. Alcindor does not appear to have been sold after 1814, and could have resettled at MMP with Armand by 1816. In the list of slaves included in Constance Duplantier’s Probate record, 1841, Alexander (1781) 60-years old, is listed as a resident of MMP. Alexander could have been Alcindor.

While in New Orleans, Armand purchased two other male cook slaves. In 1806, Armand purchased Remond/Raimond, 25-years old\(^{337}\), as a cook and sold him in 1807\(^{338}\). In 1808, Armand purchased Isidore as a cook\(^{339}\). And in 1809, Armand purchased Alcindor who appeared to have suited Armand’s requirements as an enslaved cook, as discussed above. On May 6, 1800, when Armand was administering the deceased Adam Boyd’s Pointe Coupee estate, he purchased a man, 29-year old Printemps born in Mina

\(^{335}\) Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 296
\(^{336}\) Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 564
\(^{337}\) Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 141
\(^{338}\) Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 715
\(^{339}\) Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 32
Africa, as cook and field worker from the Boyd estate. Armand was likely residing at his Pointe Coupee plantation at this time. Three years later, on May 7, 1803, Armand sold Printens to Richard Riestond in Pointe Coupee.

Armand was not unusual in holding male enslaved cooks. William Marshall lived on a plantation one mile from the fort in Baton Rouge. William Marshall, held Juba, 18-years old carpenter and a cook in 1805. Marshall died and Juba was given his freedom in Marshall’s will in 1806.

Armand purchased a group of 6 slaves on April 14, 1809 in New Orleans who were awaiting transport from Havana, Parroquia de San Salvador, to New Orleans. Armand might have been setting up a household with these six enslaved household members, one family of three and three individuals, as he prepared to live in New Orleans. (Armand rented three domestic slaves, Julliet, Annette, and Louise around this time from St. Pé and Alcindor was who brought to the household to serve Armand as a cook in 1809.) Armand purchased these six people from Louis Deynaut in New Orleans.

The group included Jayme (born 1783), 26-years old, and Fortunado (born 1773) 36-years old, who were both bakers. Jayme was born in Congo, Africa and Fortunado was born in Igbo, Africa. Julian (born 1779), 30-years old, was purchased by Armand to serve as male domestic butler. Julian was a Louisiana Creole. Enriqueta with her two sons, Stuart (born 1801), 8-years old, and a boy (born about 1805) under the age of five, were included in this slave sale. Perhaps Enriqueta was to serve Armand as a domestic

---

340 Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 0 and SPWF v. 4, p. 184
341 Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 2240
342 SPWF v. 8, p. 422
343 Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 177
servant, as well. None of these individuals appeared in later records. It is possible that some of these slaves did live and labor at MMP after 1816 but not by 1836.

Recall Lucy the seamstress listed on the 1814 inventory conducted by Armand’s New Orleans creditors. Lucy likely constructed ladies and children’s clothing for the Duplantier family. Constance left records of using tailors, 1801-1804, for her son William’s clothes and no records have yet been found for Josephine’s clothes, other than the purchase of materials. Lucy could have made clothing for enslaved household members as well as household linens.

Magnolia Mound Plantation grew cotton, indigo and corn during the Joyce and Duplantier years, approximately from 1792 to 1820. By the 1820s, MMP was cultivating sugar cane. The kind of work demanded of slaves at MMP was shaped by the kinds of crops they cultivated. We know the kinds of crops being grown during the earlier years at MMP by documents found in the Spanish West Florida Records. For example, on December 17, 1803 Armand Duplantier gave power of attorney to Pierre Porteau to make an insurance claim for 154 bundles of cotton shipped to London. Letters Armand wrote and other legal documents Armand left behind record dyewood (likely indigio), cotton, and corn being shipped, ginned, or given. Armand gave 76 barrels of corn to feed slaves on Pousset’s plantation, and he gave cotton and indigo to his brother in France to cover expenses for Armand’s two sons living in France with the family.

---

345 LSU Special Collections, Turnbull-Allain Family papers, Box 1, Folder 7 and Folder 15
346 SPWF v. 7, p. 59; SPWF v. 17, p. 227
347 SPWF v. 6 p. 133
348 SPWF v. 3, p. 368 and LSU Special Collections, MMP Collections, Duplantier Letters June 3, 1802, February 4, 1802, Jan. 20, 1803, August 25, 1803
Armand held millers as slaves as well. On May 6, 1809, Armand acquired Liverpool, a miller who was ill with rheumatism for $300\textsuperscript{349}. In 1814, Armand’s creditors listed Jacques, a miller for a low value of $400.

Using the 1814 inventory prepared by Armand Duplantier’s creditors in his bankruptcy case\textsuperscript{350}, we can glean some more information about the skills employed by some of the enslaved population who may have resided at MMP. Pompee and Celestin were valuable workers who labored as either industrial workers or as overseers or drivers. André may have been working as a driver or overseer\textsuperscript{351} at MMP. Recall André was sold to Fergus in 1813, but remained part of the Duplantier family holdings to at least 1820. He was likely at MMP, especially because he died in Baton Rouge, a free man. Enslaved black overseers were not uncommon in Baton Rouge. In addition to the Duplantier plantations, Francis Pousett held Cato, 45-years old of the Tiambo nation, who labored as the plantation overseer in Baton Rouge\textsuperscript{352}.

Jacques, 45-years old, was a blacksmith serving Armand by 1814, but he unlikely labored at MMP by 1816 (see page 54). Mansfield was a horse groomer or hostler who might have been brought to MMP by 1816, being no sale records have yet been found to refute this possibility.

Enslaved Baton Rouge residents were attended by the town’s surgeons and doctors. Dr. Louis Faure, Mr. Mahier, and Dr. Andre Gil, for example, visited sick slaves at the plantations where they were held\textsuperscript{353}.

\textsuperscript{349} Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 197
\textsuperscript{350} Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 112
\textsuperscript{351} Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 656
\textsuperscript{352} SWPF v. 6, p. 19
\textsuperscript{353} SPWF v. 11 p. 277 and SPWF v. 13, p. 291
Slave Trade and MMP

James Hillin, John Joyce, Armand Duplantier and even Constance Joyce Duplantier all endeavored in selling and buying slaves. However, only John Joyce and Armand Duplantier entered into slave sales as an entrepreneurial endeavor. John Joyce and his partner John Turnbull were in the business of selling slaves in addition to their construction business, fur trade, livestock trade, and other business ventures. Armand Duplantier sold many slaves from his first and second wives estates, Claude Trénanoy’s estate, Adam Boyd’s estate, and from his own slave holdings as discussed throughout this report. Armand Duplantier also sold slaves, briefly, as a slave trader.

In July 1806, Duplantier held the largest slave auction recorded in the Spanish West Florida Records. Duplantier imported about 200 African men, women and children via Pensacola in the schooner *Success*. The captain was Henry Neltrop. The auction took place at Magnolia Mound Plantation. The record shows that Armand auctioned off 18 young adults and children to slave holders mostly from Baton Rouge. None of these individuals were sold to MMP. The sale was suspended at 6:00pm and was to continue on a later date. No record is currently available to follow the fate of the other African individuals held in Baton Rouge by Armand Duplantier.

Naming Traditions and MMP Slave Community

According to contemporary sources (e.g. Genovese, 1974) enslaved mothers and fathers generally named their own children. The parents’ choices varied from concerns for family continuity and African traditions, and rarely did they choose classical or comical names. After Emancipation, Genovese says the African names Cato and Pompey

354 SPWF v. 11, p.78-81

340
were not used by freedmen. These are familiar names to the MMP slave community, and did not continue with later generations. However, many names with African origins were used and did survive over generations at MMP. Africans and their descendants commonly would name a child after the day or month of birth (day-name), such as Samedi (Saturday), Lundi (Monday), Coffe (Friday), and Quashee (Wednesday) at MMP. The name Juba was commonly used across the south, and was a fine African name.

Parents named their children after immediate family members. Son’s often had their father’s name but rarely did daughters have their mother’s name. This naming pattern originated early in slavery times in America\textsuperscript{355}. One African naming tradition that survived in the Deep South among enslaved communities was delayed naming. Children were not named until they were at least a month old. It was bad luck to name a child too early in life. It was also a common West African practice to name children after deceased siblings\textsuperscript{356}. These traditions will help future researchers make kinship connections among the MMP slaves we have traced to date.

According to Gwendolyn Midlo Hall’s database, Aveline and her daughters Magdalaine, Laurite, and Atala and Eulalie all had traditional African names. MMP museum workers have established that MMP enslaved laborers and residents were primarily from the Senegal-Gambia regions of West Africa. One ethnic group from this region was the Wolof, who constituted the largest group in the former French West African colony of Senegal, which extended southward to the Gambia River, a British claimed colony. The indigenous language is called Wolof and is still used in Senegal today.

\textsuperscript{355} Gutman, (1976), p. 190
\textsuperscript{356} Gutman, (1976), p. 196
1800 May 5 Inventory and Estimation (From Katy on USGen.com transcribed from the “Spanish Archives of West Florida as translated by WPA 1940”)

At Baton Rouge on the fifth of May, 1800. We, Charles Norwood testamentary executor of the property left at the deaths of John Joyce and John Turnbull, by virtue of the testamentary clauses of the latter,…accompanied by Madam Catherine Rucker, widow Turnbull and Madam Constance Rochon, widow Joyce, and Messrs. Armand Duplantier and Philip Guinault, curators of the minor children of Joyce and Turnbull, went with the appraisers above-named to the plantation of the said Messrs Turnbull & Joyce, where we have commenced the said inventory and estimation in the following form:

Lands and Buildings…
Tools and Implements…

At Baton Rouge May 7 1800…

Slaves:
Nat, native of the Carolinas, around 40 yrs old
Joan, wife of above, native of the Carolinas, around 35
Jim their son, about 12
Hannah, their daughter, about 10
Sally, from the Coast of Guinea, about 30
Charlotte, her dtr Native of La. about 8
Madeline, her dtr also about 2
Caesar, Creole, about 30, a carpenter
Jenny his wife native of Carolinas, about 45, with two suckling children
Named Adam and Eve, about one yr old
Binah, her dtr. About 13
Sam, their son, about 10
Basheba, native of La. About 20
Clarinda, about one
Jenny, native of La. About 16
Primus, native of L.A. About 12 (boy)
Girl Rinah, native of L.A. About 11
Abram of the Coast of Guinea, about 50, having a hernia
Fanny, his wife, Coast of Guinea, about 40 with her dtr. Clarissa about 15 months old
Harry, her son. Creole, about 9
Dick, her son, Creole, about 9
Patty, about 3
Rose, Coast of Guinea, about 35 with suckling baby named Stepney about 9 months old
Dick, her son, Creole, about 15
Boy Renty, her son, Creole, about 13
Peggy, her dtr. Creole about 10
Barille, her son, about 7
Michael, her son, about 3
Tony, Coast of Guinea, about 55
Cumba, his wife, Coast of Guinea, about 40
Toby her son, Creole, about 13
America Will, of the Coast of Guinea, about 36, a good carpenter
Minta, his wife, Creole, about 35, without good sense
Tom, her son, Creole, about 10
Catiche, her dtr. About 8
Poll, her dtr. About 6
Alexis, her son about 2
Prince, Creole of Carolina, about 30
Pinder, his wife Creole, about 30
Mary, her dtr. About 7
Isaac, her son, about 3
Charlotte, of Coast of Guinea, about 60
Linder, her dtr. Creole, about 18, with her suckling baby,
 named Aimee, about 10 months
Judith, her dtr. Creole, about 14 (mother of Clarinda)
Lad, Creole, about 11 (boy)
Arthee, Creole girls, about 8
Quashee, of Coast of Guinea, about 60
Juba, her dtr. Creole, about 16
Venus, her dtr. About 8
Cato, Creole of Jamaica, about 40, a good carpenter
Bess, his wife Coast of Guinea, about 45
Tom Fuller, of C of G. About 45
Prudence, his wife, a Creole of Jamaica, about 30
Nanny, his wife, C of G, about 45
A griffe or mulatto named Billy, Creole of Jamaica, about 30
Nanny, his wife, C of G about 45
Sam, C of G, about 45
Belle, his ife, of C of G about 45
Lucy, Creole of Georgia, about 35
Pussy, her dtr. Creole about 13
Aimee, her dtr. About 7
Matilla, C of G, about 55
Bungey, Creole, about 20
Phanta, C of G, about 30 blind
Banjicha, C of G. About 60, having one limb
Jack, Creole of Carolina, about 40, speech impediment
Sampson, C of G, about 35
Murray, C of G, about 55
John, C of G, about 35
Lydia, C of G about 45
Jude, Creole of Carolina, about 25 with suckling baby named
Esom, about 3 months old
Hetty, her dtr., Creole about 8
Billy, her son, about 2
Negress, named **Murrah**, C of G about 60
**Celia**, Creole of Jamaica, about 35, with suckling baby,
**Neptune** about 14 months
**Jacob**, her son Creole about 6
**Douglas**, C of G about 35 {Husband to Celia}
**Celia**, his wife, C of G about 35 with
dtr. **Hannah**, about one year old
**Boyer**, C of G about 45
**Mahomet**, C of G, about 30
Negress named **Mirah**, Co of G about 50
**Sally**, C of G about 35 with costiveness (“obstructions”)
**Peggy**, C of G about 45
John, C of G, about 45
Bess, his wife, C of G, about 30
Nancy, her dtr. Creole about 8
Joe, her son, Creole about 5
John, her son, Creole, about 2
**Sambo**, C of G, about 28
**Boatswain**, C of G about 40
**Harriet**, his wife, C of G, about 35
Abraham, C of G, about 40
Abba, his wife, C of G, about 35, with suckling baby, Sampson, about 4 months
Adam, her son, Creole, about 8
Bonner, C of G, about 50
Banna, his wife, C of G, about 45
Lucy, C of G about 50 infirm
Simon, her son Creole, about 7
Mulatto named Dick, Creole, about 18
**Nancy**, Coast of Guinea, about 70
Having no more slaves to inventory, we have closed this, all amounting to 26,530
leaving them in possession of the said ladies…who voluntarily have taken charge of them
and who signed with us the testamentary exes and curators of the minors.
(JR notes, slaves where at the Baton Rouge property held by partners Joyce and Turnbull.
So, in 1800 includes 107 enslaved of which 40 are listed as from the Coast of Guinea, 12
from Carolinas, 23 from Louisiana, 35 as Creole, one as Griffe or Mulatto, and 4 from
Jamaica. Note there are some people who where Creole Jamaican or Creole from
Carolinas. 24 listed families. Those names in bold were claimed by Constance Joyce and
most were either at MMP or transferred to MMP by 1804)
The following list is from SPWF V. 3, p. 327-328

Partition of a portion of the property belonging to the succession of John Turnbull and John Joyce between their widows. (May 15, 1800)

Written in French
Partition of portion of the property belonging to the partnership of the deceased John Turnbull and John Joyce
[JR this does not include slaves held by the families not by the partnership]

Widow Joyce takes on account of her share and portion, with the consent of Widow Turnbull and the curators of the Turnbull and Joyce minors according to the appraisement as follows

[names clustered signals family relations in the original document]

A negro named Boatswain, 300
A negress named Harriet his wife 300

XA negro named Douglas 500
X negress named Celia, his wife with her suckling daughter named Hannah 420
These cross marks are transcribed as written.
A negro named Sampson 450
A negress named Sude his wife with her suckling son named Esom 450
A negro girl named Chloe her daughter 200
Another negro girl named Hetty her daughter 150
A negro boy named Billy her son 100

A negro named Abram 150
A negress named Fanny, his wife with her daughter named Clarisse 350
A negro boy named Harry, her son 250
A negro boy named Dick her son 250
A negro girl named Patty her daughter 200
A negro girl named Catherine her daughter 350

A negro named Bungey 350
A negro named Nat 400
A negress named Joan his wife 350
A negro girl named Hannah her daughter 300

A negro named Cato 500
A negress named Bess, his wife 250

X A negress named Sally 300
A negro girl named Charlotte her daughter 200
X Another negro girl named Madeline her daughter 120
X A negro named Quashee 80
X A negress named Take his wife 100
A negro girl named Juba her daughter 350

X A negro girl named Venus her daughter 180

A negress named Jenny 400
A negro named Boyer 280
A negress named Mariah his wife 250

A negro named John 300
A negress named Celia his wife with her suckling son named Neptune 400
A negro boy named Jacob her son 150

A negro named Sam 250
A negress named Bella his wife 150

A negro named Mahomet 300
X A negress named Peggy his wife 250

X A negro named Tony 150
X A negress named Cumba his wife 250
X A negro boy named Toby her son 300

A negro named Guy 380
A negress named Basheba his wife 400
A negro boy named Joseph her son 120

A negress named Judith 400
A negro girl named Clarinda her daughter 10
A negro named Sambo 450
X A negress named Sally 100
A negro named Benjicha being one legged –

The list follows with implements from the plantation including three spinning wheels, indigo equipment, {The land and plantation at Baton Rouge with all buildings conformed to the estimation what later become Magnolia Mound Plantation as noted by E.A. the translator of these court records}
Coopers’ instruments
Then
A house and corresponding land in Mobile conforming to the price of estimation
A negro named Charles
A negress named Hannibal
A negro named Grog
A negress named Marianna his wife
A neress named Jenny a negro boy named Baptiste her son a negro girl named Lucy her daughter conforming to the estimation made in New Orleans
One negress named Nancy
One negro boy named Charles a shoemaker.
Appendix 2

1841 Probate Record for Constance Rochon Duplantier

1. Negro man Isam [Jean] Louis, 40 years old
2. Molly his wife, 25-years old
3. William, 38-years old
4. Angel his wife, 20 years old and her child
5. Ellen, 6-years old, child of Angel
6. Florentin or Thorntin [Frontin], 55-years old and his wife
7. Jane, 35-years old, and their children
8. Adele
9. Harriet
10. Moline, 16-years child of Jane and [Frontin], note Moline/Molise did not get separated from her family when in 1836 she was mortgaged by Constance Duplantier.
11. Chicot or Chloe, 11-years old child of Jane and [Frontin]
12. Jack, 22-years and his wife
13. Mary Ann, 19-years old
14. Mosian [?] and his wife Rose
15. Rose, 19-years old and her child
16. Preston, 2-years old
17. Matile or Matilda, 30-years old
18. Samy or Jeromy, 17-years old
19. Lucinda, 22-years old
20. Caroline, 16-years old
21. Priscella, 33-years old
22. Sarah, 14-years old
23. Big Sandy, 50-years old, diseased
24. Maria, 35-years old
25. Narcise or Punk, 17-years old
26. Jim, 37-years old
27. Etienne, 22-years old
28. Jean Pierre, 18-years old
29. Herny, 19-years old
30. Robertson, 11-years old
31. Jessie, 19-years old
32. Bazile, 17-years old
33. Jane, 60-years old
34. Charles, 32-years old
35. Isaac
36. Joseph, 20-years old
37. Stepney, 21-years old
38. Primus, 15-years old
39. Vincent, 11-years old
40. Paponor Poupine, 16-years old and her child

---

357 Perkins, (2004), p. 87
42. Auguste, 1-year old
43. Adelaide, 20-years old and her child
44. John, 8-months old
45. Lawrence, 60-years old
46. Alexander, 60 years old
47. Pierre or Pierce (a quadroon) 60-years old
48. Louisia, 9-years old
49. Elvira or Elvina, 50-years old
50. Onizeme, 75-years old
51. Rhina, 26-years old and her three children
52. Zinon, 6-years old
53. Frances, 4-years old
54. Unnamed child

In the probate but listed as “A privilege on the negro man William and others not mentioned above for $3,350 in favor of Misters A. Monget and Hiliare Longnesee. Recorded on the 28th day of January, 1839. [Perhaps the 18 slaves mortgaged in 1836.]

Note: most of the names in bold refer to some of the enslaved individuals followed through the Armand and Constance Duplantier era at MMP, 1802-1827.
Appendix 3

Constance Rochon Joyce Duplantier Probate Record 1841, Slave inventory

April 8, 1841 (In Perkins (2004), p. 90-91)

Juan Louis, 40-years old
Molly, his wife 25-years old
William, 38-years old
Angel, his wife, 20-years old
Ellen, their child, 6-years old
Thorntin [Frontin], 55-years old
Jane his wife, 35-years old
Hard to read [Henrietta]
Moline, 16-years old
Cloe, 11-years old
Jack, 22 years old
Mary Ann, his wife 19-years old
Rose, 19-years old
Preston, her child 2-years old
Matilda, 30-years old
Jeromy, 17-years old
Lucinda, 22-years old
Caroline, 16-years old
Priscilla, 33-years old
Sarah, 14-years old
Big Sandy, 50-years old
Mavia, 35-years old
Punk or Narcisse, 17-years old
Jim, 37-years old
Etienne, 22-years old
Jim Pierre, 18-years old
Henry, 19-years old
Robertson, 11-years old
Jessie, 19-years old
Bazil, 17-years old
Charles, 32-years old
Jane, 60-years old
Joseph, 20-years old
Stepney, 21-years old
Primus, 15-years old
Vincent, 11-years old
Auguste, 18-years old
Pounpine, 16-years old
Auguste, 1-year old, her child
Adelaide, 20-years old
John, 8-months, her child
Alexander, 60-years old,
Pierre (a quadroon), 60-years old
Louisa, 9-years old
Elvina, 50-years old (Could this be Aveline)
Onizeme, 75-years old
Rhina, 26-years old
Zinon, her son 6-years old
Frances, her child, 4-years old
Constance Rochon Joyce Duplantier petitions the Governor for a decree authorizing her to take possession of the property of her husband at appraisal value.

Written originally in Spanish

TO THE CIVIL AND MILITARY GOVERNOR OF THESE POSTS:

Constance Rochon, with all due respect before Your Excellency, appear and say, that the superior tribunal, according to the law, has permitted her to take at the appraisal value, half of the property left at the death of her husband John Joyce, by virtue of which, to which Your Excellency she begs to allow her to take possession of the said property, at the above cited appraisal value, according to the said decree of the same superior tribunal in which she is authorized to take possession of the effects that have been delivered to her by Charles Norwood, testamentary executor of the said deceased, which effects she desires to take possession of, which property is herein specified to be the plantation in which she resides in this post in its present state, for the price and sum of seventy-six hundred hard columnar pesos; likewise a negress named Nancy which has been appraised at three hundred and sixty pesos of the same coin; idem, a negro girl named Charlotte, for the price of two hundred coin; idem, another negro girl named Venus, appraised at one hundred eighty pesos; idem, a negro named Bungey, appraised at three hundred and fifty pesos; idem, a negro named Guy, appraised at three hundred eighty pesos; idem, a negro named Basheba, appraised at four hundred pesos; idem, a negro boy named Joseph, appraised at one hundred and twenty pesos; idem a negro boy named Harry, appraised at two hundred and fifty pesos; idem, another negro boy named Dick, appraised at two hundred and fifty pesos; a negro named Judith, estimated at four hundred pesos; idem, a negro girl named Clarinda, appraised at one hundred pesos;
idem, a negro named **Samson**, appraised at four hundred fifty pesos; idem, a negress named **Jude**, and her son, a **suckling baby**, appraised at four hundred fifty pesos; idem a negro girl named **Chloe**, daughter of the said Jude, appraised at two hundred pesos; idem, a negro girl named **Hetty**, appraised at one hundred fifty pesos; idem, a negro named **Belly**, appraised at one hundred pesos, of the said Mexican coin, the said plantation and slaves which she desires to take possession of, as is above mentioned, making a total of eleven thousand nine hundred and thirty columnar pesos, which the declarant takes as part of half of the said property that corresponds to her and has been delivered to her by the said testamentary executor. Therefore, to Your Excellency she begs, to order as she requests. **Baton Rouge, March 30, 1804.**

Constance Rochon

Baton Rouge, March 30, 1804

Let this be served on the tutor of the minors, so that once apprised of the contents of this demand, to state if he has any objection to it.

Grand-Pré
Appendix 5
SPWF, v. 4, p. 351

Constance, widow of John Joyce (wife of Armand Duplantier, by second marriage) is put into possession of a plantation near Baton Rouge.

Whereas: there being no objection on the part of the tutor and procurator of the Joyce minors concerning the adjudication to Constance Rochon and a part of the property left by her deceased husband John Joyce, at the price of its appraisal, that property being as express in the preceding memorial, this consisting of the plantation [appears to be the present “Magnolia Mound Plantation”] in which she resides, which has been appraised at seven thousand six hundred pesos; a negress named Nancy, appraised at three hundred and sixty pesos; a negro girl named Charlotte appraised at two hundred pesos; another negro girl named Venus, appraised at one hundred eight pesos; a negro named Bungey, appraised at three hundred and fifty pesos; another negro named Guy, appraised at three hundred and eight pesos; a negro named Basheba, appraised at four hundred pesos; a negro boy named Joseph, appraised at one hundred twenty pesos; another negro boy named Harry, appraised at two hundred and fifty pesos; another negro boy named Dick, appraised at two hundred and fifty pesos; negro girl named Jude, appraised at four hundred pesos; another negro named Clarinda, appraised at one hundred pesos; a negro named Samson, appraised at four hundred fifty pesos; a negress named Jude together with her suckling baby appraised at four hundred and fifty pesos; a negro girl named Chloe, appraised at two hundred pesos, which girl is the daughter of the said Jude; another negro girl named Betty, appraised at one hundred fifty pesos; and another negro boy named Belly appraised at one hundred pesos, the total making eleven thousand nine hundred and forty pesos, this property should be adjudicated to the said Constance.
Rochon for the said appraisal value, so that she take possession of them and enjoy them as her property. Let this be notified to the interested parties; as to the tutor.
This shows that Constance and Armand and those slaves named were at MMP living
April 2 1800
In Baton Rouge on the 2\textsuperscript{nd} day of the month of April, 1800. Before me Don Carlos de
Grand-Pre, Colonel of the Royal Armies, ....and District of Baton Rouge, appeared
Constance Rochon, widow of John Joyce, accompanied by the procurator of the tutor of
her minor children and she declared of her own free will to be in possession of the
plantation in which she resides, conforming to her request and decree to that effect, this
plantation being apart of the property partitioned between her and Catherine, widow of
John Turnbull, the said plantation having been adjudicated to her for the appraisal value
as well as seventeen heads of slaves which I mentioned in the same proceedings and
decree, also for their appraisal value together with a suckling infant all of the property
having been adjudicated to her for the amount of eleven thousand nine hundred and forty
pesos, which property she acknowledges to have received and which she admits has
formally been delivered to her. In testimony of which the said Constance Rochon signed
together with Ricard de Rieutord and Armand Duplantier, present husband of the said
lady and the witnesses of my assistance, Antonio Gras and John Poiret, who were
present.
References

Primary Sources

1906 Baton Rouge City Directory, LSU Special Collections, Baton Rouge.

Afro-Louisiana Database, http://www.ibilio.org

Afro-Louisiana Database CD-ROM, Mobile 1787 Census, LSU Reference Collections, Baton Rouge.

Baptism and death records at the Archives at Diocese of Baton Rouge, Catholic Life Center.

Conveyance Records, East Baton Rouge Parish Courthouse, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.


LSU Special Collections, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, Survey Collection. Baton Rouge, Louisiana.


New Orleans Death Record Index

Spanish West Florida Records, Special Collections at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge.

Turnbull-Allain Family Papers, Special Collections at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge.

U.S. 1870 Census, Louisiana.

U.S. 1880 Census, Louisiana.

Secondary Sources


Appendix B

Post Tour Conversation Questions

The following are examples of questions the investigator will be asking the museum workers in the process of reflecting on the museum tours they gave to visitors. These are open ended questions intended to engage museum workers in discussing their tours regarding their visitors’ responses to the tour and the museum workers’ ideas and approaches to interpret the exhibits.

1. Tell me about your tour group.
   a. Where are they from?
   b. Why did they choose to come to this museum?
   c. What are their approximate ages?
   d. How many people were in the group?
   e. Did visitors identify themselves as African American?

2. Tell me about how you engaged the group in the tour.
   a. How long did the tour take? Was this tour longer or shorter than your usual tours?
   b. What parts of the tour did your group seem most interested in?
   c. What kinds of questions did your group members ask? Did anyone ask questions about slavery or slave life?
   d. Were there any surprises for you or the group while on the tour?
   e. Were there any parts of the tour that did not seem to interest the group members? Can you give examples?

3. Tell me about how you integrated your narrative with points on slavery.
a. Where on the tour did you discuss slavery?

b. How did you tie the stories of slave life with other stories about the exhibits?

c. Did you use any new material in your narratives or use a new approach to describe slave life on this tour? Can you explain?

d. Did you feel you could use specific information that is not currently available to you about slave life on the tour? What information would you like to be supplied with for your tour?

e. How did your visitors respond to information and stories on slave life?

   Did their responses fall short, meet, or exceed your expectations? How?

4. Tell me about your ideas for tailoring the tour to include slave life that you would like to try on future tours.

   a. What parts of the tour would you like to focus more on to feature slave life? Do you have the information to do this? What else do you need?

   b. Is there a particular visitor category, e.g. school groups k-4, 5-8, 9-12, seniors, that you would like to target your tour for? What features of the tour would you present for that particular visitor group? How are descriptions of slavery or slave life constructed for this group? Do you need materials or information to develop your ideas?

   c. What tour features worked well to describe slave life for this visitor group?

   d. What tour features did not work well to describe slave life for this visitor group?
Appendix C

Third Draft of the New Tour Narrative

An Interpretation Proposal for Magnolia Mound Plantation’s Regular Tour

Prepared by Julia Rose with special thanks to the MMP staff and volunteers who so graciously and generously participated in the study.

November, 2005

The goal for this study was to develop an interpretation strategy to expand the representations of free and enslaved residents at Magnolia Mound Plantation in the site’s regular tour.

Contents:

Chapter One: A Skeleton Tour.
This is an outline of the key-points docents and tour guides describe on each designated stop on the 45-minute tour.

Chapter Two: Sample Tour Narrative.
This is a detailed narration that includes the names and relationships of key members of the Magnolia Mound Plantation community from around 1786-1830. The sample narrative follows the skeleton tour.

Chapter Three: Biographical Notes.
This is an alphabetical listing of biographical notes describing all the individuals named in the sample narrative. The historical information in each biographical note helps to explain the historical individuals’ affiliations to Magnolia Mound Plantation.
Instructions: This tour skeleton is an outline of the tour route through the MMP big house and kitchen with specific talking points to be discussed in each room on the tour. The talking points indicate what historical information MMP would like you to present to visitors. More detailed information on these talking points can be found in the attached biographical notes and in the sample tour narrative. Additional information can be gathered from the MMP docent training manual, docent training sessions, and in the suggested readings in the docent manual. The tour stops are written in *italics*. The talking points are numbered for each tour stop. Invite visitors to ask questions especially in the visitors’ center, on the front gallery, in the girls’ bedroom and on the back gallery, and in the kitchen building.

Tour begins in the Visitor Center:

Talking point 1.) Welcome to Magnolia Mound Plantation!

Introduction Zone includes the following areas where we recommend docents and guides give information for the first portion of the tour.

a. Visitor Center Diorama

b. Arbor next to the Visitor Center - visitors may sit on the benches

c. Walk way to the big house

d. Front steps of the big house
e. Front gallery of the big house- Visitors can sit on the benches and in the rocking chairs while they listen to the docent’s presentation. This is a good place to take visitors’ questions.

Talking points:

1.) MMP is an early 19th century French Creole plantation. MMP uses the term ‘Creole’ to mean one born to European or African parents in the colony.

2.) MMP geographic location, Mississippi River, and River Road.

3.) Interpretation time-frame includes colonial period and early Louisiana statehood.

4.) James Hillin received a Spanish land grant in 1786; Six enslaved laborers and Hillin family establish MMP, corn and indigo crops.

5.) John Joyce purchased MMP in 1791 and ran MMP as an “absentee plantation”. MMP was worked by about 54 enslaved residents. Slave residents were from West Africa, West Indies, United States.

6.) Joyce built the MMP big house, a four-room raised French Creole Cottage.

7.) Joyce was drowned at sea in 1798, as witnessed by his slave James. Widow Joyce officially inherited MMP in 1804.

8.) Less than 10 people lived in the big house and around 50 people lived in the slave quarter.

9.) Invite visitors’ questions and comments.

Boys’ Room- discuss family genealogies; architecture; crops

Talking points:

1.) Widow Constance Joyce remarried Armand Duplantier in 1802.
2.) Frenchman Armand Duplantier served under General Lafayette in the American Revolutionary War. Duplantier was a widower with four children and had plantations in Pointe Coupee. Constance Joyce Duplantier came into the marriage with two children.

3.) Plantation house architectural features include cypress timber *mortise and tennon* construction and *bousillage entre poteaux* walls, and rooms arranged *en suite*.

4.) The house was likely built by enslaved carpenters, Jamaican born Cato, African born Sam and American Will. Each man had a wife and children by 1800.

5.) Planter’s sons’ received formal educations. William Joyce attended boarding school in New Orleans and Guy and Armand Duplantier, Jr. studied in France.

6.) MMP enslaved boys were not allowed to attend school. They acquired skills from apprenticeships, from their parents and members of the plantation community. Harry and Dick, twin brothers, could have learned to cultivate cotton, indigo and corn from their father Abram.

7.) MMP was an agricultural enterprise that produced indigo and cotton, and by 1820 sugar cane. Duplantier held enslaved overseers including André and Celestin.

*Salon- 1810-1812 big house remodeled; Duplantiers had BR and NO households; politics and slave resistance; objectification of enslaved individuals; names of domestic house slaves*

Talking points:

1.) The big house was expanded and remolded around 1810-1812. Note the coved ceiling, imported French wallpaper, and paint colors. Point out the French, English, and American furnishings and French wrap around style mantle with American Federal sunburst medallion.
2.) Baton Rouge was governed by French, British, Spanish, self rule and American governments. Cause for dynamic political climate and cash shortages.

3.) In 1803, Armand and Constance Duplantier considered moving to France and began selling property in preparation, including slaves, breaking up slave families, for example Quashee and wife Take separated from daughters Venus and Juba.

4.) Story of Charlotte a house slave, Constance Joyce’s wedding gift 1788. In 1803, Armand and Constance sold Charlotte with one daughter and sold her other daughter to planter in New Orleans.

5.) Talk of politics among planters in the Salon included slave rebellions. In 1791, Armand Duplantier’s uncle was killed by his slave Latilupe. Armand was the executor of his uncle’s large estate and absorbed part of the slave community. Many of these slaves were with Armand at MMP 20 and 30 years later.

6.) Elegant living maintained by house slaves, including Josephine who was held by Armand for about 35 years, Julian a butler, Basheba held by Constance for around 26 years.

Master Bedroom- Code Noir and family life; area’s religions; health care at MMP

Talking points:

1.) Catholicism was the official colonial religion. Point out the holy water font, crucifix and the prie dieu or prayer bench.

2.) Duplantier family practiced Catholicism and enslaved residents were often baptized in the Catholic Church. White and Black baptized residents could be buried in consecrated grounds. Many MMP enslaved residents were buried on plantation grounds.
3.) *Code Noir* or Black Code prohibited other religions being observed, yet tolerated Protestantism. Many MMP slaves likely held onto their Islamic heritage, e.g. Mahomet and Abram.

4.) The Black Code controlled slaves’ rights (right to food and clothing) and governed slaveholders treatment of slaves (outlined legal corporal punishment). The code allowed enslaved individuals to purchase their own freedom and restricted the sale of children 10 years and younger from their mother.

5.) MMP enslaved community described as three groups: house slaves, artisans, and laborers.

6.) House slaves and plantation mistress tended to health care for free and enslaved residents. Health care included European medicine (Spanish Royal Hospital physicians in Baton Rouge), West African medicine, and likely Native American medicine.

*Girls’ Bedroom - Planter girls’ education; enslaved girls’ education; enslaved seamstress and plantation clothing*

Talking points:

1.) The planters’ daughters, Josephine Joyce and Augustine and Euphemie Duplantier, likely learned to read and do math from their mother or from a hired tutor. They attended Ursuline Convent in New Orleans and likely attended a female academy boarding school in nearby towns.

2.) The planter’s daughters learned to play piano, (note the *piano forte* in the Salon), and to sew fancy work. Notice the mourning embroidery on the wall.

3.) Enslaved sisters, for example Venus and Juba who were the daughters of Quashee and Take at MMP, learned domestic skills from their parents and other house slaves.
4.) When Juba was sold to a plantation five-mile away on Highland Road she was still close enough to visit her sister Venus at MMP (circa 1804). Slaves were not allowed to learn to read or write. Armand or Constance Duplantier would have had to write a pass for Venus to carry on the walk to visit Juba.

5.) Notice the period clothing the docent/guide is wearing today. This is a 19th century day-dress with an Empire waistline. Plantation female residents wore clothes likely made on the plantation. Lucy was an enslaved seamstress. Slaves clothing could have been made by the seamstress or by the slaves for themselves. Men’s clothes were likely made in town by tailors.

6.) Invite visitors’ questions and comments.

_Dining Room – décor; multiple uses for dining room; 19th century meal time and food way practices; Baton Rouge growing city, French General Lafayette_

1.) The dining room was added around 1810-1812. This room was used for formal dining and possibly tutoring or other Duplantier family functions.

2.) Dinner was served at mid-day, the largest meal of the day.

3.) Food was prepared in the kitchen building by an enslaved cook (Alcindor) and served by house slaves (Josephine, Basheba, Julian). Notice the punkah fan over the table. Likely a child of one of the house servants (Josephine for example) would be a candidate to pull the rope to move the fan during the meal.

4.) Constance Duplantier likely held keys to drawers, cabinets and an armoire that held spices, teas, linens, silver and wines for meal preparation. She would have likely delegated tasks to house slaves and distributed items. Notice the sideboard/buffet and armoire have keyholes.
5.) Notice two decorative items in this room that help to describe Baton Rouge in the 1820s, when MMP was a sugar plantation: two porcelain urns decorated with portraits of French General Lafayette and two watercolor paintings (reproductions). In 1825, General Lafayette visited Baton Rouge and, in part, was hosted by Armand Duplantier. The landscape paintings show views of Baton Rouge circa 1821. Notice the busy waterway. (In 1812, steamboats began traveling the river.)

*Office - Multiple languages coming together at MMP; MMP slave run away and freedom stories; West African naming traditions; Who lived at MMP? Answer by using historic documents “Hillin Succession (1798),” “Turnbull and Joyce Inventory (1800),” “1820 U.S. Census for MMP,” “1836 MMP Conveyance Record”*

Talking Points:

1.) Armand Duplantier was fluent in French and Spanish and likely English. MMP residents were French speaking. Some slaves knew their ancestral or native West African languages, for example, overseer André spoke French and Gur.

2.) The cultures from Europe, West Africa, and North America blended at this plantation. Naming traditions exemplify the blending of cultures. The West African tradition of naming children for the day on which they were born was translated into French at MMP, for example, while Quashee is the African word for Wednesday, Samedi (an enslaved field hand) is French for Saturday and Lundi (an enslaved field hand) is French for Monday.

3.) Blending of cultures was not consistently smooth or optional for MMP residents. Enslaved carpenter, American Will, ran away from MMP and was later captured. Armand and Constance sold him to a planter in Galveztown (Manchac).
4.) Armand Duplantier assisted some of his slaves in obtaining their freedom. Fronsine paid Armand Duplantier 200 pesos towards her purchase price and agreed to work for Hypolite Tivollier to earn the remainder of her purchase price to be paid to Duplantier (circa 1810).

5.) Who lived at MMP? Notice the display of historic MMP documents that show the names of the hundreds of people who lived at MMP from 1786 to 1836 (50 years). The ratio of free residents to enslaved residents was roughly 1 to 5.

**Back Gallery- The historical plantation landscape and structures associated with enslaved residents. (Invite visitors to sit on benches or on the back steps of the Back Gallery.)**

Talking Points:

1.) Point out the structures including the cash crop garden, overseer’s house, slave cabin, *pigeonnaire*, blacksmith hearth, weaving room, carpenter shop, kitchen garden and kitchen building.

2.) Samples of MMP cash crops in the garden include cotton, indigo and sugar cane.

Harry, Dick, Samedi and Lundi worked in the fields.

3.) Hired overseer and his family lived at MMP likely after 1816. The current house dates to 1870.

4.) Two room slave cabin includes an exhibit of a slave family household and an exhibit about Louisiana slavery. Quashee and Take with Venus and Juba would have lived in a one room household.

5.) The *pigeonnaire* is a decorative birdhouse for raising squab.
6.) The blacksmith area, weaving room and carpentry shop hold tools and information about enslaved artisans including carpenters Sam and Cato and their families.

7.) The kitchen garden was a source for the planter’s table for fruits, vegetables, seasoning and medicinal herbs. Armand and Constance Duplantier likely oversaw what was planted.

8.) Ask visitors for questions or comments.

*Kitchen – Discuss building and cooking tools; role of enslaved cooks, bakers, miller, fire boy/water boy; food ways and food preparation; Slave quarter gardens to supplement diet and as revenue source.*

Talking Ponits:

1.) The kitchen building is a reproduction of the original 1800s open-hearth kitchen.

2.) Discuss open-hearth cooking. Food was cooked on griddles and in pots hanging over the fire and on piles of hot coals in front of the hearth.

3.) Armand Duplantier left a record of buying male African slaves to serve him as cooks (e.g. Alcindor) and bakers (e.g. Jayme).

4.) Constance might have discussed daily menus with Alcindor and distributed spices and preferred ingredients to him. Point out spice box.

5.) Armand acquired seeds for vegetables from France for the kitchen garden.

6.) The kitchen was primarily used for the planters’ food. Slaves typically prepared their own meals in the slave quarter using rations of pork and corn and foodstuffs they cultivated in the slave quarter. It is possible that the kitchen building was used to prepare food for slaves, more likely during sugar cane harvest season.

7.) Ask visitors for their comments and questions.
8.) Invite visitors to view the exhibits in the structures described above. Ask visitors to share their comments in the comment books at the exhibits.

9.) Thank you.
Tour begins in the Visitor Center:

Welcome to Magnolia Mound Plantation! We are glad you have joined us to take a tour of this early 19th century French Creole big-house and to visit the re-created plantation landscape. [I would like you to know how MMP uses the term ‘Creole’. Creole means one born to European or African parents in the colony. A plantation was a large agricultural enterprise to raise cash crops that were cultivated by enslaved laborers.]

Introduction Zone includes the following areas where we recommend docents and guides give information for the first portion of the tour marked ‘Introduction Zone’:

a. Visitor Center Diorama- A large exhibit depicting the historical MMP landscape including, river front, levee, sugar cane fields, slave quarters, out buildings, and big house, swamp areas, and forested areas.

b. Arbor next to the Visitor Center

c. Walk way to the big house

d. Front steps of the big house

e. Front gallery of the big house- Visitors can sit on the benches and in the rocking chairs while they listen to the docent’s presentation. This is a good place to take visitors’ questions.

Introduction Zone

Magnolia Mound Plantation is located on the Mississippi River just south of Baton Rouge’s downtown. The plantation grounds, which were originally along River Road, overlooked the river, a levee, and fields of crops. Who lived at Magnolia Mound Plantation? On this tour we will discuss the free and enslaved residents who lived here;
those men, women and children who made up this particular plantation’s community and who contributed to the production of indigo, cotton and sugar between 1786 and 1830.

We will be talking about MMP during the colonial period and through the early years of Louisiana statehood. During that time, MMP was established and inhabited by European planters and their families, and the enslaved families358 and individuals from West Africa, the Caribbean Islands, and the young United States of America.

The historical families we will talk about include the Hillin, Joyce and Duplantier planter families; and some of the enslaved families we will talk about include the families headed by Quashee, Abram, Charlotte, and Josephine. The big-house was the residence of the planter family and the enslaved families lived in approximately 16 cabins in the slave quarter behind the big house. Less than 10 people lived in the big house, and around 50 people lived in the slave quarter. An overseer, who was hired by the planter, at times likely lived on the plantation in a house near the slave quarter.

Today, MMP includes 16 acres. However, from the late 1700s to early 1900s, (around 200 years), MMP included roughly 950 acres. The plantation is located on a natural mound that helps protect the plantation from severe floods. In 1786, this large tract of land was granted to an Irish yeoman farmer named James Hillin by the colonial Spanish government. The Spanish land grant enabled Hillin to establish a plantation that would later be called Magnolia Mound Plantation. Hillin with his wife and children and enslaved individuals settled on the land. Hillin purchased at least 6 slaves to labor at MMP and to help clear the land and build a home site (Thomas, John, Catherine, Lucia and Ana, and Jenny).

358 By 1820, MMP was home to at least 3 free people of color (fpc).
In the 1780s, slave traders from Kentucky, Tennessee and Georgia were bringing slaves into Baton Rouge. In addition, the newspaper (*Louisiana Gazette*) advertised ships arriving at New Orleans with African slaves for sale. Baton Rouge planters traveled to New Orleans to buy slaves. In 1788, Hillin purchased at least one enslaved African\(^{359}\) woman in New Orleans. She was 18-years old and was described by the ship captain who sold her to Hillin as “brut,” a French term meaning newly arrived or untrained slave. She traveled the Middle Passage, across the Atlantic Ocean, to Martinique before arriving in New Orleans. Her 8-month\(^{360}\) journey from the Senegal-Gambia region of West Africa was typical of many enslaved Africans who were brought to Baton Rouge\(^{361}\). (Can use the world map near diorama)

In 1791, Hillin sold MMP to a Mobile businessman John Joyce. Joyce had a business partner, John Turnbull. Both men already owned plantations in Baton Rouge, and MMP was one more investment. Joyce built a raised Creole cottage\(^{362}\), the original four rooms of this present big-house, and peopled the plantation with at least 54 slaves (15 families and 6 single adults). MMP was an ‘absentee plantation’ where enslaved laborers produced cotton and indigo. Joyce did not live there; he likely visited with his wife and 2 children from their home in Mobile.

\(^{359}\) The 18-year old woman was from Chamba; Chamba is in present day northwestern Nigeria near the border of Cameroon. (See “Jenny” in History Report index.)


\(^{362}\) The big house is raised on brick piers to increase air circulation, a building technique from the West Indies that helps keep the house interior cool.
In 1798, both partners died. Joyce’s death at sea was witnessed by his enslaved servant James. James gave his testimony in English in the Spanish Baton Rouge court. James explained that Joyce had ordered him to bring Joyce’s bedding to the deck of the schooner during the stormy night at sea when Joyce was washed overboard and drowned.

When Joyce and Turnbull died, their widows, Constance Joyce and Catherine Turnbull, were left to divide the large estate that included MMP and the enslaved communities. Constance, a French Creole descendant, inherited MMP with 63 slaves. The story of the big house, which we are about to enter, focuses on the 25 years Constance and her second husband, Armand Duplantier, owned MMP. Do you have questions?

*Boys’ Room - Family Genealogies, architecture, and crops at MMP residents*

Constance Joyce was remarried in 1802 to a Frenchman, Armand Duplantier. Armand Duplantier, a widower with four children, owned plantations in Pointe Coupee Parish, just across the river from Baton Rouge. Duplantier came to America to serve with French General Lafayette in the American Revolutionary War. In 1781, Armand Duplantier accepted an invitation from his wealthy planter uncle, Claude Trénonay, to settle on the west side of the river. In 1800, Armand Duplantier, an administrator of the Turnbull and Joyce estate, helped to inventory MMP including the enslaved population for Widows Joyce and Turnbull.

The plantation house was only four rooms at that time, as you can see from the architectural clues in the Boys’ Room (Overhead dividing beam, two doors lead to the adjacent Salon, the enclosed back window). The French Creole house was built with cypress timbers, a common wood in this area. The wood beams are fastened with
‘mortise and tenon joints,’ a sturdy construction technique that does not require nails. 

(Show visitors the sample mortise and tenon joint.) The walls are filled with *bousillage entre poteaux,* a mixture of Spanish moss and mud. The exposed beams on the ceiling and the absence of hallways connecting the rooms, *en suite,* are traditional French Creole architectural characteristics.

The original house was likely built by enslaved carpenters and laborers some time between 1792 and 1797. The 1800 MMP inventory made for the widows included 3 enslaved carpenters who may have helped build this house: Jamaican born Cato (wife Bess), African born Sam (wife Belle), and American Will (wife Minta and their four children).

This room is furnished as a boys’ room. The older sons of the planter family may have lived at MMP when they were not at boarding schools in France or in New Orleans. The older boys included Constance’s son (William), and Armand’s three sons (Fergus, Armand, and Guy). Together, Armand and Constance had four sons (Augustin, Alberic, Didier, and Alfred, born between 1804-1813) who likely lived in this house and received formal educations.

It was a law that slaves could not receive a formal education; they were not allowed to read or write. MMP’s enslaved children learned skills through apprenticeships, from their parents and members of the plantation community. Enslaved twin boys at MMP, Harry and Dick, who were living with their family at MMP since the boys were 9-years old, likely worked in the indigo, corn and cotton fields as unskilled laborers along side of their mother Fanny and father Abram. However, in instances enslaved individuals did acquire some math and reading skills. Armand Duplantier had his slave, Jean Louis, represent him at a public auction to bid and purchase a mare. This
example shows Jean Louis could calculate numbers and conduct business transactions suggesting he had some education.\footnote{SPWF v. 2, pp. 151-153}

MMP was an active agricultural enterprise that produced indigo, cotton, corn and tobacco, and by 1820 sugar cane. The crops were continuously cultivated, harvested and packaged for sale or for plantation use by men, women and children under the direction of overseers. At times, the Duplantiers assigned enslaved overseers (e.g. André and Celestin) and industrial workers (e.g. Pompee and Onezime) to manage the agricultural work.

The cash crops were indigo, cotton and sugar. Corn, brown cotton and tobacco and a host of food stuffs were cultivated by and for the plantation residents. Thousands of pounds of white cotton were grown\footnote{According to Joe Gray Taylor (1969), Louisiana cotton was planted by slaves, largely by women, in April. Hogs were normally butchered in January. Plowing fields began in the end of February. In January and February slaves were ordered to repair fences, and repair and clean stables and barns. Grains were planted in March. Cotton was planted in April and after ten days slaves “chopped” or hoed around the young cotton plants and corn stalks. In the summer months enslaved men women and children were directed to cut hay, dig potatoes, and ready equipment for the harvest season. By middle of August, slaves were ordered to pick cotton and all hands were kept picking cotton to mid-September. The average amount a grown man could pick was 160 pounds of cotton a day. Then the cotton was cleaned and ginned. The cotton lint was pressed into bales. Four hundred pounds of cotton were pressed into one bale. (pp. 62-67).} and exported to markets in Europe. Possibly, small amounts of brown cotton were produced for slave clothing, linens, and utilitarian textiles for plantation residents. \textit{(Show visitors the samples of raw cotton. Ask visitors for questions.)}

Indigo is used for dying cloth blue. Processing indigo in the 18\textsuperscript{th} and 19\textsuperscript{th} centuries was hazardous, exposing workers to dangerous chemicals causing sickness and fatalities. Competing indigo plantations in the West Indies produced more and better quality indigo. Indigo was not the favored cash crop, and eventually MMP ended
production. Business decisions were conducted primarily by Armand Duplantier, but Constance Joyce Duplantier saw to business matters as well.

*Salon – 19th century decorative arts and big house remodeled, Duplantier BR and NO households, period politics and slave resistance, objectification of enslaved individuals, names of domestic house slaves*

In this elegant setting, planters likely discussed politics and business. Around 1810-1812, the Duplantiers greatly expanded this plantation house. The Duplantiers likely settled at MMP as their full time residence sometime after 1814. Before that time, the Duplantier family generally chose to live in New Orleans during the winter months and spent summer months in Baton Rouge.

This room is the *Salon* or Parlor. Here the ceiling was replaced with the present coved ceiling. The French imported wallpaper and decorative moldings were installed. This room is an example of the household’s blending of European and American cultures. The French interior chimney and the American Federal sunburst crest on the French wrap-around-mantle and the mix of English, American, and French furnishings begin to illustrate the complex and constantly changing colonial governments the residents had to endure. Baton Rouge was governed by French, British, Spanish, self-rule, and eventually American laws. The volatile political environment resulted in a constant cash shortage and an uncertain economy.

Armand and Constance considered leaving for Armand’s native France. Towards that plan\(^{365}\), they began selling much of their property, especially their enslaved property.

\(^{365}\) See Duplantier Letters in MMP collection and LSU Special Collections
By 1804, the MMP enslaved population was a combination of families and individuals from John Joyce’s estate, Armand’s Pointe Coupee plantations, and Armand’s uncle Claude Trénonay’s estate. Constance held slaves in her own name. Armand sold over half of the enslaved population by 1806, putting the MMP slave community in crisis, breaking up families and severing communal connections. For example, parents Quashee and Take were separated from their daughters Venus and Juba.

As a course of business (in 1803), Armand and Constance decided to sell Charlotte, an enslaved woman Constance had received as a wedding gift from her mother (in 1788), when Constance married her first husband in Mobile. Charlotte might have been a house slave who came to Baton Rouge with the Joyce household as early as 1790. Armand and Constance agreed to sell Charlotte with only one of her daughters, Rosette who was 8-years old, to a planter in New Orleans. Two months later they sold her other daughter, Frosina who was 13-years old, to another Baton Rouge plantation.

366 Constance and her 2 children had inherited 63 slaves from the Turnbull and Joyce estate by 1804.

367 In April 1804, the Joyce minors sold Quashee, Take, and Venus, age 11, to Dr. Michel Mahier who lived in present day Port Allen. However, on March 30, 1804, Constance claimed Venus “a negro girl”, without her sister or her parents, as property she wished to have at MMP. There is a discrepancy as to whether Venus stayed with Constance or went with her parents to Dr. Mahier. A woman named Venus was included on Michel Mahier’s probate record dated June 6, 1810. However, Venus was described as 55-years old. (SPWF v. 3, p. 317, SPWF v. 4, p. 354 and p. 340; Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 9). Juba was inherited by the Joyce minors without the rest of her family. Juba was around 18-years old when she was sold on April 27, 1804 to a German settler, Joseph Sharp. Juba was listed as a Creole single slave woman age-35 on the succession of Joseph Sharp in 1819. Joseph Sharp had a 400-acre plantation on Highland Road called Mt. Hope Plantation. (Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 175; SPWF v. 8, p. 174).

368 Charlotte was a Creole of Mobile and her parents were from Africa. She was 20-years old when she became the legal property of Constance Rochon Joyce, and was pulled from the Rochon’s Mobile slave community of about 39 slaves. Charlotte did not marry and had two children: a daughter Frosina, a black child born in Baton Rouge in 1790; and a daughter Rosette, a mulatto child, born in 1795, likely in Baton Rouge, as well. The slave sale record explains that Frosina was “a native of this province”. (SPWF v. 2 p. 287)

368 Afro-Louisiana Database Mobile 1787 Census; SPWF v. 7, p. 54).
This story of using an enslaved woman as a wedding gift and her children as property helps us to illustrate the objectification of individuals, slaves’ captive state, and the inherent dehumanization of people in slavery.\(^{369}\)

Slave rebellion was another important topic likely discussed among the planter class in the *Salon*. The Haitian slave rebellion of 1791 affected Baton Rouge planters, including Armand who purchased slaves from Haiti. Armand wrote in 1796, “The example of St. Domingue still troubles us”\(^ {370} \).

Armand’s uncle, Claude Trénonay, was assassinated by his slave Latulipe\(^ {371} \) (in 1791). Latulipe was retaliating against Trénonay’s penal methods. The Ibo assassin hung himself after his escape, upholding an Ibo belief in a better afterlife.\(^ {372} \) This violent slave revolt impacted Armand Duplantier personally and financially. Armand was burdened with the realities of slave resistance and he became responsible for his deceased uncle’s land and slave property, engaging him for decades in settling the estate.

Slaves’ lives and planters’ lives at MMP were sometimes intimately connected. While Armand sold many slaves, he and Constance chose to keep particular enslaved individuals within their household for many years. For example, (in 1804) Constance guarded one particular group of slaves she inherited from her first husband’s estate, including Judith and Judith’s daughter Clarinda, and Nancy, who likely served Constance

\(^{369}\) The Black Code or *Code Noir* defined the condition of slavery was passed from mother to child, not from father to child.

\(^{370}\) Armand Duplantier wrote a letter January 10, 1796. LSU Special Collections, MISC D.

\(^{371}\) Hall, (1992), pp. 252-255.

\(^{372}\) Ibo is an ethnic group from Nigeria and Benin of West Africa.
as house slaves or personal slaves\textsuperscript{373} for 20 to 30 years. Armand kept particular slaves for his life time, those from his first wife’s estate, including Pelagie, Josephine, and Pompee\textsuperscript{374}. One enslaved woman in particular, likely Pelagie, was charged with nursing and caring for Armand Duplantier’s new-born daughter (Augustine) when his first wife suddenly died of yellow fever shortly after childbirth in 1799\textsuperscript{375}. (Ask visitors for questions.)

Master Bedroom –Code Noir and family life, area’s religions, health care at MMP

As you entered into the Master Bedroom you may have noticed the holy water font at the doorway, and the crucifix and the \textit{prie dieu} or prayer bench in this room. The Duplantier household was a Catholic home and many of the MMP enslaved residents were baptized in the Catholic Church in Baton Rouge. Enslaved individuals who had been baptized could be buried in consecrated grounds. Armand Duplantier saw to the formal burial of Pelagie, paying $2.70 to St. Joseph Church in 1820\textsuperscript{376}. Both Armand and Pelagie died in 1827. Armand was buried in a family cemetery at nearby Highland Road and Pelagie was buried in church grounds. The majority of MMP slaves were likely buried on MMP grounds.

\textsuperscript{373} Perkins, (2003), p. 45.

\textsuperscript{374} In 1819, Fergus and his siblings sued their father for part of their inheritance from their deceased mother, Augustine Gerard Duplantier. Armand married Augustine Gerard in 1781. Their claim included the following slaves at MMP\textsuperscript{374}: André (60 years and more); Pompee (dead by 1821); Batiste; Celstin (32-years old); Louise; Josephine; Modeste; Henry; Aveline; Onezime; Celeste (70-years old); Lucie (35-years old) (Perkins, (2004), p. 20).

\textsuperscript{375} On March 5, 1801, Armand wrote his family in France that a slave nursed his infant daughter, Augustine, in 1799 when her mother died in New Orleans of yellow fever. The Duplantiers were traveling from New Orleans to Baton Rouge when Augustine Gerrard Duplantier died of yellow fever (LSU Special Collections Armand Duplatnier Letters, Misc. D).

\textsuperscript{376} Catholic Life Center, Archives of the Diocese of Baton Rouge.
The colonial governments, France and Spain, both mandated Catholicism to be the official colonial religion for free and enslaved residents; while Protestantism was tolerated other religions were not. Most of the enslaved residents at MMP were from West Africa (Senegal-Gambia region) or were of West African descent. Some held onto their Islamic beliefs, as made evident by the first names of some MMP-held men, Mahomet (wife Peggy) and Abram (wife Fanny and parents of Harry and Dick), for example. These laws were part of the Black Code, or *Code Noir*, established by the French government in 1724. When Spain took control of Baton Rouge from Britain (1763-1779) in 1779, many of the original laws in the French Black Code were maintained. Before Louisiana statehood in 1812, the Black Code allowed enslaved individuals to purchase their own freedom and it protected children 10-years and younger from being sold apart from their natural mothers. After statehood, the laws governing slavery became harsher.

The slave community at MMP consisted of roughly 50 to 60 people who labored in various places around the plantation. Plantation slave populations can be described as a three-tiered hierarchy of laborers. The smallest and top tier included slaves who had the most contact with the planter family members as household slaves – servants, nurses, cooks. At MMP, this group likely included Clarinda, Josephine, Basheba, Alcindor and Julian. This group was followed by artisans and skilled laborers. At MMP this group likely included Lucy a seamstress, André an overseer, George or Alexander a cooper, Cato a carpenter. The largest group included the unskilled laborers who were, for the

---

377 After the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, the Americans began to infiltrate the Orleans territory. By 1808 a revised Black Code was introduced into the region. However, the political climate allowed for a localized interpretation of Black Code laws, a combination of the traditional Spanish colonial laws and new American laws. This climate was clarified after statehood in 1812.
most part, field hands. At MMP, this group could have included Harry and Dick, and Samedi and Lundi who were field hands.

The house slaves, possibly Josephine or Basheba, assisted the planter family in personal health care. Notice the ceramic chamber pot and the washbasin with a water pitcher on display in the bedroom. House slaves likely drew the planter family baths, possibly in this room in front of the fireplace\textsuperscript{378} where warm water could be added to a tin tub.

Healthcare for free and enslaved MMP residents was a mix of European medicine, African medicine and likely Native American medicine. Doctors from the Spanish Royal Hospital in Baton Rouge were likely called to attend to Duplantier family members and members of the MMP enslaved community. More often, household members themselves would tend to the sick and injured before calling on a physician.

Plantation mistresses, likely Constance Duplantier, spent considerable time tending to the health of her family and the enslaved families\textsuperscript{379}. The demands of caring for the sick and producing medicines sometimes brought together slave women and slaveholding women in common tasks. Household health work was one way African and European cultures came to blend on plantations. Women came together to exchange herbal remedies and in the process formulated new remedies from each other\textsuperscript{380}.

Midwives were often enslaved women from within the plantation community; however records show European doctors were also summoned to assist at childbirth.

\textsuperscript{378} Interior chimney is a French Creole architectural feature at MMP.


\textsuperscript{380} Fett, p. 67.
Armand Duplantier’s wives most often gave birth in bigger cities. His first wife and Constance traveled to New Orleans and Mobile to give birth to most of their children.

*Girls Bedroom*—Planter girls’ education, sisters Venus and Juba could not write passes to visit each other, sisters Augustine and Euphemie Convent education and music piano forte in Salon and sewing Mourning embroidery, Lucy a seamstress women’s clothes and men’s’ clothes tailor made.

As we enter the Girls’ Room, notice how this room was an addition to the original four room house. You can see the floor boards run in a different direction from the Master Bedroom floors and the ceiling does not have exposed beams but rather looks like the front-gallery ceiling. This space was made from the original wrap-around-gallery. The surrounding gallery was enclosed at the south and east sides of the house adding at least four more rooms to the house. The two small rooms that comprise the Boys’ Room, *Salon*, and the adjoining Master Bedroom were the original house.

This room may have been used by the planter’s daughters. Constance’s eldest daughter, Josephine Joyce, attended the Ursuline Convent in New Orleans. Armand (in 1802) wrote that his step daughter, (Josephine), at age 13 was getting ready to marry[^381]. She likely did not live in this house. However, Armand’s daughter from his first wife, Augustine, who would have been around 14-years old after the house remodel, and Euphemie (10-years old in 1814), Armand’s and Constance’s daughter (Augustine’s half sister), likely lived in this house.

[^381]: In 1802, Armand Duplantier wrote his sister, Edwidge, in France. His letter included information about his new wife Constance Joyce Duplantier and of her daughter, “who is thirteen will get married soon.” (Letters in the collection of Magnolia Mound Plantation).
This is a trundle bed that could have accommodated several girls. The mattress was likely filled with Spanish moss or corn husks. It is possible that a house slave was told to sleep in one of the planter’s children’s rooms. Possibly a pallet was put on the floor for Basheba or Josephine to be near the planter’s children at night.

The planter’s daughters received a formal education that included religion, basic math and reading skills, music, art (e.g. water colors), handwriting, manners, and sewing. Armand purchased a piano for his step daughter in New Orleans so she could play. The mourning embroidery on the wall is an example of fancy work done by planter women. Constance Duplantier could have tutored the girls or she may have hired a tutor to come to the house. Likely the two younger daughters were sent away to a convent or a female academy to study.

Enslaved MMP sisters, Venus and Juba, likely learned domestic skills from their parents, Quashee and Take. Venus and Juba likely used domestic skills in the slave quarter and in their duties in the big house. In 1804, Venus, who was 12-years old, was claimed by Constance in her inheritance from the Turnbull and Joyce estate. By 1804, Constance could have assigned Venus to tend to young Augustine (5-years old) as a ‘nurse’ or caregiver.

---

382 AD bought Josephine a piano in New Orleans, receipt dated February 18, 1805. (Turnbull-Allain Family Papers, Folder 7, Box 1, LSU Special Collections).

383 Quashee was 60-years old and his wife Take was 50-years old in 1800. Both were from West Africa. In 1804, Quashee and Take were sold to Dr. Michel Mahier in present day Port Allen. (SPWF v. 3, p. 314-320 and SPWF v. 4, p. 340 and p. 354).

384 Fox Genovese writes of young slave girls being nurses charged with babysitting young planter children. (Fox-Genovese, 1988, p. 25).
Venus’s older sister, Juba was an enslaved domestic servant, as well. In 1804, Juba was sold away from MMP when she was 18-years old\(^{385}\). She was sold to a planter in Baton Rouge who owned Mt. Hope, a plantation on Highland Road. It is possible that the sisters did get to see each other on Sundays. However, a slave could not travel off the plantation without a written pass from her owners. Slaves were not allowed to write or issue passes. Venus would have had to ask Armand or Constance Duplantier to write a pass for her. She would have to carry the pass on her 5-mile walk from MMP to Mt. Hope Plantation.

Notice the dress I am wearing [Docents were period clothing.] My dress is in a popular 19\textsuperscript{th} century style with an Empire waist. By 1814, Lucy was a seamstress who likely made the clothes for the Duplantier women and girls. Lucy had a child who could have learned from her mother how to sew clothing. Men’s clothes in Constance’s families had their clothes made by tailors who had shops in New Orleans\(^{386}\). Lucy could have been given the tasks to make slaves’ clothing, linens, and curtains, and would have been busy mending clothes. (Ask visitors for questions and comments.)

\textit{Dining Room – Room décor, multiple uses for dining room, 19\textsuperscript{th} century meal time and food way practices, adult and children house slaves, Baton Rouge growing city, French General Lafayette}

The dining room is another formal room in the big house. The planter family could entertain here or the plantation mistress could use this room for tutoring her

\(^{385}\) SPWF v. 8, p. 174.

\(^{386}\) LSU Special Collections, Turnbull-Allain Family papers, box 1, folder 7 and folder 15.
children. The room was added around 1810-1812. The ceiling offers one clue that this space was originally part of the back gallery. The planter family likely ate dinner in the dining room. Dinner was served at mid-day and was the largest meal of the day.

Food was prepared in the kitchen building, which you can see just outside these windows. House slaves would bring the food into the big house and serve the meal. Julian was a butler who Armand purchased in New Orleans in 1809; Basheba was a domestic who was held by Constance for at least 26 years; and Josephine was a house servant held by Armand for over 35 years. Josephine and Lucy (the seamstress) each had a child who was a likely candidate to be sent to pull the rope of the punkah fan over the dinning room table during the planter family’s mid-day meal.

Constance likely had the keys to open the locked drawers and the armoires. The sideboard/buffet drawers and cabinets held wines, spices, and silver. Linens and tableware were likely stored in the armoire. Basheba, Josephine, Julian and other house slaves needed access to these items to set the table, prepare for meals, and to clean. Constance was the plantation mistress who delegated tasks, distributed spices and selected wines, silver, and tableware to her enslaved house staff.

Let us take a closer look at two decorative items in the dining room. First on the fireplace mantle are two porcelain urns decorated with portraits of the French General Lafayette. Recall that Armand Duplantier served under the General and they maintained a life-long friendship. In 1825, General Lafayette visited Baton Rouge as an honored guest and Armand helped host the grand reception in town. Armand’s little granddaughter was
quoted in the newspapers that week telling the General she would like to dance with him.

Look at the two landscape paintings in the dining room. (They are reproductions). They show what Baton Rouge looked like in 1821, around the time General Lafayette visited Baton Rouge (1825), and the period when MMP changed from cotton to a sugar plantation. Notice the busy waterway traffic, the pentagon barracks, and variety of structures. The first steamboat came to Baton Rouge in 1812. The little town of Baton Rouge continued to steadily grow since MMP was first established some 35-years ago.

Office - Multiple languages coming together at MMP; MMP slave run away and freedom stories; Who lived at MMP? Answer by using historical documents Hillin succession(1798), Turnbull and Joyce Inventory (1800), 1820 U.S. Census for MMP, 1836 MMP Conveyance Record

This room is set up as a plantation office. By the time Armand Duplantier was permanently residing at MMP, Baton Rouge was a part of the United States of America (Louisiana statehood 1812). Recall that France first established the colony, leaving a strong French cultural presence in this city, which was followed by 16 years of British rule and then followed by 30-years of Spanish rule.

Armand Duplantier was fluent in French and Spanish, and likely English. The enslaved population at MMP likely spoke French; (some could still remember their native African languages such as André who spoke French and Gur and Pompee who spoke French and Kwa). Imagine the likely language difficulties of the 18-year old woman who traveled the Middle Passage in 1788 to Hillin’s MMP. The people around her spoke

---

French, English and Spanish, while she likely had to learn at least one of the European languages. Most likely she learned French.

MMP was a French speaking plantation. The West African inhabitants learned to speak French and blended their adopted language with their ancestral heritage. Naming traditions is an excellent example of how cultures were blended. Day naming is one such West African tradition. Children were commonly named for the day of the week on which they were born. Quashee is an African word for Wednesday. Samedi is the French word for Saturday and Lundi is the French word for Monday. Quashee and Take named their eldest daughter with a traditional West African name, Juba. Venus’s name was likely adopted from European names. It was also common for children to be named in honor of their father or other kin.

The blending of cultures at MMP may not have been smooth or optional, but residents found ways to survive. Around 1800, when the Turnbull and Joyce estate was divided between the widows, American Will the carpenter ran away. His wife Minta and their four children were inherited by Catherine Turnbull and were likely sent to Bayou Sara or St. John Plains north of Baton Rouge. Three years later, American Will was found in St. John Plains and Armand and Constance sold him to a planter in Galveztown, south of Baton Rouge.\(^{388}\)

Armand Duplantier sold select slaves to accommodate their manumissions. For example, in 1810 he sold a ‘mulatto’ woman named Frosine who paid Armand 200 pesos towards her purchase price (800 pesos) in order for her to be sold to Hypolite Tivollier with the condition that she could earn more money to purchase her own freedom. All

---

\(^{388}\) SPWF v. 6, p. 252-253.
parties agreed that she would work for Tivollier to earn the remaining 600 pesos that would be given to Armand Duplantier to pay the balance of her purchase price\textsuperscript{389}.

We started our tour by asking, “Who lived at MMP?” MMP continues to learn about the plantation’s 18\textsuperscript{th} and 19\textsuperscript{th} century residents from a variety of archival documents. Take a moment to look at the 1789 succession of Jane Hillin who died at MMP leaving the names and geographic origins of 6 enslaved individuals. Then notice the 1800 Turnbull and Joyce inventory of the 17 enslaved families and 6 individuals who were living at MMP. This is followed by two more historical listings of residents, an 1820 U.S. Census that accounts for the (8) free white residents, (3) fpc, and (50) enslaved residents; and a sale from 1836\textsuperscript{390} documenting Constance Duplantier sold MMP with slaves, some who were listed as “mortgaged.” Several enslaved individuals spent their lives at MMP, others spent their lives with the Duplantier family after emancipation and continued to live in Baton Rouge\textsuperscript{391}.

\textsuperscript{389} SPWF v. 17, p. 188

\textsuperscript{390} Constance Duplantier bought back MMP and all slaves except those who were mortgaged in 1839. (East Baton Rouge Courthouse, Conveyance Records)

\textsuperscript{391} Charlotte was claimed by Constance in 1804 as “a negro girl.”\textsuperscript{391} Charlotte may have stayed with the Duplantier household for many years, and possibly she adopted the master’s surname after Emancipation. In the 1870 United States Census, a Charlotte Duplantier was listed as age 75-years old (born 1795), an African living in East Baton Rouge Parish, Ward 9 (Ward 9 is in the same region MMP is located). She could not read or write and she was living close to Catchie and Narcisse Duplantier, two more familiar enslaved MMP residents’ names from the MMP Duplantier era. (SPWF v. 3, p. 327)

Narcisse was a name that appeared for nearly a century within Duplantier related households. As early as 1791, a slave named Narcisse, identified by the courts as Narcisse Bacoco\textsuperscript{391} was a slave held by Claude Trénonay in Pointe Coupee. Narcisse was a witness who testified at the Trénonay murder trail. In 1791, Armand Duplantier inventoried Narcise (born 1766), 25-years old, as Bococo, born in Moko Africa. In 1795, a boy was born in Louisiana who was named Narcisse Duplantier. Could this boy have been the son of Narcise Bococo? Narcisse Duplantier married Catchie, who was born around 1800 in Louisiana. By 1870, the married black couple in Baton Rouge lived near Charlotte Duplantier, who was born in 1795 in Africa. These neighbors, and likely relatives, were living in Baton Rouge, Ward 9, which was in the same area as Magnolia Mound Plantation. (Hall, 1992, p. 254; Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 1761; U.S. Census, 1870 Louisiana roll M593_512 page 158; U.S. Census 1879, Louisiana roll M593_512 page 158).
The Back Gallery - The historical plantation landscape and structures associated with enslaved residents. (Invite visitors to sit on benches or on the back steps of the Back Gallery.)

Look around from the back gallery to see a sampling of plantation out buildings. The large green in front of us would have been a yard where a variety of chores were done including laundry and hauling firewood. To our right is the cash crop garden display. Young field hands Harry and Dick likely worked in cotton fields and Samedi and Lundi likely worked in the sugar cane fields.

Next to the growing cash crops is an overseer’s house, which is furnished to around 1870, the time after emancipation when MMP was a sugar cane plantation worked by hired hands. Behind the overseer’s house is an exhibit of a sick room that replicates a plantation infirmary.

As you continue viewing the landscape you can see, behind the large Magnolia tree, a two-room slave cabin. The slave quarter had about 16 cabins that housed roughly 50 to 60 enslaved residents, most who lived in household family units. Quashee and Take likely lived there with their two daughters. The slave cabin exhibit is furnished as if an enslaved family lived inside, and the other room has an exhibit on plantation slavery history.

After the barn pavilion, you see a pigeonaire, a common French Creole feature that is a decorative birdhouse for raising squab (pigeon). To the left of the well are three exhibits: a blacksmith hearth, a weaving room and a carpentry shop. A blacksmith, a cooper and carpenters Cato and Sam all might have lived with their families in the slave quarter.
You can see the kitchen garden that is a source for fruits, vegetables, and medicinal and seasoning herbs and flowers for the planter family’s dinner table. Enslaved gardeners would have tended the kitchen garden with Constance directing their work.

We will walk to the kitchen building, the last stop on the tour, after we try to address some of your questions. Any comments or questions at this time?

*Kitchen – Discuss building and cooking tools; role of enslaved cooks, bakers, miller, fire boy/water boy; foodways and food preparation; Slave quarter gardens to supplement diet and as revenue source*

The kitchen building is a reproduction of what would have been present in the early 1800s on the original kitchen location. The kitchen was designed based on archeological and archival research to determine the historical size and materials[^392]. The large open-hearth provided heat for cooking. Food would have been prepared and then heated in pots (show an example of a spider pot and Dutch oven) placed over small mounds of hot coals and ashes near the hearth. Other food stuffs would be heated on griddles (point out a griddle), hung from hooks in the hearth, and roasted in a reflector oven (point out the reflector oven). One way to cook fish was to tie it down to a water-soaked board and place it against the interior hearth wall (point out board).

This kitchen is equipped with a bake oven. Breads and cakes required flour. French style cuisine called for wheat flour, which was imported from Tennessee to Baton

[^392]: When you entered the kitchen you may have noticed the brick floor. Most kitchen buildings had dirt floors; a brick floor was a more expensive feature.
Rouge. Corn flour was made on the plantation. In 1814, Armand owned an enslaved miller named Jacques. The enslaved cooks and assistants, including bakers prepared the meals for the Duplantier family. Cooks were assisted by older children to fetch water from the well and to tend to the fire from sun up to sun down. The fire was rekindled every morning of everyday.

Armand Duplantier left a record of buying male African slaves to serve him as cooks and two male bakers (Jayme and Fortunado). In 1814, Alcindor was Armand’s cook. Alcindor was an African man, who traveled the Middle Passage by way of Santiago, Cuba to the New Orleans slave market. This was the same sale that Armand purchased Julian, the butler. Alcindor may have remained with the Duplantier family after Armand’s death in 1827.

393 On May 6, 1809, Armand acquired Liverpool, a miller who was ill with rheumatism for $300. In 1814, Armand’s creditors listed Jacques, a miller for a low value of $400. (Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 197).

394 Armand purchased Alcindor and two bakers, Jayme and Fortunado ((Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 564).

395 Armand purchased two other male cook slaves in New Orleans. In 1806, Armand purchased Remond/Raimond, 25-years old, as a cook and sold him in 1807. In 1808, Armand purchased Isidore as a cook. And in 1809, Armand purchased Alcindor who appeared to have suited Armand’s requirements as an enslaved cook. On May 6, 1800, when Armand was administering the deceased Adam Boyd’s Pointe Coupee estate, he purchased a man, 29-year old Printemps born in Mina Africa, as cook and field worker from the Boyd estate. Armand was likely residing at his Pointe Coupee plantation at this time. Three years later, on May 7, 1803, Armand sold Printens to Richard Riestond in Pointe Coupee. (Afro-Louisiana Database Document no.564, Document no. 141, Document no. 715, Document no. 32, Document no. 0 and SPWF v. 4, p. 184, Document no. 2240).

Constance might have discussed her plans for the daily meals and brought spices to Alcindor with other preferred ingredients to the kitchen (Point out spice box). Armand had preferences as well. He wrote to his family in France asking for seeds including “white beets and beets of all types, cabbage, carrots, yellow turnips and others in quantity, plain celery, lettuce and some flower and bulbs and seeds”\textsuperscript{397}.

The kitchen slaves prepared meals for enslaved field hands during sugarcane harvesting. This season usually started in November, before the first frost, and field hands worked especially long days. Possibly during the intensive harvest season, planters had food brought out to the field hands to save time.

Enslaved residents were more often responsible for preparing their own meals in the quarter using corn meal and pork rations provided by the planter. Slave quarter residents supplemented their diet with wild small game and fish. There were lakes and bayous on MMP. In addition, slaves grew fruits and vegetables in kitchen gardens next to their individual cabins. Residents often tended chickens in small yards in the quarter as well. The slave quarter gardens provided enslaved residents with a way to raise money for themselves. In Baton Rouge, before 1806, slaves were allowed to sell or trade their produce and the eggs and pine knots they gathered.

At your leisure, you are invited to visit the kitchen garden on display right outside the kitchen. Follow the brick path to the carpentry shop and weaving room then walk across the grounds to visit the slave cabin exhibit, the overseer’s house and the cash crop garden. At each stop you will find more information about who lived at MMP.

Thank you.

\textsuperscript{397} Duplantier Letters, January 10 1796, LSU Special Collections, MISC. D.
(Offer to talk individually with visitors who may have comments to share or more questions about MMP. Hand out the brochure, Residents of MMP, to interested visitors. Invite visitors to write remarks in the comment books in the kitchen, carpentry shop, overseer’s house, slave cabin exhibit and in the visitors’ center.)
Magnolia Mound Plantation (MMP)

Biographical Notes

An alphabetical listing of MMP historical characters

Background information for the proposed regular tour of MMP big house and kitchen

Julia Rose
Louisiana State University

Developed Fall 2005
Abram – In 1800, enslaved MMP resident Abram was 50-years old and had a hernia. Abram’s name may be an indication that he was Muslim/Islamic. Abram was married to Fanny who was 40-years old. Both husband and wife were from the Coast of Guinea. Fanny had five children. She had Louisiana Creole twin sons, who were 9-years old, Harry and Dick (born 1791), a daughter Catherine (n.d.), a daughter Patty (born 1797) “mulatto Rouge” 3-years old, and a daughter Clarissa (born 1798) “mulatto Rouge” who was 15-months old.

This MMP held family was not able to stay together after they were inherited by Constance Duplantier in 1804 from the Turnbull and Joyce estate. Catherine (born 1785), age 15 (350 pesos) was listed with 7 other slaves on May 5, 1800 as part of the Turnbull and Joyce estate in New Orleans. Harry and Dick were claimed by Constance in 1804. By 1803 or possibly 1811, Fanny remarried Nat (born 1760) who was another member of the MMP enslaved community. (By April 1804, Nat’s wife Joan had died.) Fanny at age 50, along with her daughters Patty, about age-10, and Clarisse, about age-8, became part of a blended family with Nat and his children from his first marriage. Nat’s children from his first wife were his daughter Hannah 17-years old (born 1790) and his son James (born 1796) who was around 15 years old.

A small receipt detailed Armand Duplantier sold a family of slaves to Catherine Turnbull in Baton Rouge on May 23, 1803. The family included Matt, Fannie, Anna, James, Patty and Claris. Coincidently, these names resemble the blended family Nat,

398 SPWF v. 3, p. 314 and pp. 327-328
399 Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 110
400 SPWF v. 3, p. 314 and pp. 327-328
401 SPWF v. 4, pp. 340-341 and p. 348
402 Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 110 indicates that Nat is “mate” to Fanny, the ages match these MMP individuals
403 SPWF v. 4, p. 346 and p.355
Fanny, Hannah, James, Patty and Clarissa. Even more puzzling, the family was sold by Armand one more time in 1811. Perhaps, Catherine Turnbull did not accept the sale in 1803. On March 21, 1811, Constance and Armand Duplantier sold the blended enslaved MMP family of 6 to John Towles in New Orleans, as a group of six slaves.

Abram and Fanny’s family with children Harry, Dick, Patty, Catherine and Clarissa might have lived at MMP in 1800 but after that year the family was forced to change. Fanny might have lived at MMP for 19 years (1792-1811). Harry and Dick lived at MMP since they were born in 1791 and possibly remained there until at least 1813.

Alcindor - Armand Duplantier left a record of buying male African slaves to serve him as cooks and two male bakers. In 1814, Alcindor (born 1781), about 33-years old, was listed as the cook. Alcindor was an African man, 28-years old, who Armand purchased in New Orleans on October 21, 1809. Jean Baptiste Baquier brought Alcindor from Santiago, Cuba to the New Orleans slave market and sold him to Armand as a cook. Alcindor does not appear to have been sold after 1814, and could have resettled at MMP with Armand by 1816. In the list of slaves included in Constance Duplantier’s Probate record, 1841, Alexander (1781) 60-years old, is listed as a resident of MMP. Alexander could have been Alcindor.

While in New Orleans, Armand purchased two other male cook slaves. In 1806, Armand purchased Remond/Raimond, 25-years old, as a cook and sold him in 1807.

---

404 Turnbull Allain Family Papers, box 1 folder 6
405 Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 110
406 Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 564
407 Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 141
408 Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 715
In 1808, Armand purchased Isidore as a cook. And in 1809, Armand purchased Alcindor who appeared to have suited Armand’s requirements as an enslaved cook, as discussed above. On May 6, 1800, when Armand was administering the deceased Adam Boyd’s Pointe Coupee estate, he purchased a man, 29-year old Printemps born in Mina Africa, as cook and field worker from the Boyd estate. Armand was likely residing at his Pointe Coupee plantation at this time. Three years later, on May 7, 1803, Armand sold Printens to Richard Riestond in Pointe Coupee.

American Will - In 1800, American Will, (born 1764) who was 36-years old was either from the Coast of Guinea or he was a Creole of Jamaica. He was listed as the husband of a Creole woman, Minta (born 1765) who was 35-years old. The name, “American Will,” might indicate that this carpenter came to Louisiana from the American states. The couple had four children: Tom (born 1790) a “Creole” boy who was 10-years old, Alexis a 2-year old son (1798), and two girls Catiche (born 1792) 8-years old, and Poll (born 1794) 6-years old. These names might indicate the family’s regard for their kin and African heritage. American Will was noted on the inventory as a good carpenter. Minta is described as “without good sense.”

American Will was a runaway slave by 1804, described “in the state of a fugitive.” He likely ran away by 1800 and is noted as one who “helps runaways.” His wife and family who were claimed by Catherine Rucker Turnbull, likely went to a cotton

---

409 Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 32
410 Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 0 and SPWF v. 4, p. 184
411 Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 2240
412 SPWF v. 6, p. 252 and SPWF v. 3, p. 316
413 SPWF v. 3, p. 314, May 7 1800 inventory
414 SPWF v. 3, p. 314
415 SPWF v. 8, p. 187 and SPWF v. 6, p. 252
plantation in Baton Rouge or on Bayou Sara. American Will was inherited by the Joyce minors and Constance Duplantier. On September 17, 1803, American Will was found around the St. John’s Plains. John Almond was on his way to Baton Rouge to the house of “Mr. Duplantier” (possibly Pointe Coupee or MMP) to inform Armand that American Will was found and that Almond intended to buy the fugitive slave. On September 21, 1803, Armand and Constance Duplantier sold American Will, the runaway carpenter, to John Almond a resident of Galveztown. On May 9, 1804, Armand Duplantier received payment from John Almond for American Will, still in Galveztown. It is likely that American Will and/or his family spent less than 8 years (1792-1800) at MMP.

André - In 1800, two men named André were included on the 1794 inventory of the Claude Trénonay estate in Pointe Coupee. André (born 1755) was described as a Louisiana Creole and the other André (born 1762/1763) could speak French and the African language, Gur. African born André was purchased from Claude Trénanoy’s estate in Pointe Coupee by the first Mrs. Duplantier who died in 1799 and he likely remained with Armand Duplantier. On October 29, 1813, Armand Duplantier sold African born André, at age 50, to his son Fergus Duplantier. In the sale, André was described as a commandeur, mayoral, majordomo (commander, plantation manager, or a driver). African born André was with the Duplantier family until at least 1821.
Ana - Ana (born about 1769) was from the Mina nation in the Bight of Benin region in Africa. She was part of the Hillin slave community at MMP from as early 1787 to 1789. On March 8, 1790, Hillin sold his slaves Ana and John to John Cole422.

Basheba - On May 5 and May 7, 1800 inventories, Basheba, a 20-year old native of Louisiana, was listed as a single woman423. On May 15, 1800, Basheba was listed in a group with her husband Guy and son Joseph at MMP as part of Constance Joyce’s claim from the Turnbull and Joyce estate424. In March 1804, Basheba is listed with her husband Guy and son Joseph among the slaves Constance inherited from the Turnbull and Joyce estate425. Guy, a 45-year old field worker, was listed as one of 30 slaves held by the Turnbull and Joyce estate in Mobile in November 17, 1798426. In 1814, Constance petitioned the courts to separate her property from her bankrupt husband Armand, and she included Basheba as one of four slaves she inherited from her first husband, John Joyce. These four were Basheba, Lucile, Clarinda, and Auguste427. Basheba was likely separated from her son and husband and remained with Constance at MMP for years. Basheba possibly lived at MMP from as early as 1792 to at least 1814, around 26 years.

Catherine - Catherine or Caterina (born about 1768) was a 20-year old woman from Apa nation in Africa who worked and lived at MMP as part of the Hillin slave community from around 1787 to 1789. On March 8, 1790, Hillin sold Catherine to John O’Connor428.

422 Perkins, (2004), p. 3
423 SPWF v. 3, p. 314
424 SPWF v. 3, p. 328
425 Perkins, 2004, p. 34; SPWF v. 4, pp. 340-341
426 Unconfirmed source likely from Mobile, AL archives
427 Perkins, 2003, p. 45
Cato - Cato (born 1760), a 40-year old Creole man from Jamaica, was married to Bess (born 1755), a woman from the Coast of Guinea, who was 45-years old in 1800. Bess had a Creole daughter named Nancy (born 1792). The name Cato is a common West African name and likely the name of his African father or grandfather. This couple was included in the group of slaves at MMP that the Joyce minors inherited. Cato was a carpenter with some exceptional skills. However, when the Turnbull and Joyce estate was divided all the carpentry tools went to Catherine Rucker Turnbull. It appears that Constance Duplantier and her children were not very interested in Cato’s carpentry. On April 27, 1804, the couple was sold to George Garig in Baton Rouge. George Garig owned an 800-arpent plantation (1794-1825) near Magnolia Mound Plantation on Highland Road. Garig was a German settler from Maryland who built cotton gins and presses for the territory. Perhaps Cato’s carpentry skills were attractive to Garig for his gin and press-building business in Baton Rouge.

Celestin - Celestin was named as one of seven slaves in a 1819 court case stating Armand Duplantier held slaves from his first wife’s estate who rightfully belonged to Duplantier’s children. In the 1819 court record, Celestin was noted as 32-years old. (The list of slaves included Modeste, who later named her son Celestin.) It is likely that the 6-year old boy, Celestin (born 1788), who was the son of Trénonay’s slave Francoise (born 1767) and brother to Eugenie, and who was mortgaged by Armand Duplantier the

---

429 SPWF v. 3, p. 314
430 SPWF v. 8, p. 170
431 ftp.rootsweb.com/pub/usgenweb/la/e-batonrouge/cemeteries/highland.txt, accessed June 1, 2004
432 Perkins, (2003), p. 67 and p. 74
executor of the Trénonay estate in 1794\textsuperscript{433}, was the same Celestin named in 1819. It is likely that Celestin who was named as the second overseer on Armand’s New Orleans creditor’s list of slaves composed on February 14, 1814 was the same Celestin (1788); he would have been around 26-years old\textsuperscript{434}.

On January 18, 1827, Modeste’s 11-month old son, Celestin, was baptized in Baton Rouge. The adult Celestin was recorded as the godfather and Julienne\textsuperscript{435} served as godmother and both were described as slaves owned by the widow Constance Duplantier\textsuperscript{436}. On January 18, 1829, Celestin was recorded as the godfather with Julia the godmother to Pierre, a child of Anna a slave of Duplantier in the Catholic Church records in Baton Rouge\textsuperscript{437}. Celestin was a slave associated with the Duplantier household from as early as 1794 to 1814, and possibly to 1829, for about 35 years.

**Charlotte** – When the Joyces married in 1788, Constance’s mother, Louise Rochon, gave her daughter a wedding gift, an enslaved woman named Charlotte. Charlotte (born 1768), who likely spoke French, was a Creole of Mobile and her parents were from Africa. She was 20-years old when she became the legal property of Constance Rochon Joyce, and was pulled from the Rochon’s Mobile slave community of about 39 slaves\textsuperscript{438}. Charlotte stayed with Constance and she probably labored as a house servant, a domestic. Charlotte did not marry but had two children: a daughter Frosina, a black child born in Baton

\textsuperscript{433} Afro-Louisiana Database
\textsuperscript{434} Perkins, (2003), p. 41
\textsuperscript{435} Julienne had a daughter Isabella who was baptised in 1818 in Baton Rouge, both mother and daughter were listed as slaves held by Fergus Duplantier. Julienne was listed as a slave belonging to Fergus Duplantier in 1826, with slaves Auguste and Rose. Apparently the enslaved population held by Constance and Fergus were overlapping. Julienne served as godmother to Silverster in 1831, the son of Marie Therese another slave woman held by the Duplantiers. See church records.
\textsuperscript{436} Catholic Life Center, Archives Diocese of Baton Rouge
\textsuperscript{437} Catholic Life Center, Archives Diocese of Baton Rouge (p. 87, #5)
\textsuperscript{438} Afro Louisiana Database Mobile 1787 census
Rouge in 1790; and a daughter Rosette, a mulatto child, born in 1795, likely in Baton Rouge, as well. The slave sale record explained that Frosina was “a native of this province”\textsuperscript{439}. This suggests that Charlotte was in Baton Rouge as a slave for the Joyce family as early as 1790.

It was the law in Louisiana that enslaved children under age ten could not be sold separately from their mothers\textsuperscript{440}. Records indicate that Baton Rouge’s slaveholding citizen’s abided by this law. A small receipt documents Mrs. Joyce was living in Baton Rouge on October 18, 1800, so it is possible Charlotte and her two daughters were with Constance at that time\textsuperscript{441}.

In 1803, Charlotte’s family was permanently severed. First, on September 24, 1803, Armand Duplantier (Constance’s second husband) sold his wife’s slaves, Charlotte, who was 35-years old, with her younger daughter Rosette, who was 8-years old, to Josef Reynes of New Orleans\textsuperscript{442}. The sale was completed in Baton Rouge\textsuperscript{443}. Then two months later, on December 6, 1803, likely from MMP, Constance sold Frosina, who was 13-years old, to Eustace Ambroise Longue-Epee in Baton Rouge\textsuperscript{444}. The young Frosina possibly never again saw her mother or sister who moved to New Orleans. This family’s story of using an enslaved woman as a wedding gift (and other stories of using slaves as collateral for mortgages or as valuables to bequeath in a will) is useful to illustrate the objectification of individuals as a form of oppression and dehumanization inherent in slavery.

\textsuperscript{439} SPWF v. 7, p. 54
\textsuperscript{440} Taylor, (1963), p. 123
\textsuperscript{441} Constance purchased goods in New Orleans and sent them by freight to Baton Rouge. Turnbull-Allain Family Papers box 1 folder 6
\textsuperscript{442} Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 0; SWPF v. 17, p. 256
\textsuperscript{443} SPWF v. 6, p. 256
\textsuperscript{444} SPWF v. 17, p. 54
Armand Duplantier - Armand Gabriel Allard Duplantier (1753-1827) was born in Voiron, France. As a young man he joined the French Calvary and then served under the Marquis de Lafayette in the American Revolutionary War. In 1777, his uncle Claude Trénonay invited him to Louisiana. He married Augustine Gerard in 1781; six weeks after Armand came to Pointe Coupee, Louisiana. They had four children. His first wife died in 1789, after 18 years of marriage and the birth of their only daughter. Armand remarried to Constance Joyce in 1802. They lived in New Orleans and Baton Rouge. Together they have five children. Armand was a planter, dabbled in the slave trade and was active in civic and military affairs. He died at MMP in 1827 and is buried in a Catholic cemetery on Highland Road.

Augustine Gerard Duplantier – Augustine was Armand Duplantier’s first wife. She was the step daughter of Claude Trénonay in Pointe Coupee when Armand first arrived to Louisiana in 1781. They were married for 18 years. She died in 1799 of yellow fever. They had four children, Fergus, Guy, Armand Jr. and Augustine Duplantier.

Constance Rochon Joyce Duplantier – Constance Duplantier was born in Mobile Alabama in 1770. She married her first husband John Joyce in 1788. They had two children, Josephine and William. Armand and Constance had four sons Augustin,
Alberic, Didier, and Alfred, and one daughter Euphemie Duplantier. Constance Duplantier occasionally lived at MMP from 1792 to 1814. After that time she was a permanent resident of MMP until her husband’s death in 1827. Constance owned MMP up until her death in 1841, except for three years when John Dawson owned MMP from 1836 to 1839.

Fortunado - Armand purchased a group of 6 slaves on April 14, 1809 in New Orleans who were awaiting transport from Havana, Parroquia de San Salvador, to New Orleans. Armand might have been setting up a household with these six enslaved household members, one family of three and three individuals, as he prepared to live in New Orleans. (Armand rented three domestic slaves, Julliet, Annette, and Louise around this time from St. Pé and Alcindor who was brought to the household to serve Armand as a cook in 1809.) Armand purchased these six people from Louis Deynaut in New Orleans. The group included Jayme (born 1783), 26-years old, and Fortunado (born 1773) 36-years old, who were both bakers. Fortunado was born in Igbo, Africa.

Frosine - Armand Duplantier sold Frosine to Hypolite Tivollier on March 15, 1810 with the condition that she could earn money to purchase her own freedom from Tivollier. Frosine was described as a mulatto woman who was sold to Tivollier for 800 pesos. Frosine put up the first 200 pesos and all parties agreed that she would work for Tivollier to earn the remaining 600 pesos that would be given to Armand to pay the remaining balance on her sale. At that time, Tivollier promised he would free her. This transaction

445 Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 177
446 Perkins, (2003), p. 37
447 SPWF v. 18 p. 188
took place in Baton Rouge. In the 1820 U.S. Census, Hypolite Tivollier was listed as a resident in West Baton Rouge\textsuperscript{448}.

George - Armand Duplantier owned an enslaved cooper, a barrel maker, named George (born 1786). In 1808, Armand sold George, 22-years old with a hernia, to Elie V. Jourdain in New Orleans\textsuperscript{449}. It was either a coincidence or evidence of a cancelled sale when Armand Duplantier’s creditors inventoried George, a barrel maker, in 1814\textsuperscript{450}. Perhaps George’s hernia effected a cancellation of the 1808 sale. George would have been 28-years old if and when he was listed on the 1814 inventory made by Armand’s creditors. However, on June 16, 1814, Armand sold George to Crisostome Lupe in New Orleans\textsuperscript{451}. It is unlikely that George joined the MMP slave population. (An 18-year old man named George was listed in Mobile on a 1798 Turnbull and Joyce estate inventory\textsuperscript{452}.)

Alexander is another name associated with Duplantier enslaved coopers. Among the MMP slave community that was conveyed in 1839 only one individual, Alexander (1791) 45-years old, was identified by his skill. Alexander was a cooper\textsuperscript{453}. He was listed as about 60-years of age on Constance Duplatnier’s Probate record, which suggests Alexander likely lived and labored at MMP for at least five years. The name Alexander appeared on many earlier documents (e.g. April 27, 1814), however these could be confused with Alcindor or another man named Alexander from Constance’s earlier

\textsuperscript{448} U.S. 1820 Census, Roll M33-31, p. 81
\textsuperscript{449} Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 2
\textsuperscript{450} Perkins, (2003), p. 42
\textsuperscript{451} Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 346
\textsuperscript{452} Afro-Louisiana Database Turnbull and Joyce estate November 7, 1798 Mobile inventory
\textsuperscript{453} East Baton Rouge Courthouse, Conveyance Records 1836 and 1839
property claims of MMP slaves, especially being there was no mention of Alexander the cooper prior to 1836.

Jacques – Jacques was listed as a miller by Armand Duplantier’s creditors in 1814 who may have been settled at MMP when Armand settled at MMP. Jacques was also the name of a blacksmith held by Armand Duplantier in New Orleans, who unlikely lived at MMP.

Harry – see Abram

James Hillin - In 1782, the Louisiana colonial census for Baton Rouge states that James Hillin and his wife Jane Stanley Hillin had five sons and one daughter and did not own any slaves. According to this record, Hillin was a yeoman farmer growing tobacco and corn\(^{454}\). Bannon, Yancy and Edwards (1984, p. 19) add that Hillin also grew indigo. The Spanish government encouraged settlers to grow tobacco and indigo for the mother country. Hillin, like many settlers, was growing corn for local consumption. James Hillin was working towards becoming a planter. On December 12, 1786 Hillin acquired a land grant for 1054 arpents (948.6 acres) in Baton Rouge from the Spanish government, land that became MMP\(^{455}\).

James Hillin rented out MMP and left the plantation in the hands of Charles O’Reilly and his wife Nancy Dunn. They were to oversee the farm and care for the Hillin children. The slaves, the Hillin children, and the O’Reillys milked cows, tended to the

\(^{454}\) 1782 Census, Ardon (ed.) (1977) p.196
\(^{455}\) SPWF v. 2, p. 424-5
hogs, and made a crop of provisions and clothing for themselves. They kept the fences and levee in good repair. One year later, at the end of 1791, James Hillin sold MMP to John Joyce of Mobile. Hillin did not leave any of the slaves he owned at MMP.

Jane Stanley Hillin – see James Hillin

James - Joyce’s death at sea on May 10, 1798 was witnessed by his enslaved servant, James. James, a black 24-year old man and a practicing Catholic, gave a lengthy testimonial to the Spanish court in Baton Rouge detailing his master’s death. According to James’s testimony, John Joyce gave James orders to bring Joyce’s bedding to the deck of the schooner The Mobilian during the stormy night when Joyce was lost at sea.

James spoke English in the courtroom and likely understood some French being part of the Joyce/Rochon household.

Jayme - Armand purchased a group of 6 slaves on April 14, 1809 in New Orleans who were awaiting transport from Havana, Parroquia de San Salvador, to New Orleans. Armand might have been setting up a household with these six enslaved household members, one family of three and three individuals, as he prepared to live in New Orleans. (Armand rented three domestic slaves, Julliet, Annette, and Louise around this time from St. Pé and Alcindor who was brought to the household to serve Armand as a cook in 1809.) Armand purchased these six people from Louis Deynaut in New Orleans. The group included Jayme (born 1783), 26-years old, and Fortunado (born 1773) 36-

---

456 SPWF v. 1 p. 235
457 SPWF v. 2 p. 287
458 Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 177
years old, who were both bakers. Jayme was born in Congo, Africa and Fortunado was born in Igbo, Africa.

**Jenny** - In 1789, Jane Stanley Hillin’s succession records include a slave woman “Chiny” aged 20 of the Chamba nation. Chiny is an African female name. However, the age given, the African heritage, and the similar name on this record, and “Jenny” with the corresponding age listed on Hillin’s wife’s succession suggests ‘Chiny’ was ‘Jenny’ who was held by Hillin for many years in Baton Rouge.

In 1788, Hillin purchased at least one enslaved African woman in New Orleans. She was 18 years old and was described by the ship captain who sold her to Hillin as “brut,” a French term meaning newly arrived or untrained slave. She traveled the Middle Passage, across the Atlantic Ocean, to Martinique before arriving in New Orleans. Her 8-month journey from the Senegal-Gambia region of West Africa was typical of many enslaved Africans who were brought to Baton Rouge. Hillin purchased the 18-year old woman in July 1788 in New Orleans from Captain Domingo Mayronneella. The slave ship was called *Le Joven Felicianna*⁴⁶⁰. The 18-year old woman was from Chamba; Chamba is in present day northwestern Nigeria near the border of Cameroon.

**John** - John (born 1769) who was about 19-years old from Africa lived and worked at MMP held by James Hillin. John was enslaved at MMP from as early as 1787 to 1790. On March 8, 1790, Hillin sold Ana and John to John Cole⁴⁶¹.

---

⁴⁶¹ Perkins, (2004), p. 3
John Joyce - John Joyce fought in Canada during the American Revolution on the side of the British. He traded furs, slaves, and goods in Mississippi, Louisiana, Florida, and Alabama. John Joyce, an Irishman, (born 1752) owned land in Baton Rouge on the north boundary of MMP\textsuperscript{462}. Joyce expanded his holdings when he bought MMP from Hillin on December 23, 1791. It is possible that Joyce had slaves living on his first piece of property in Baton Rouge and planned on enlarging his plantation operations by adding more slaves to the total property\textsuperscript{463}. At the time MMP was a cotton and indigo plantation.

A census for Mobile, Alabama for 1787 states that John Joyce was 34-years old and that he owned 10 slaves for a total of 11 individuals in his household\textsuperscript{464}. In 1788, John Joyce married his neighbor Josephine Rochon in Mobile. They had two children, Josephine and William. Joyce was a successful businessman and went into partnership with John Turnbull on February 24, 1798. They described their enterprise as “Trade, Plantations, Negroes, Cattle, etc.”\textsuperscript{465} Nearly half of their assets ($26,530) were listed as slaves.

Josephine Joyce – Marie Josephine Joyce was Constance’s eldest child, born in Mobile in 1790. Josephine married her step-brother Fergus Duplantier and remained in Baton Rouge as a plantation mistress for the rest of her life. She died in 1859.

Josephine - Josephine (1789), 32-years old, was an enslaved woman claimed by the Duplantier children in the 1819 court case against their father, Armand Duplantier. The

\textsuperscript{462} SPWF v. 2, p. 424  
\textsuperscript{463} LSU Special Collections, Survey Collection. A January 31, 1793 map shows 1,000 arpents owned by Juan Joyce with two adjacent properties with small frontage on the Mississippi River extending eastward that appear to be the site of MMP.  
\textsuperscript{464} Afro-Louisiana Database, Mobile Census 1787  
\textsuperscript{465} Perkins (2004), p. 11
courts found that Augustine Gerard Duplantier acquired Josephine before her death in 1799\textsuperscript{466}. Josephine may have been less than 10-years old at that time. Likely, Josephine had been with Armand Duplantier’s household through 1821. Josephine was described as a “house servant” and “domestic” on Armand’s creditors’ lists in 1814\textsuperscript{467}. Josephine was also a mother of at least one child by 1814\textsuperscript{468}. She would have been around 25-years old at that time.

**William Joyce** – William was the only son of John and Constance Joyce. He was born in 1799 and died in 1870. He attended school in New Orleans, and never established himself in a trade or as a planter.

**Jean Louis** - Jean/John Louis is another familiar name among the Duplantier held slaves. John Louis (born 1775) was a slave Armand Duplantier inventoried among the Claude Trénonay estate in Pointe Coupee in 1794\textsuperscript{469}. In 1793, Armand Duplantier sent his slave John Louis to bid on his behalf at a public auction. John Louis bid and purchased a mare for 15 pesos and 4 reales for Duplantier in Baton Rouge\textsuperscript{470}. This was a significant record. It demonstrates that John Louis was educated in math and business trading. It shows that Armand Duplantier trusted and held some respect for John Louis. In Baton Rouge in 1801, Armand Duplantier saw that his slave John Louis (1759), who was 42-years old,

\textsuperscript{466} Perkins, (2004), p. 61  
\textsuperscript{467} Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 112; Perkins, (2003), p. 42  
\textsuperscript{468} Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 112; Perkins, (2003), p. 42  
\textsuperscript{469} Afro-Louisiana Database, Document no. 1800  
\textsuperscript{470} SPWF v. 2, p. 151-3
was baptized on June 15 at St. Joseph Catholic Church; and his god parents were Louis and Julian (possibly Julienne), also slaves owned by Armand Duplantier.471

**Juba – see Quashee**

**Judith** – Judith (born 1786) was a young teen when she became a mother around age 12-14. In 1800, Judith was listed as the mother of one-year old Clarinda (born 1799). Both were inventoried as slaves at MMP472. Judith was likely the daughter of Charlotte, 60-years old from the Coast of Guinea, and sister to Linder an 18-year old Creole woman with her own daughter Aimee, who was 10-months old473. This whole family was included on the Turnbull and Joyce inventory. However, Judith and Clarinda were claimed by Constance Joyce474, while the rest of the family was claimed by Catherine Rucker Turnbull475. On March 30, 1804, when Constance received her inheritance from the estate of her husband’s partnership with Turnbull, Judith and Clarinda were included as her property at MMP476.

Ten years later, April 27, 1814, when Constance petitioned the court in New Orleans for separation of property from her husband Armand Duplantier, Constance stated she would “take the following property viz a plantation in Baton Rouge...and the following slaves.”477 Ten slaves were named, including Judith and Clarinda. Therefore, by the spring of 1814, Judith at 24-years old and Clarinda at 11-years old were still living

---

471 Catholic Life Center, Archives Diocese of Baton Rouge
472 SPWF v. 3, p. 314
473 SWPF v. 3, p. 314
474 SPWF v. 3, p. 328
475 SPWF v. 3, p. 327-330
476 SPWF v. 4, p. 340
477 Perkins, (2003), p. 16
at MMP\textsuperscript{478}. Judith possibly lived at MMP from as early as 1792 to as late as 1814, around 22 years. Clarinda might have lived at MMP her entire life, at least from 1799-1814, around 15 years.

**Julian** - Julian (born 1779), 30-years old, was purchased by Armand to serve as a domestic butler. Julian was a Louisiana Creole. Armand purchased Julian in New Orleans\textsuperscript{479}. However, Julian’s name has not shown up in later documents to ascertain if he came to live at MMP with Armand by 1816, however it is possible that he did live and labor at MMP.

**Lafayette** – The full name of the French General Lafayette was Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roche Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de Lafayette who was born in 1757. People often refer to him as the Marquis de Lafayette. On April 9, 1771, at the age of 14, Lafayette entered the Royal Army. Lafayette married Marie Adrienne Francoise de Noailles when he was 16-years old. Lafayette allied himself with one of the wealthiest families in France. (She was related to the King.) The Marquies de Lafayette aided the Americans in the American Revolutionary war.

**Latulipe** – Claude Trénonay was murdered by his slave, Latulipe who was an Ibo African. Ibo is an ethnic group from Nigeria and Benin in West Africa. Latulipe was accused of stealing and Trénonay put him in stocks and flogged him. Latulipe retaliated by shooting his master on July 9, 1791 and then hung himself on July 14, 1791 in the

\textsuperscript{478} Perkins, (2003), p. 16
\textsuperscript{479} Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 296
slave quarter. Armand became intimately familiar with slave resistance and became the executor of this estate and absorbed some of the slaves from Trénonay’s plantation.

Lucia - Lucia was from the African Ashanti nation and was a part of the Hillin slave community at MMP in 1789. She had a two-month old daughter. On March 10, 1790, Hillin sold three slaves to Jacob Stampley. Stampley may have purchased Lucia and her daughter at this time.

Lucy - In 1814, Armand Duplantier’s creditors inventoried the slaves he held including Lucy who was a seamstress. Lucy had a child by 1814. Lucy likely constructed ladies and children’s clothing for the Duplantier family. Constance left records of using tailors, 1801-1804, for her son William’s clothes and no records have yet been found for Josephine’s clothes, other than the purchase of materials. Lucy could have made clothing for enslaved household members as well as household linens.

Lundi/Lundy - Lundi was listed as a field hand by Armand Duplantier’s creditors in 1814. That year Constance Duplantier claimed she owned several slaves including Lundy, separate from her husband’s property.

According to contemporary sources (e.g. Genovese, 1974) enslaved mothers and fathers generally named their own children. The parents’ choices varied from concerns for family continuity and African traditions, and rarely did they choose classical or comical names. Many names with African origins were used and did survive over

---

480 Hall, (1992), p. 252-255
481 Perkins, (2004), p. 3
482 LSU Special Collections, Turnbull-Allain Family papers, Box 1, Folder 7 and Folder 15
generations at MMP. Africans and their descendents commonly would name a child after the day or month of birth (day-name), such as Samedi (Saturday), Lundi (Monday), Coffe (Friday), and Quashee (Wednesday) at MMP.

**Marcelitte** – Marcelitte was listed as a house servant by Armand Duplantier’s creditors in 1814. That same year, Constance Duplantier purchased many of the slaves on the creditors list, including Marcelitte, keeping them with the Duplantier household later in Baton Rouge.

**Modeste** - Modeste was named in the claim of the Duplantier children in 1819 against Armand Duplantier, stating Modeste was a slave of their mother, Augustine Gerard Duplantier before her death in 1798\(^ {483}\). The court settled in their favor\(^ {484}\). Modeste was a house servant listed as one of Armand’s slaves on February 14, 1814 in New Orleans with Josephine, named above. These records suggest that Josephine and Modeste, both house servants, were with Armand’s household since at least 1799. If Armand was living in New Orleans, (records suggest he was living in New Orleans around 1809-1816), the bankruptcy case in 1814 likely required the aging Armand to settle at MMP. The creditors did not foreclose on Armand, and his slaves appear to have stayed with the Duplantier household. The court ordered that the 7 slaves who belonged to the Duplantier children “be delivered to the petitioners, they being entitled to them by inheritance from their mother, whose property they were”\(^ {485}\).

\(^{483}\) Perkins, (2003), p. 61
\(^{484}\) Perkins, (2003), p. 42
\(^{485}\) Perkins, (2003), p. 20
Modeste had her infant child, Pierre baptized on April 15, 1827 at the Catholic Church in Baton Rouge. In that record, Modeste is described as “the slave of the older Duplantier.” That was the same year Armand Duplantier died. Two years later, Modeste had another child baptized at the same church. On January 18, 1827, Modeste’s 11-month old child, Celestin, was baptized in Baton Rouge. Slaves owned by the widow Constance Duplantier served as godparents, Celestin and Julienne. It is likely that Modeste was a house servant at MMP since as early as 1798 to 1814, and possibly to the 1820s.

Mahomet – Mahomet, 30-years old (born 1730), and his wife Peggy, 45-years old (born 1755), were both from the Coast of Guinea. Mahomet was a name that was likely derived from Islamic culture. On April 15, 1804, the Joyce minor children had inherited the couple from the Turnbull and Joyce estate. Armand Duplantier sold Peggy, who was listed as “elderly,” for 64 pesos to Felix Bernard du Montier of Baton Rouge. Armand was unsuccessful in selling Mahomet who died that year. On June 15, 1801, Armand Duplantier brought his slave Louise to be baptized in the Catholic Church in Baton Rouge. Louise’s god parents were Louis and Mahomet. This suggests, if this was the same man named Mahomet, that Mahomet held a popular and respected position in that plantation community among free and enslaved residents.

---

486 Catholic Life Center, Archives Diocese of Baton Rouge
487 SPWF v. 4, p. 354
488 SPWF v. 4, p. 346
489 St. Joseph Church Archives, Baton Rouge, Book 9
Nancy - Nancy was in Mobile, Alabama on November 21, 1798 when an inventory was done for the slaves held by the Turnbull and Joyce estate. Nancy (1782) was 16-years old and given a monetary value of 360 pesos. This value in pesos has been helpful in tracking Nancy’s movement to MMP in 1804. Nancy was listed on May 5 and May 15, 1800 with the slaves held by the Turnbull and Joyce estate in New Orleans, still marked with 360 pesos. On March 30 and April 21, 1804 when Constance Duplantier claimed 17 slaves from the Turnbull and Joyce estate she included “Nancy 360 pesos” as one of the slaves at MMP. Nancy was likely held by Constance Joyce Duplantier prior to 1798 in Mobile and remained with Constance to at least 1804. Nancy would have been 22-years old when she was living at MMP in 1804.

Onezime - Onesime/Onizim/Onesine (born 1781) was claimed by the children of the first Mrs. Duplantier in 1821. The siblings claimed that Onesine was one of the slaves from their deceased mother’s estate from Pointe Coupee (1799). The 1819 court records show that Onesine and André were purchased at the same sale from Trénonay’s estate around 1795-6. (The name Onesine relates to the Igbo nation in Africa, where Kwa is the regional language.) Still held by Armand Duplantier, African born Onesine, 42-years old, was purchased by Fergus Duplantier on October 29, 1813 with 16 other slaves from Armand Duplantier. He is listed as one of 17 slaves on a court document dated February 14, 1814 stating Armand Duplantier sold these enslaved individuals, one family.

---

490 Afro-Louisiana database and personal communication Elaine Farve, 2005.
491 SPWF v. 4, p. 329 and p. 333
492 SPWF v. 4, p. 340-342 and p. 352
493 Perkins, (2003), p. 66
494 Perkins, (2003), p. 66
495 Afro-Louisiana Database, African Names
496 Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 656; Perkins (2003), p. 45
of three and 14 individuals, to Fergus. Onesine remained at MMP for many years. In 1836 and in 1839, when Constance Duplantier sold and then re-purchased MMP from John Dawson, Onesine was listed as being 55-years old at MMP on the conveyance records. In 1841, in Constance Duplantier’s Probate record, Onesine was listed at MMP as 75-years old. Onesine was at MMP from as early as 1803 to 1841, for at least 39 years, and was associated with Armand Duplantier from as early as 1798 to 1827, for at least 29 years.

Pelagie - Pelagie (born 1763) was included as one of the 17 slaves Armand sold to his son Fergus. In the October 29, 1813 sale, Pelagie was described as a 50-year old black woman. Earlier, another woman named Pelagie (born 1762) was listed in the 1791 inventory of Claude Trénonay as a 32-year old Creole woman of Louisiana. In 1794, Pelagie was listed as one of the “unsold” slaves from the Trénonay estate in Pointe Coupee. The Pelagie born in 1762 and part of Claude Trenonay’s estate was likely the same woman sold to Fergus in 1813. Pelagie was listed in the records at St. Joseph Church in Baton Rouge on November 11, 1821. The record states that Armand Duplantier paid for “the internment of a female Negro Pelagie $2.50.” Later in the church records, a free woman of color, Pelagie Allain died at about age 70 in 1827. Was this the same woman? Armand cared enough about her to plan a proper church burial. Did he see to her freedom? In the 1820 U.S. Census, Armand Duplantier’s household included three free females of color, one girl under 14-years old and two women over 45-years old.

---

497 Perkins, (2003), p. 45
498 Conveyance Records, Archives East Baton Rouge Parish Courthouse
499 Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 656
500 Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 656
501 Catholic Life Center, Archives of the Diocese of Baton Rouge
Favrot wrote to Armand Duplatnier in 1816 and reported, “Pelagie is asking me to tell you and Titine [Augustine Duplatnier] so many things that I do not have enough space for everything. She does not like it here at all...” If this is Pelagie born in 1763, she was 54 years old and with Favrot in Baton Rouge in 1816. The nickname “Titine” suggests Pelagie had an intimate relationship with Armand’s daughter, perhaps she was the slave who nursed Augustine in 1799 when her mother died in New Orleans (see March 5, 1801 letter Armand to his brother). In addition, Constance purchased an enslaved woman named Pelagie in New Orleans in 1800.

Pompee - Pompey/Pompee (born 1760) was no longer alive in 1821 when the trial was held to ascertain property rights to slaves held by Armand Duplantier, whom his children from his first wife were claiming in court. Pompey was inventoried in 1791 and in 1794. He was listed as one of several slaves who were “unsold” from the sale of deceased Claude Trénonay in Pointe Coupee. Pompey was born in Calabar, Africa and spoke French and Kwa. Pompey went with Armand to his plantations for the remainder of his life. First, he lived and labored in Pointe Coupe, and after 1803, Pompey most likely lived and labored at MMP. Pompey was listed as “ouvier” in Baton Rouge, not a field hand as other slaves were listed in the inventory taken by Armand Duplantier’s creditors in February 14, 1814. He was an industrial worker listed with an extraordinarily high value, $1,500. Perhaps Pompey worked the gin press, understood the production of indigo, or became skilled in the sugar mill. (MMP was a sugar producing plantation by

502 Favrot Papers, V.5, p. 365.
503 LSU Special Collections Armand Duplatnier Letters, Misc. D.
504 Perkins, (2003), p. 67
505 Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 1800
506 Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 1800
1824\textsuperscript{508}.) Another unique aspect of how Pompey was described by Armand’s creditors in 1814; he was the first listed with the highest monetary value and as an industrial worker\textsuperscript{509}. The courts found that Pompey was a slave that belonged to the first Mrs. Duplantier and should have been the property of her children. Pompey was likely with the Duplantier family from as early as 1794 to his death before 1821, for about 27 years.

Quashee - In 1800, Quashee (born 1740) was a 60-year old man from the Coast of Guinea. His wife Take/Kate (born 1750) was 50-years old. They had two daughters, Juba (born 1784) who was 16-years old and Venus (born 1792) who was 8-years old when the Turnbull and Joyce estate inventory was taken at MMP\textsuperscript{510}. Both Quashee and Juba are traditional West African names.

In April 1804, the Joyce minors sold Quashee, Take, and Venus, age 11, to Dr. Michel Mahier who lived on his plantation in present day Port Allen\textsuperscript{511}. Michel Mahier (born 1757, died 1810) a native of France, was a physician who did business with Armand Duplantier\textsuperscript{512}. However, on March 30, 1804, Constance claimed Venus “a negro girl”, without her sister or her parents, as property she wished to have at MMP\textsuperscript{513}. There is a discrepancy as to whether Venus stayed with Constance or went with her parents to Dr. Mahier. A woman named Venus was included on Michel Mahier’s probate record dated June 6, 1810. However, Venus was described as 55-years old\textsuperscript{514}.

\textsuperscript{508} Perkins, (2003), p. 22
\textsuperscript{509} Afro-Louisiana Database document no. 112
\textsuperscript{510} SPWF v. 3, pp. 327-328
\textsuperscript{511} SPWF v. 4, p. 354; SPWF v. 3, p. 317
\textsuperscript{512} SPWF v. 3, p. 125
\textsuperscript{513} SPWF v. 4, p. 340
\textsuperscript{514} Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 9
Juba was inherited by the Joyce minors without the rest of her family, as an individual. Juba was around 18-20 years old when she was sold on April 27, 1804 to a German settler, Joseph Sharp. Juba was listed as a Creole single slave woman age-35 on the succession of Joseph Sharp in 1819. Joseph Sharp had a 400-acre plantation on Highland Road called Mount Hope Plantation. By 1820, the plantation had been expanded to 1,200-acres and was then sold out of the Sharp family.

If Venus did stay with Constance, all four family members were still in the immediate vicinity of Magnolia Mound Plantation and could have managed visits to each other. Quashee and his family lived at MMP, possibly from 1792-1804, and Venus may have been there a few years after the rest of her family was sold.

Take – see Quashee

Hypolite Tivollier – see Frosine

Thomas - Thomas (born about 1750), was a 30 to 40-year old man from the Coromanti nation in the Gold Coast region in Africa. He was a member of the MMP slave community held by Hillin, around 1787 to 1791.

Claude Trénonay – Claude Trénonay was a wealthy planter in Pointe Coupee growing indigo and cotton with over 100 enslaved laborers. Trénonay invited his nephew Armand Duplantier to come to Louisiana after his military service with the French General Lafayette. In 1781 Armand did come to Pointe Coupee where he met and married

---

515 Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 175; SPWF v. 8, p. 174
Trémonay’s step daughter, Augustine Gerard Duplantier. Many of the slaves Trémonay owned were from Africa. Latilupe was from Igbo, Africa and was accused of stealing from his Trémonay who flogged him and locked him in stocks. Latilupe murdered Trémonay in retaliation in 1791.

**John Turnbull** - John Turnbull (d. Aug. 24, 1798) came to Louisiana from England in the 1770s. He was a trader in Louisiana and areas extending eastward. He traded furs, provisions, slaves, livestock, and agricultural produce including indigo and tobacco. John Turnbull founded the partnership, Turnbull & Joyce, with John Joyce. The firm was active from the 1770s to about 1800. It was based in Louisiana and traded in New Orleans, Natchez, Mobile, Pensacola, the Chickasaw Nation, and London. The firm purchased pelts and skins from a number of Native Americans, mostly of the Chickasaw and Choctaw nations. John Turnbull was married to Catherine Rucker Turnbull.

**Catherine Turnbull** - Catherine Rucker Turnbull was married to John Turnbull who owned plantations and land in Baton Rouge and Bayou Sara. They had children John (d. ca. 1822), Daniel (1796-1861), James F. (d. before 1831), George, William, Susannah (d. before 1831), Isabella (married Robert Semple), Sarah (married Lewis Stirling), and Walter (d. ca. 1838). After the death of her husband, Catherine managed the family business affairs with the assistance of Charles Norwood. She jointly owned a plantation in Saint Mary Parish with her son-in-law, John Towles and had properties in New Orleans.
Sam - In 1800, Sam (born 1755) and his wife Bella/Belle (born 1755), both from the Coast of Guinea, were 45-years old. In 1804, Sam and Bella were listed among the group of slaves Constance inherited from the Turnbull and Joyce estate. No records have yet been found that describe what happened to this couple. It is possible they remained at MMP. A mulatto man named Sam (1765), 35-years old, who was skilled in carpentry and rope making was included in the Turnbull and Joyce estate inventory in New Orleans May 5, 1800.

Samedi - On February 1814, Samedy, an African born man was appraised for a relatively low value, $300, on Armand Duplantier’s creditors’ inventory. In July 17, 1814, Constance Duplantier purchased Samedy for 5 pesos. Records indicate that likely a woman held by the Duplantiers was named Samedi.

Venus – see Quashee

---

516 SPWF v. 3, p. 314 and pp. 327-328; SPWF v. 4, p. 340
517 SPWF v. 4, p. 333
518 Afro-Louisiana Database Document no. 112
519 Perkins, (2003), p. 42
References

Primary Sources

1906 Baton Rouge City Directory, LSU Special Collections, Baton Rouge.

Baptism and death records at the Archives at Diocese of Baton Rouge, Catholic Life Center.

Conveyance Records, East Baton Rouge Parish Courthouse, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.


LSU Special Collections, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, Survey Collection. Baton Rouge, Louisiana.


New Orleans Death Record Index.

Turnbull-Allain Family Papers, Special Collections at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge.

U.S. 1870 Census, Louisiana.

U.S. 1880 Census, Louisiana.

Secondary Sources


Afro-Louisiana Database, http://www.ibilio.org


Spanish West Florida Records 1782-1816. Transcribed and translated into English in 1939. Special Collections at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge.

Appendix D

Tour Framework Worksheet

to include Slave Life in the regular tour at Magnolia Mound Plantation

9/25/05

0. Diorama in the Visitor Center – key topics include: building uses on the plantation landscape; resident family identities planter family and key enslaved families.

a.) Use the diorama to point out the buildings on the historical landscape. Point out the slave quarter, overseer’s house, work places including the weaving room and laundry room, stables, carpentry/coopers shop.

b.) Introduce the historical families that lived at MMP approximately from 1800 to 1827. The planter family the Duplantiers, and approximately 17 enslaved families including Quashee and Take’s family, Fanny and Abram’s family, Basheba and Guy’s family, Sampson and Jude’s, Lucy’s, Judith’s and Charlotte’s families.

1. Front Gallery - key topics include: 1786 Hillin’s Land Grant; Diaspora; Joyce Purchase; Joyce drowns according to James’s deposition;

a.) In 1786, James Hillin rec’d Spanish Land Grant for approx. 948.6 acres (1054 apernts). “Slaves cleared the land and prepared the timbers and made the bricks to build this plantation." This statement refers to slaves held by James Hillin who acquired slaves after rec’ing this land grant.

b.) In 1788, Hillin purchased at least six slaves, including one 18-year old woman who he purchased in New Orleans from the merchant Captain Domingo Mayronneella. This woman was from West Africa (Chamba); we believe her name was Jenny. She is described in the sale records as “Brut”, a French term meaning newly arrived or untrained slave. She traveled the middle passage and went to Martinique before arriving in NO aboard a slave ship called, Le Joven Felicianna. The voyage took approx. 8 months.

c.) In 1791 Hillin sold MMP to John Joyce who was a business partner with John Turnbull. Both owned plantations near MMP. Joyce built the original four rooms of this present house and peopled it with at least 54 slaves, (15 families and six single adults). MMP was an “absentee plantation.” Joyce did not live here, it was a business investment. Joyce likely visited with his wife and 2 children from their Mobile home.

---

520 SPWF v.3 p. 327 and v. 3, p. 314-320 that reflect May 1800. Then add two more families Josephine and her child and Lucy and her child who likely lived at MMP from as early as 1816.
521 MMP Docent Manual 2005, p. 27
522 Captain Domingo Mayronneella owned Le Joven Felicianna and likely routinely imported slaves to New Orleans from Africa.
523 Nine months for Captain’s full voyage originating in Europe, Jenny’s journey/voyage originated in Senegambia region of West Africa, through Martinique to NO could have been as long as 8 months.
d.) In 1798 both Joyce and Turnbull died, leaving MMP to wife Constance Joyce. The story of Joyce’s death was told in court by James, Joyce’s personal enslaved servant who witnessed how Joyce drowned at sea between Baton Rouge and Mobile.

2.) Boys’ Room – key topics include: House architecture French Creole Cottage; carpenters enslaved; MMP cash crops and staple crops; boys free and enslaved stories.
   a.) When Turnbull and Joyce died the administrators of the large estate inventoried MMP including the enslaved residents. The inventory (circa 1800) identified three carpenters, some of whom may have built this house. Jamaican born Cato (wife Bess), African born Sam (wife Belle), and American Will (wife Minta and their four children).
   b.) Discuss architecture use back wall to discuss mortise and tenon cypress beams with filled walls, bousillage entre poteaux with rooms en suite; show original four rooms; and modifications made by Duplantiers (1812).
   c.) Constance Joyce remarried in 1802, to one of the administrators of the Turnbull and Joyce estate, Armand Duplantier. Armand was a widower with four children and Constance had two young children. Armand’s sons from his first marriage did not likely live at MMP, but Armand’s toddler daughter Augustine and Constance’s two children, Josephine and William, may have lived at MMP when they were not at boarding schools. Together, Armand and Constance had five children who lived at MMP at varying times (1804–1813?). Enslaved boys at MMP included twin brothers Harry and Dick, who were around 13-years old when their African born father died, and their mother Fanny remarried. Fanny with her daughters and new husband were sold from MMP. Harry and Dick were legally old enough to be separated from their mother and were likely put to work in the cotton fields at MMP. By 1802, when Armand and Constance married, Armand had ginned two years of MMP cotton. Cotton production was continuous despite the changing planter families living arrangements.
   d.) Discuss 19th century agricultural concept of plantation – cash crop farm with slave labor (typically more than 20 held slave laborers). MMP cash crops included indigo, cotton and later, by 1820s, sugar cane. Show cotton samples and bed cover.

Move to the Salon, show two interior doors in boys’ room both lead to le Salon.

3. Salon – key topics include: Room decor and social uses; Armand as a French planter and Baton Rouge businessman; Constance and Armand’s BR and NO households; Combined slave communities around 1803 caused major changes in enslaved families’ lives; Slave rebellion as political conversation; Objectification of slaves, e.g. house servants Venus inherited property and Charlotte “the wedding gift.”
   a.) Constance and Armand Duplantier lived in BR and NO. They summered in the country, MMP in BR. The small four-room cottage was expanded 1810-1812 and

by 1816 the Duplantiers settled permanently at MMP. Discuss French and English decorative elements especially furnishings and fireplace; discuss cove ceiling; This room was designed for entertainment and social gatherings.

b.) Armand came to Louisiana from France in 1781 and served the American army under the French General Lafayette. Later Armand accepted an invitation from his uncle, Claude Trénonay, a planter in Pointe Coupee just across the Mississippi River from Baton Rouge, who helped Armand get established as a cotton and indigo planter. In 1792, Trénonay was assassinated by his slave Latulipe. Latulipe was retaliating against Trénonay’s penal methods. The Ibo/Wolof assassin hung himself after his escape; discuss African beliefs in afterlife. This violent slave revolt impacted Armand Duplantier directly; he was responsible for his deceased uncle’s estate and his own plantation. Join rebellion as political discussion.

c.) Armand absorbed part of his uncle’s slave population into his own and eventually this group was added to the slave community at MMP in Baton Rouge. During his first years of marriage to Constance (1802-1806), Armand was eager to return to France with his new wife and family. He began selling many of the slaves at MMP disrupting family ties permanently. Examples include John and Celia who were separated from their sons Neptune and Jacob in 1804; and sisters Venus and Juba were sold apart from each other and their parents Quashee and Take in 1804.

d.) Enslaved house servants; Venus; Charlotte the Wedding Gift;
In this elegant setting men and women might have discussed business decisions. Venus was claimed by Constance in particular in her inheritance from the Turnbull and Joyce estate. Venus may have been selected to serve in the big house to mind the young children, she herself was only 12 or 13 years old. She was later sold by herself to a plantation in Port Allen.
Charlotte was likely another enslaved house servant at MMP. She was originally from Mobile and came to Baton Rouge with her mistress, Constance Rochon Joyce who had accepted Charlotte as a wedding present from her mother Louise Rochon in 1788, when Constance married John Joyce. In 1803, Armand and Constance agreed to sell Charlotte with only one of her own two daughters, Rosette 8-years old, to New Orleans. Two months later they sold her other daughter, Frosina 13-years old, to another Baton Rouge plantation.

4. Master Bedroom – key topics include: Religion free and enslaved residents; 19th century health and hygiene e.g. bath time, yellow fever; house servants and ‘slave entrance’ e.g. 3 social tiers of slave population and prices of slaves, implications skilled and unskilled
a.) Holy water font and other Catholic artifacts. Lady of Sorrows ca. 1792. Discuss Code Noir (1724) and Spanish Code (1763), Catholicism the official religion in the colony. Code Noir included enslaved residents in the church, baptized and buried in consecrated grounds. Examples of baptized slaves e.g. and Pelagie buried in St. Joseph’s cemetery in Baton Rouge ca. 1827...Black Code 1808, American harsher slave laws, limits on manumissions. Children ten years or younger to stay with their natural mothers.

525 MMP Docent Manula 2005, p. 34
b.) Islam from Africa, e.g. Mahomet and Peggy and Abram and Fanny, Sally not by her name by Hall’s database.

c.) Health: Armand’s first wife died of yellow fever right after birth of daughter Augustine. Armand had a woman-slave nurse and care for his baby daughter. General belief to leave city NO during summer for health. Family letter recalls Augustine 5 years old cheerfully referred to having two mums, “white mum and black mum” who scolded her. Free and enslaved were treated by European trained doctors in Baton Rouge, Royal Hospital e.g. doctors Dr. Mahier who bought Venus...Bath time by the fireplace house servants Marcelitte, Basheba, or Judith, or her dtr. Clarinda helped clean and care for planter family – water basins and chamber pots.

d.) Morning “hot toddy”, rum served in bedroom, “slave entrance” [it really is not this but OK] Modeste or Marcelitte, for instance, could collect the toddies prepared by the enslaved cook, likely Alcindor, and carry them into the Master bedroom to serve to Armand or Constance.

e.) Three tiers of MMP slave population, house servants, skilled artisans (cook, baker, miller, cooper, blacksmith, weaver, carpenter, industrial workers, drivers, horsegroomer), and field hands. Prices for skilled higher than unskilled. Name a few, e.g. Mansfield horsegroomer, George cooper, Alcindor cook, Jayme baker, Julian butler, Lucy seamstress, Jack blacksmith, etc.

5. Girls’ Bedroom - Key topics include: 19th c. Boys and Girls education, enslaved residents education; Lucy the Seamstress, period clothing; Role of plantation mistress and house slaves; life long ties among free whites and enslaved blacks; Define “Creole” both Europeans and Africans could have Creole families in Louisiana.

[Room for Augustine (born 1799) and half sister Euphemie (born 1804)]

a.) Josephine Joyce attended Ursuline Convent in NO, played piano (in Salon) Armand purchased for her in NO; her mother, tutors or nuns religious instruction, basic reading, math, art, music, and sewing (mourning embroidery). Augustine attended school at Ursuline Convent. Fergus, Armand and Guy educated in France.

b.) By 1814-1816 Lucy skilled enslaved seamstress made clothing made for planter females, Lucy has a child who could be trained by mother to weave or sew. Lucy likely produced household textiles, cotton to fine silks, slave clothing possibly sewn at MMP.

c.) Venus or Sally’s dtr. Charlotte “nurses” for Augustine and/or Euphemie or other young planter children, slaves might have slept on the floor to attend the children through the night; Venus might have visited sister Juba using a Duplantier-written pass (slaves not allowed to learn to read or write) for her to go to Mt. Hope Plantation on Highland Road.

d.) Mistress of plantation’s domestic responsibilities included managing slaves in big house, kitchen, kitchen garden, weaving room.

e.) MMP slaves with African (Ibo and Wolof) origins, Duplantiers and Rochons French origins, define Creole. e.g. Cato a Creole of Jamaica with African parents,

526 June 21, 1804, Duplantier Letter
527 MMP Docent Manual, p. 35.
Constance Creole of Mobile with French parents. Harry and Dick Creoles of Baton Rouge with parents MMP slaves Abram and Fanny natives of West Africa.

f.) Other slaves with Armand Duplantier nearly entire lifetime e.g. Pompee (1760-1821), André (1762-past 1821), Onezime (1780-past1836), Josephine, Modeste (25 years or more). Narcise Duplantier & wife Catchie Duplantier into post bellum period, son Punk to 1870 w/ Duplantiers in Ward 9.

6. Back Entrance/Stair Hall – key topics include: African naming traditions at MMP; discuss attic space; armoire with ceramic utilitarian wares;

a.) Discuss back entrance and attic space uses, renovation from ladder to stairs, point out utilitarian mocha ware, imported from England inexpensive.

b.) Historical West Africa naming traditions were present at MMP in the 19th century among the enslaved community, e.g. Samedi (Saturday) and Lundi (Monday) are names of two enslaved men held by Armand Duplantier. Samedi and Lundi were field hands who likely labored in sugar cane fields. Discuss “Day Names” and the transition from African words, i.e. Quashee for Wednesday, to French words for days of the week shows the Creolization of the MMP population through language.

c.) Discuss Bungey’s name, a West Indies word for unattractive or poorly made, long time slave associated with Constance who changed his name to a proper French name, Auguste. Recall traditions of naming children for their fathers and other kin, and for god parents in the Catholic Church, tradition among African Creole and French Creole families (There are some minor distinctions among these two cultures in naming practices.)

d.) Tell the story of Bungey and Renty running long errands from Baton Rouge for Charles Norwood and how Renty’s parents, Rose and Hector, demanded their masters see their son promptly comes home, and how Renty ( a Turnbull held slave) asked for checkered shirt and how Turnbull and Norwood respected both of these requests. Also shows how Baton Rouge slaves knew each other from other plantations and interacted openly in town and from plantation to plantation.

7. Dining Room – key topics include: Multiple uses of dining room and decor, mealtimes and 19th century foodways, adult and children house servants and cook, Marquette de Lafayette 1825 visit,

a.) Discuss dining room as place for eating, socializing, larger delicate sewing projects, tutoring planter children. Dinner was the Mid-day meal served in this room and was prepared in the kitchen building by cooks, some of whom were enslaved men. Discuss Armand’s inclination to purchase male slave cooks and bakers, other Frenchmen in Louisiana did the same.

b.) Refer to buffet storage with locks, use symbolism of Mistress’s keys to describe her relationship with house slaves, e.g. Distribute spices, wines & liquors, silverware, linens to Julian male house servant who was with Armand since 1809 and Modeste who was with AD as early as 1798 to at least 1821 (23+ years); and
Basheba who was with Constance as early as 1798, Marcellite (as early as 1814) who set the tables and served in the dining room.

c.) Lucy’s child or Josephine’s child might have been the enslaved children sent to pull the rope to move the punkah fan over the dinner table or to carry away the table fly catcher to be cleaned.

d.) Discuss Armand’s relationship to Marquette de Lafayette and his visit to Baton Rouge in 1825, AD’s granddaughter Augustine (6-years old) dance with the General.

b.) Period watercolors show city landscape and busy waterway traffic circa 1820s when MMP had transitioned from a cotton plantation to a sugar plantation. Segway to Office.

8. Office – key topics include: 1820 US Census for MMP; Three languages at MMP; steamboat 1812; Louisiana Purchase and three ruling governments; Slave resistance and freedom stories; Hillin, Turnbull & Joyce, and Duplantier documents; Plantation business ventures

a.) MMP changed to a sugar plantation after Louisiana statehood, 1812. Discuss Louisiana Purchase 1803 to discuss demise of French and Spanish rule in BR and the permanent cultural influences remaining with BR population, free and enslaved.

André spoke French and Gur, Pompee spoke French and Kwa, Armand spoke French, Spanish and English.

b.) Change in governments affected Black Code. Discuss freedom stories, during Spanish rule slaves, until 1806, slaves could purchase their own freedom. Discuss Armand’s slave sells to accommodate manumissions,

e.g. In 1803 Bienville (fpc) purchased St. Luc, Mary and Eulalie, his family members from Armand to free them;

Armand sold Frosine to Hypolite Tivollier 1810 with the condition that she could earn money to purchase her own freedom from Tivollier\(^{528}\). Frosine was sold to Tivollier for 800 pesos. Frosine put up the first 200 pesos and all parties agreed that she would work for Tivollier to earn the remaining 600 pesos that would be given to Armand to pay the remaining balance on her sale.

c.) Runaway/resistance stories. The enslaved African born, American Will ran away from MMP after 1800. American Will was a carpenter who had a wife, Minta and four children. His wife and children were claimed by Catherine Turnbull in the division of the Turnbull & Joyce estate in 1800 who was living in Bayou Sara area, north of Baton Rouge. That is where American Will was found. Perhaps he was going north to see his family or on his way to the free states. In 1803, Armand and Constance recovered American Will and sold him to John Almond in Galvezton, south of Baton Rouge.

d.) Discuss who lived at MMP circa 1820, 8 free white planter family members, 27 enslaved agricultural workers, and 3 fpc.

\(^{528}\) SPWF v. 18 p. 188
e.) Armand Duplantier variety of business ventures: cotton, indigo, sugar cane, college, importation of African slaves 1806 and sale at MMP (19-200 slaves).
f.) Overseers included enslaved Celestin, and Andre and another leader among the enslaved workers was Pompee an industrial worker.
g.) How do we know who lived at MMP? Point out the Hillin, Turnbull and Joyce, and Duplantier succession papers and inventories as examples of public records. (Display to be provided to complement this interpretation strategy.)

9. Back Gallery – key topics to include: historical plantation landscape with structures; cotton gin to sugar house; Field workers names and kin
a.) Point out cash crop garden, Overseer House, Slave Cabin, Pigeonnier, Carpentry Shop, Weaving Room, Kitchen Garden, and Kitchen.
b.) Discuss people who would have occupied those structures.
   i. Cash Crop Garden: Samedi, Lundi, Lindor field hands
   ii. Overseer House: White man possibly with his family, employed by Duplantier
   iii. Slave Cabin, represent 16 cabins in the slave quarter housing for 50+
   e.g., Abram and Fanny’s family (5 children)
   Abram, of the Coast of Guinea about 50, having a hernia
   Fanny is wife of the Coast of Guinea about 40 years old
   and/or
   Cato, a man Creole of Jamaica, about 40 years old, “a good carpenter”
   Bess, his wife, Coast of Guinea about 45 years old
   and/or
   Bungey a man, a Creole about 20 years old
   iv. Pigeonnier: Mansfield a horse groomer and Charles a shoemaker
   v. Carpentry Shop: Cato, American Will, Sam, and their families
   vi. Carpentry Shop: Alexander, George, and Zeno as Cooper and Jacques as Blacksmith
   vii. Weaving Room: Lucy seamstress, laundress, weaver too.

10. Kitchen – key topics to include: Describe kitchen tools and furnishings; Discuss role of enslaved cooks, bakers, miller, fire boy/water boy; foodways and food preparation; refer to kitchen garden herb garden, medicinal herbs, fruits and vegetables for planter family; Slave quarter gardens supplement diet and as a revenue source
a.) Reproduction kitchen based on archeological evidence; Open hearth kitchen with bake oven and brick floor; food preparation for planter family and possibly for slave population during harvest times.
b.) Some of the cooks associated with Armand Duplantier’s households were African men including Alcindor, Isidore and Reimond. These men were purchased in NO and only Alcindor could have relocated to MMP after 1816 with Armand. Armand also purchased two male bakers in NO, Jayme and Fortunado. (This same 1809 slave purchase included Julian the Butler and Enriqueta with her two small children.) Discuss Alcindor’s story.
c.) Some cooks may have been female; cooks were assisted by older children to fetch water and keep the fire going in the kitchen.
d.) Kitchen garden; Armand Duplantier wrote his family in France asking for seeds including white beets and beets of all types, cabbage, carrots, yellow turnips and others in quantity, plain celery, lettuce and some flower bulbs and seeds.

Discuss what is growing there currently, mention culinary and medicinal herbs.

e.) Slave quarter gardens and poultry were allowed and used by enslaved residents to supplement rations of pork and corn. Also slaves before 1806 were allowed to sell or trade their produce, eggs, & pine knots.

NOTE: Use approx. 4 minutes a stop, 5 minutes to walk back and forth from Visitor Center = 45 minutes. You will find some rooms require less time than others, so you may shorten and lengthen your narration in each room as needed without exceeding 45 minutes total.

NOTE: I plan on supplementing this regular house tour with a brochure hand out to be given to visitors that is called a “house guide”. This may enable you to shorten your narration in some rooms.

NOTE: If visitors spend time in the Visitor Center engaged in an orientation activity, prior to their 45-minute tour this will also assist you in keeping your tour within the 45-minute time frame.

---

529 Duplantier Letters, January 10, 1796, LSU Special Collections
Appendix E

Informed Consent Form

1. Study title: Rethinking representations of slave life at Magnolia Mound Plantation Museum: An interpretation approach for museum educators
2. Performance site: Magnolia Mound Plantation
3. Investigator: Julia Rose, (225)……., JRose4@lsu.edu
4. Purpose of the study: The purpose of this research is to develop an educational interpretation pedagogy or strategy to teach about slave life in history museums.
5. Number of subjects: 4
6. Subject inclusion: Four museum workers who develop exhibits and who give tours about plantation slave life. These individuals are between 20 and 70 years old.
7. Study procedures: This is a qualitative research project. This action research study will be conducted in four phases over three to four months. In the first phase, the investigator will be trained by the subjects to give tours, and the investigator will observe subjects give tours with interpretations of slave life. In the second phase, subjects will discuss their ideas, interests, and concerns about leading tours that include slave life interpretations in a group setting with the investigator. In the third phase, the investigator will gather data from academic and archival research. In the fourth phase, the investigator will draft a new tour narrative for interpreting slave life at MMP based on data collected in the preceding three phases. The subjects will review the new tour narrative and their feedback will be used to revise the new tour narrative and inform the interpretation approach.
8. Benefits: This study will yield an in depth historical interpretation of slave life at the subjects’ museum that will augment the information in the current exhibits and expand the museum’s interpretation strategies. This study will yield an approach for museum workers and educators in other history museums across the nation to develop slave life interpretation strategies.
9. Risks: The study risk is the disclosure of subjects’ identities that may reflect those individuals’ personal positions and perceptions of American slavery. All personal data collected will be confidential. Every effort will be made to maintain subjects’ anonymity in the investigator’s records and journals. No subjects’ names or identifying information will be disclosed in subsequent publications from this study.
10. Right to Refuse: Subjects may choose to not participate or to withdraw from the study at any time with out penalty or loss of any benefit to which they might otherwise be entitled.
11. Privacy: Results of the study may be published, but no names or identifying information will be included in the publication. Subjects’ identity will remain confidential.

Signed Julia Rose, Investigator

Initials of Subject 1, 2, 3, 4

Date

This completed document will be kept confidential.
Vita

Julia Rose was born and raised in Queens, New York. She graduated from State University of New York at Albany (SUNYA) with a Bachelor of Arts with majors in fine art and education communication. While attending SUNYA, Julia interned at the Albany Institute of History and Art where she was introduced to the field of museum education. After interning at the Museum of American Folk Art in New York, New York, and the Nordic Heritage Museum in Seattle, Washington, Julia attended The George Washington University in Washington, D.C., interned at the National Portrait Gallery and earned a Master of Arts in Teaching degree in museum education. Julia began her professional career in museum education at the Historical Society of Washington, D.C. She then moved to Tennessee with her husband and children and worked at the Children’s Museum of Oak Ridge and then the East Tennessee Historical Society as curator of education. After resettling with her family in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Julia was curator of education at Magnolia Mound Plantation. She enrolled at Louisiana State University to further her education and study curriculum theory that can be applied to museum education.