
Using Primary Sources to Support Student-Centered Pedagogy

Blended Learning Conference

May 24, 2018

Franky Abbott, Samantha Gibson

Analyze a Primary Source







A photograph of African American and white gold prospectors working together at Spanish Flat, California, 1852, by photographer Joseph Blaney Starkweather.



California Gold Rush

On January 24, 1848, carpenter James Marshall discovered gold at Sutter's Mill, a sawmill on the American River in Coloma, California. This news quickly spread across the country and around the world, igniting the California Gold Rush.

[Show full overview](#)

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Time Period

Expansion and Reform (1801-1861)

Subjects

US History
Migration

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[SOURCE SET](#)

[ADDITIONAL RESOURCES](#)

[TEACHING GUIDE](#)



A map showing the gold mining region of California and routes for traveling there, 1849.



A print depicting a long line of men, women, and families waiting to depart for the gold regions of California, 1848.



An excerpt from *A trip across the plains, and life in California* by George Keller, 1851.



A letter from gold prospector Newton Chandler to his wife Jane after arriving in San Francisco, January 15, 1851.



A painting of California gold miners around a campfire, ca. 1850.



A portrait of surveyor Alonzo Doolittle posing with a bag of gold, ca. 1850.



A photograph of African American and white gold prospectors working together at Spanish Flat, California, 1852.



A photograph of a group of white and Chinese miners at a sluice box in Auburn Ravine, 1852.

Using DPLA Primary Source Sets

What is DPLA?

The **Digital Public Library of America** is a free, national digital library that provides access to millions of materials from libraries, archives, and museums across the country.

Currently: 21 million items from 3,000 institutions.

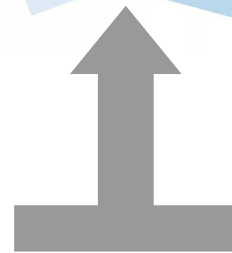


Smithsonian
Institution

+



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DPLA Primary Source Sets

<https://dp.la> > Primary Source Sets

Or

<https://dp.la/primary-source-sets>

DPLA Primary Source Sets

Primary Source Sets

Primary source collections exploring topics in history, literature, and culture developed by educators — complete with teaching guides for class use.

All Subjects ▼

All Time Periods ▼

Sort by Recently Added ▼



California Gold Rush

Expansion and Reform (1801-1861)
US History, Migration



Treaty of Versailles and the End of World War I

The Emergence of Modern America (1890-1930)
US History, World History, Law and Government



Cotton Gin and the Expansion of Slavery

Revolution and the New Nation (1754-1820s),
Expansion and Reform (1801-1861)
US History, Science and Technology, African Americans

What are the DPLA Primary Source Sets?

- **140 topic-based “highlight reels”**
Adaptable collections of primary source images, documents, audio/video clips, and more



Frank Lloyd Wright and Modern American Architecture

The Emergence of Modern America (1890-1930)
US History, Arts



Theodore Dreiser's *Sister Carrie* and the Urbanization of Chicago

The Development of the Industrial United States (1870-1900), The Emergence of Modern America (1890-1930)

US History, American Literature



Eugenics Movement in the United States

The Emergence of Modern America (1890-1930)
US History, Science and Technology, Social Movements

What are the DPLA Primary Source Sets?

- **By Instructors, For Instructors & Students**
Created by secondary and collegiate instructors on DPLA's Education Advisory Committee



Women and the Temperance Movement
The Development of the Industrial United States (1870-1900)
US History, Social Movements, Women



Fake News in the 1890s: Yellow Journalism
The Emergence of Modern America (1890-1930)
US History



Reservations, Resistance, and the Indian Reorganization Act, 1900-1940
US History, Law and Government, Native Americans

What are the DPLA Primary Source Sets?

- **Interdisciplinary topics**

Topics align with US History, American Literature, World History, History of Science & Technology, and Art History



Spanish Missions in California

Revolution and the New Nation (1754-1820s)

US History, World History, Native Americans



The Fire Next Time by James Baldwin

Postwar United States (1945 to early 1970s)

American Literature, African Americans, Social Movements



The United Farm Workers and the Delano Grape Strike

Postwar United States (1945 to early 1970s)

US History, Asian Americans, Labor History, Latino Americans, Social Movements

Finding the right DPLA Primary Source Set

Primary Source Sets

Primary source collections exploring topics in history, literature, and culture developed by educators — complete with teaching guides for class use.

All Subjects



All Time Periods



Sort by Recently Added



California Gold Rush

Expansion and Reform (1801-1861)

US History, Migration



Treaty of Versailles and the End of World War I

The Emergence of Modern America (1890-1930)

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Cotton Gin and the Expansion of Slavery

Revolution and the New Nation (1754-1820s),
Expansion and Reform (1801-1861)

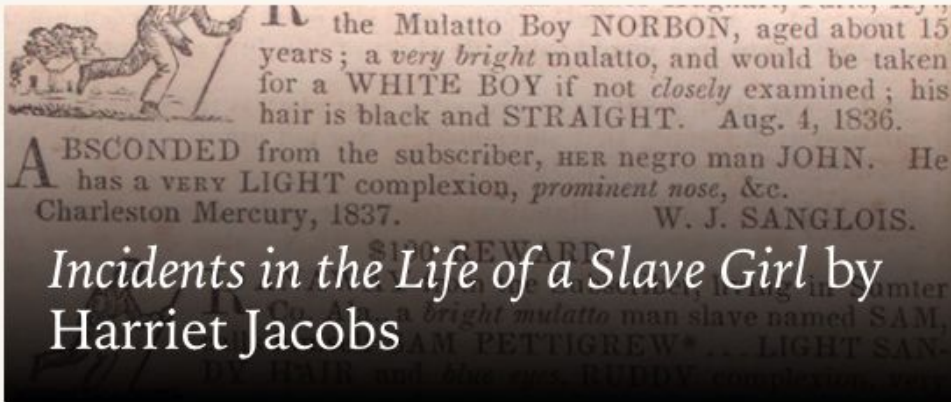
US History, Science and Technology, African Americans

Quick Task:

Find the Primary Source Sets about US History topics from the 1950s and 1960s, with the oldest topic listed first.

What is the first topic on the page?

Main page of a Primary Source Set



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Samantha Gibson, Digital Public Library of America

Time Period

Civil War and Reconstruction (1850-1877)

Subjects

US History
American Literature
Women
African Americans

[Cite this set](#)

In 1861, Harriet Jacobs published *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, an account of her experience of enslavement in Edenton, North Carolina. Jacobs used the pseudonym Linda Brent and changed all of names in the book to protect the identity and safety

[Show full overview](#)

[SOURCE SET](#)

[ADDITIONAL RESOURCES](#)

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Excerpts from *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* by Harriet Jacobs, under pseudonym Linda Brent, 1861.



Title page from *The Deeper Wrong or Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, the edition of Jacobs' work published in London in 1862.



A portrait of Lydia Maria Child, an abolitionist who helped Harriet Jacobs to prepare her narrative for publication.



A runaway slave advertisement placed by Dr. James Norcom, enslaver of Harriet Jacobs, 1830.

Source page within a set

A runaway slave advertisement placed by Dr. James Norcom, enslaver of Harriet Jacobs, 1830.



Dr. James Norcom, Jacobs' enslaver, placed this runaway slave advertisement in the newspaper for a man named Derry. Five years later, when she disappeared, Norcom placed an ad for her return as well, offering \$100 as a reward.

Cite this item

Courtesy of University of North Carolina at Greensboro via North Carolina Digital Heritage Center.

[View item information](#)

[View in North Carolina Digital Heritage Center](#)

TIPS FOR STUDENTS

For this source, consider:

- the author's point of view
- the author's purpose
- historical context
- audience

Primary Source Set Teaching Guide

Discussion questions

1. Compare the titles given to the **1861 US edition** and the **1862 British edition** of Jacobs' book. What is the significance of the phrase "the deeper wrong"?
2. Dr. Norcom's advertisement for Harriet's return in 1835 offered four times as much reward as this **ad for Derry**. Given the details of Jacobs' life as recounted in *Incidents*, why do you think Norcom valued her so highly?
3. One of the themes Jacobs describes in *Incidents* is the constant threat slavery posed of separating families (i.e. chapter three or Harriet's conversation with Fanny in chapter thirty). Using her narrative and the **illustration from *Anti-Slavery Almanac***, the **drawing of the slave market**, and the **bill of sale for Margaret**, explain why this was a powerful argument for the abolitionist movement.
4. Jacobs describes not only her experience of sexual predation by her enslaver but, in chapter six, how common it was to see enslaved children with light skin, often nearly "white," that were the products of these forced relationships. How do the **photograph of Isaac and Rosa**, the **runaway slave advertisements**, and the **broadside advertising a slave auction** reflect American anxiety about enslaved people with light skin tones? How might the **photograph of Isaac and Rosa** have increased white Northerners' support for the Civil War and Emancipation in 1863?
5. **Francis Jackson's letter** recounts how Thomas Sims, who had escaped slavery to freedom in Boston, was re-enslaved under the auspices of the Fugitive Slave Law. How did the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law impact Jacobs, her children, and her brother? What does Jackson's letter reveal about the tension between abolitionist communities and government power when it came to the lives of men and women who had escaped slavery?

Classroom activities

Jacobs and her **brother John** each wrote about their upbringing, enslavement, and escapes to freedom. Ask students to choose another

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Teacher Tools

 [Share to Google Classroom](#)

 [Print this Guide](#)

Primary source analysis

For each source, ask students to indicate:

- the author's point of view
- the author's purpose
- historical context
- audience

For inquiry-based learning, ask students to:

- explain how a source tells its story and/or makes its argument
- explain the relationships between sources
- compare and contrast sources in terms of point of view and method
- support conclusions and interpretations with evidence
- identify questions for further investigation

Additional tools

- [Document Analysis Worksheets from the National Archives](#)
- [Using Primary Sources from the Library of Congress](#)

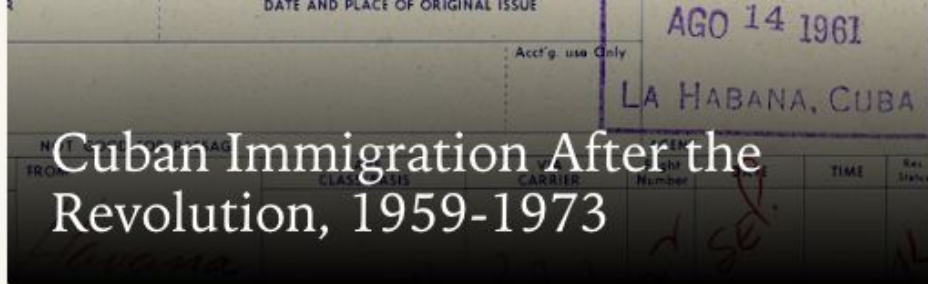
Implementation Ideas

Sample Set: Cuban Immigration After the Revolution

Find this set at:

<https://dp.la/primary-source-sets/cuban-immigration-after-the-revolution-1959-1973>

Or use filters to locate it!



At the end of a six-year armed conflict called the Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro's 26th of July Movement ousted Cuban President Fulgencio Batista on January 1, 1959, and ushered in a new government. Within months, as Castro began to implement policies and align with the communist Soviet Union, hundreds of thousands fled Cuba for the United States. Most were educated members of the upper and middle classes. Many of these immigrants, termed “exiles” and “refugees,” believed their stay in the United States was temporary because Castro’s government would be short-lived. As Castro’s regime persisted, they realized their flight could be permanent. Pushed out by the consequences of the Revolution, the influx of refugees swelled the Cuban population of the United States from 79,000 in 1960 to 439,000 by 1970. Cubans settled across the country, with the most significant community in Miami, Florida, followed by Union City, New Jersey.

The Cuban Revolution occurred during the Cold War—a period of post-World War II tension between the Eastern Bloc, led by the communist Soviet Union, and the Western Bloc, led by the democratic United States. Responding to Castro’s Cuba as a communist threat close to home, the US government offered Cuban exiles asylum, financial support, and pathways to permanent residency. The Cuban Refugee Program was created by President Dwight Eisenhower in 1960 and expanded by President John F. Kennedy through the “Migration and Refugee Assistance Act” in 1962. It provided financial assistance, health care, educational loans, resettlement, and care of unaccompanied children for the 1,500-2,000 Cubans arriving weekly. The United States also supported Cuban exodus programs: Operation Pedro Pan (1960-1962), which brought 14,000 unaccompanied children, and the Freedom Flights (1965-1973), during which the US negotiated with the Cuban government to allow relatives of Cuban refugees to relocate. In 1966, the Cuban Adjustment Act allowed Cuban refugees who came after the Revolution and had lived in the United States for two years to pursue permanent resident status. This primary source set explores the experiences of Cuban immigrants motivated by the Revolution—why they fled, how they arrived, and who supported and resisted their resettlement.

Time Period

Postwar United States (1945 to early 1970s)

Subjects

US History
Latino Americans
Migration

[Cite this set](#)

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A clip from a 1963 film, *Cuba: World Verdict*, produced by the US Information Agency about early responses to the 1959 Cuban Revolution.



A news clip of a Cuban official discussing his changing opinions of Fidel Castro and the Cuban Revolution, October 25, 1960.



A pamphlet entitled "Castro Admits Cuba is Communist," published by the Truth About Cuba Committee, December 1961.



A script from a news story about four Cuban refugees in Fort Worth, Texas that aired on December 21, 1961.



A Pan American Airlines ticket for Margarita Lora, who left Cuba as part of Operation Pedro Pan in August 14, 1961.



A translated excerpt from a 2008 interview with Cuban Albertina O'Farrill who worked for refugee initiatives including Operation Pedro Pan.



A photograph of the Cuban refugee Sanz family at home in Van Nuys, California, October 2, 1962.



An excerpt from a US Senate subcommittee hearing on "Cuban Refugee Problems" with testimony from Dr. José Miró Cardona, 1961.



A speech about Cuban refugees in Miami-Dade County to the Downtown Rotary Club by Marshall Wise of the US Cuban Refugee Center, May 2, 1963.



An excerpt from a publication about the number of political prisoners in Cuba created by the Truth About Cuba Committee, April 1964.



A photograph of Cuban refugees arriving in Miami on a Freedom Flight.



A photograph of a family reuniting at a Cuban refugee camp in Miami, Florida, 1966.



A photograph of a Cuban American restaurant in Miami, Florida, 1966.



A 1969 photograph of a bust of José Martí in Union City, New Jersey.



A map titled "Fidel Castro's 10-year Reign in Cuba," published by the Civil Education Service, 1969.

Discussion questions

1. Using evidence from the clip of *Cuba: World Verdict* and the [news clip of a Cuban official](#), how did Cubans and world leaders respond to Castro's Cuban Revolution in its earliest days? How did they understand the Revolution in the context of Cuba's history?
2. According to the [news clip of a Cuban official](#) and the pamphlet "[Castro Admits Cuba is Communist](#)," why did international perception of the Cuban Revolution change after several months? How did the tensions of the Cold War period inform the way people saw the situation in Cuba? How did Cold War tensions impact Cuban immigration to the United States?
3. Compare and contrast the experience of the young men described in the [news story about four Cuban refugees](#) with the children of Operation Pedro Pan described in the [Pan American Airlines ticket for Margarita Lora](#) and the [interview with Albertina O'Farrill](#).
4. According to [Albertina O'Farrill](#), what motivated Operation Pedro Pan? What were its goals and consequences?
5. The pamphlet entitled "[Castro Admits Cuba is Communist](#)," [news story about four Cuban refugees](#), the [photograph of the Cuban refugee Sanz family](#), and the [photograph of a family reuniting at a Cuban refugee camp](#) were all published during the 1960s and circulated to members of the American public. What stories do they tell about Cuban refugees during this period? How might they have shaped American perceptions of both Castro's Cuba and Cuban refugees?
6. Read the excerpt from a [US Senate subcommittee hearing on "Cuban Refugee Problems"](#) closely. Why did the US government provide so much asylum and support to Cubans fleeing Castro's regime? According to Dr. José Miró Cardona, what challenges were created by the influx of Cuban refugees by 1961?
7. Read [Marshall Wise's speech about Cuban refugees](#) closely. Which specific community concerns about the growing number of Cuban refugees does Wise respond to? What is Wise's argument and what evidence does he use to make it? How does it compare and contrast with the ideas expressed by Dr. José Miró Cardona in the excerpt from a [US Senate subcommittee hearing on "Cuban Refugee Problems"](#)?
8. The pamphlet "[Castro Admits Cuba is Communist](#)," and the [publication about political prisoners in Cuba](#) were produced by the Truth About Cuba Committee, a group of Cuban exiles in Miami. From these sources, what can you infer about the political ideas of this committee? Who was the audience for these publications and what kinds of support are they designed to garner?
9. How do the photographs of [Cuban refugees arriving in Miami on a Freedom Flight](#) and a [family reuniting at a Cuban refugee camp](#) depict the experience of Cuban refugees in the

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Teacher Tools

 [Print this Guide](#)

Primary source analysis



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Additional tools

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Sample Questions

7. Read *Marshall Wise's speech about Cuban refugees* closely. Which specific community concerns about the growing number of Cuban refugees does Wise respond to? What is Wise's argument and what evidence does he use to make it? How does it compare and contrast with the ideas expressed by Dr. José Miró Cardona in the excerpt from a *US Senate subcommittee hearing on "Cuban Refugee Problems"*?
8. The pamphlet "*Castro Admits Cuba is Communist*," and the *publication about political prisoners in Cuba* were produced by the Truth About Cuba Committee, a group of Cuban exiles in Miami. From these sources, what can you infer about the political ideas of this committee? Who was the audience for these publications and what kinds of support are they designed to garner?

Classroom activities

1. *Explore and annotate bias in a source:* Divide students into small groups to explore the map titled “**Fidel Castro’s 10-year Reign in Cuba,**” a wall map of Cuba for the social studies classroom published in 1969. Ask each group to identify five features of the map that show bias that shaped social studies students’ perceptions of Cuba in the 1970s. For each of these features, students should create an annotation on the map (with post-it notes on a printed map or in a basic image editing program on a digital map) that highlight the feature, explain the bias, and indicate the perception it would help shape. Once all groups have identified five features and annotated them, each group should display their map and give a short presentation explaining their findings.
2. *Place events on a timeline:* Using the sources in this set, ask students to create a timeline of important events in this period of Cuban immigration to the United States, starting with the Cuban Revolution in 1959 and ending with the last Freedom Flights in 1973. Then ask students to research the Cuban Missile Crisis and place it on this timeline. Reflecting on the complete timeline, students should discuss the ways the Cuban Missile Crisis impacted Cuban immigration in a brief writing assignment, using sources from this set as evidence for their arguments.
3. *Research changes in Cuban immigration over time:* Independently or in small groups, students should conduct outside research in DPLA and other sources on one of two major events in Cuban immigration to the United States that occurred after the 1970s: the Mariel boatlift (1980) or the Elián González custody battle (1999-2000). Students should then compare the event they chose to 1960s Cuban immigration as depicted in the sources in this set by answering the following questions: Who were the Cuban refugees and why did they come? How were the refugees received by different members of the American public? What was the United States government’s attitude towards Cuba during this period expressed by federal policy and lawmakers? Students can present their findings in individual essays, graphic organizers designed to compare events, or short presentations.

Some implementation ideas from feedback...

Traditional

Adapted

Remixed

Questions/Gaps

Additions

As models

Your Turn! (10 mins)

Select a set that is of interest to you personally or for your teaching. Examine the overview, sources, and teaching guide.

Share your set with a partner. Discuss a specific idea, source, question, or activity that caught your eye from the set. How would you use it with students? In which course(s)?

Remember your ideas for when we share as a group.

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X Clear all filters

Refine your search

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3

Subject

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Slavery

Turner, Nat, 1800?-1831

Slave insurrections

African Americans

Turner, Nat

History

Virginia

United States--History--1815-1861

United States

Portraits

North Carolina--History--Societies, etc

African American

7

6

4

4

3

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2

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2

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2

2

2

Date

+

Location

+

Language

+

Contributing Institution

+

Partner

+



Nat Turner

ca. 1945 · William H. Johnson, born Florence, SC 1901-died Central Islip, NY 1970

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The discovery of Nat Turner

c1894-1903 · Andrews, Elisha Benjamin (1844-1917)

[View Full Item](#) in Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Jean Blackwell Hutson Research and Reference Division. The New York Public Library



Bible belonging to Nat Turner

1830s

A small Bible, missing its front and back cover. It has lost pages at the beginning and end of the text, losing the entirety of Genesis and parts of Leviticus and Revelation. The first page contains L...

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The Confessions of Nat Turner

Title page from and edition of The Confessions of Nat Turner. New York: C. Brown, 1831.

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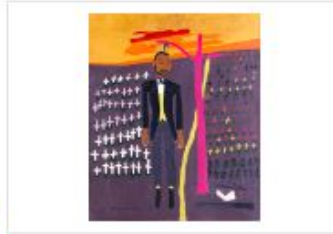
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X Clear all filters

Refine your search



Type	—
image	20
text	3
Subject	—
Slavery	7
Turner, Nat, 1800?-1831	6
Slave insurrections	4
African Americans	4
Turner, Nat	3
History	3
Virginia	2
United States--History--1815-1861	2
United States	2
Portraits	2
North Carolina--History--Societies, etc	2
African American	2
Date	+
Location	+
Language	+
Contributing Institution	+
Partner	+



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Refine your search

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Date —

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and Year



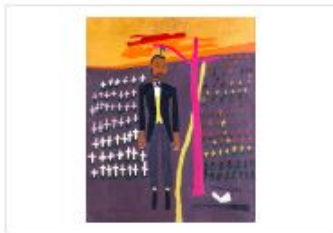
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Language +

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Nat Turner

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Date —

Between Year

and Year

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Language +

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Partner +



Nat Turner

ca. 1945 · William H. Johnson, born Florence, SC 1901-died Central Islip, NY 1970

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The discovery of Nat Turner

c1894-1903 · Andrews, Elisha Benjamin (1844-1917)

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Bible belonging to Nat Turner

[Cite this item](#)



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Created Date 1830s

Description A small Bible, missing its front and back cover. It has lost pages at the beginning and end of the text, losing the entirety of Genesis and parts of Leviticus and Revelation. The first page contains Leviticus 4:32 through Leviticus 6:2.

Partner [Smithsonian Institution](#)

Contributing Institution [National Museum of African American History and Culture](#)

Subjects [Slavery](#)
[United States--History--1815-1861](#)
[Turner, Nat](#)
[Religious groups](#)
[African American](#)
[African Americans](#)
[History](#)

Location [Southampton County, Virginia, United States, North and Central America](#)

Catalog Data

Add to My List

PUBLISHED BY: Unidentified [Q](#)

OWNED BY: Nat Turner, American, 1800 - 1831 [Q](#)

MEDIUM: ink on paper (fiber product)

DIMENSIONS: H x W x D: 4 15/16 x 3 1/2 x 1 1/2 in. (12.5 x 8.9 x 3.8 cm)

TYPE: Bibles

PLACE USED: Southampton County, Virginia, United States, North and Central America

DATE: 1830s

DESCRIPTION: A small Bible, missing its front and back cover. It has lost pages at the beginning and end of the text, losing the entirety of Genesis and parts of Leviticus and Revelation. The first page contains Leviticus 4:32 through Leviticus 6:2.

TOPIC: African American [Q](#)
 Religious groups [Q](#)
 Slavery [Q](#)
 United States--History--1815-1861 [Q](#)

CREDIT LINE: Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of Maurice A. Person and Noah and Brooke Porter

OBJECT NUMBER: 2011.28

RESTRICTIONS & RIGHTS: Public domain

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CLASSIFICATION: [Slavery and Freedom Objects](#)
[Documents and Published Materials-Published Works](#)
[Religious and Sacred Objects](#)

EXHIBITION: [Slavery and Freedom](#)

ON VIEW: [NMAAHC \(1400 Constitution Ave NW\), National Mall Location, Concourse 3, C3 053](#)



x Close



Search Tips (also on website)

Exact phrases: enclose with quotation marks

Boolean operators: Combine multiple search terms using OR or NOT. (Default behavior is AND.)

Wildcards: Use an asterisk (*) as a substitute for any collection of characters within a word.

Remember that no search engine is Google (except Google).

Sample Searches

Woman and women in keywords will get different results.
Wom*n can solve this!

Ellis Island vs. "Ellis Island" - what do you see?

Consider all the different ways you might search for World War II using keywords. (World War 2 vs. World War II vs. ww2....etc.)

Quick Search Activity

Using DPLA search effectively is all about the keywords.

For example, how might you approach the task of searching DPLA for items related to the artist (formerly) known as Prince?

Wrap-Up

What's a thing of value that you learned today?

Contact Us!

education@dp.la

@dpla