

Mammy Monuments

Selected Bibliography with Student Annotations

Blight, David. *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory*. Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2001.

Race and Reunion presents the conflicting viewpoints on race that existed in the wake of the Civil War. This can best be seen in the way different groups commemorated race in the decades following the war, in both the North and the South. For example, the book shows how African Americans and women were heavily involved in the creation of what we know now as Memorial Day. On the other hand, the book also presents how many people in the south were resistant to change following the war, with many groups like the United Daughters of the Confederacy influencing public opinion. The actions and beliefs of both groups are crucial in understanding monuments of the era. How race and gender factor into the creation of monuments is another crucial aspect that this book brings up.

Boulukos, George. *The Grateful Slave*. Cambridge University Press, 2008.

The Grateful Slave provides an insightful look into the evolution of race and the history of slavery in the eighteenth century. Boulukos is among many to believe that the practice of slavery, in particular the enslavement of Africans by Europeans, was facilitated by race, in turn, allowing race to later justify slavery rather than being a means behind its emergence. Boulukos's distinction between xenophobia and racism is strongly backed by insightful arguments that make clear sense to a reader like myself who may not understand this chronological ordering of xenophobia/racism and slavery. Boulukos's abundant evidence effectively supports his chronological "domino effect" claims. This book also provides an interesting perception of Slavery. How Europeans at the time could honestly believe that they were "saving" the Africans is bizarre. Reading this book made me wonder what Africa would be like today if slavery never occurred.

Cox, Karen L. *Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003.

Karen Cox's *Dixie's Daughters* examines the role of women, specifically those in the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC), in the mythicization of the Lost Cause, and how this process was used to increase white women's political power. The Lost Cause asserts that during the Civil War the South did not fight for slavery, but for states' rights. This myth illustrates slavery as a positive institution, with a "civilizing" effect on African Americans. The UDC perpetuated the Lost Cause via the creation of educational tools, caring for former veterans, and erecting monuments to Confederate veterans as well as "loyal" slaves. These slave monuments only strengthened the myth that African Americans were content in slavery. The UDC efforts to rewrite history extended to women's organizations in the north as well, largely due to the Great Migration, when racism ran rampant after a large influx of newly freed African Americans settled north.

Glazier, Jack. *Been Coming Through Some Hard Times: Race, History, and Memory in Western Kentucky*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2015.

Jack Glazier's book *Been Coming Through some Hard Times: Race, History, and Memory in Western Kentucky* explores the memory of race from the perspective of Hopkinsville Kentucky. Glazier covers everything from slavery and freemen before the civil war up to the present-day controversies over confederate monuments. His in-depth look at the town's history provides unique insights into the history of memory in the United States and how that memory was being fundamentally altered by reconstruction sentiments and Jim Crow. The book also expresses the viewpoints of the local townspeople from both today and in many periods of American history. From ex-slaves in Liberia to highways named after Jefferson, Glazier delivers a wealth of analysis and information on the topic of race and memory in the United States.

Harris, Michael D. *Colored Pictures: Race and Visual Representation*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003.

Michael Harris argues that much of our understanding of race comes from deliberate racially coded messages. This applies to paintings but also to science (such as phrenology) and even advertising. The latter is the subject of his chapter on Aunt Jemima, the ubiquitous stand in for Mammies. It is true that Aunt Jemima was portrayed by an actual Black woman, but the character portrayed in this advertisement had an invented past made up to idolize plantation life. Aunt Jemima serves as a case study for other mammies. The typical archetype of a mammy is a large, post-menopausal woman with a smile and work attire. She is completely asexual which Harris argues is to prevent her from being a threat to white hierarchy. Not just a non-threat but having big smile is meant to convey a sense of loyalties to her white masters. None of these messages went unnoticed by the black community. Harris recounts a mother who told her daughters to never wear a rag on their head, less they be identified as a mammy. In later years Aunt Jemima became a target for black power movements that sought to subvert the racist messages of loyalty, submissiveness, and/or asexuality. Harris argues, however, that subversion strategies often deployed a masculine perspective such as smashing out of the box or firing a machine gun. These failed to reclaim the feminine sexuality that is robbed from Mammy. Overall, however, the project of reclaiming black identity from racial stereotypes has been a positive one.

Harris, Trudier. *From Mammies to Militants: Domesticity in Black American Literature*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1982.

From Mammies to Militants provides an analysis of how black women were viewed as domestic house workers throughout much of the American twentieth century. The analysis is sourced via statistics and interpreting trends in literature. Trudier limits her focus to how black women were viewed in mammy roles, rather than other facets of the economy or their life, unless those dynamics intersected with the domestic role. Over the course of the book, Trudier is able to paint a clear picture showing there was a cultural amalgamation of black women and the domestic worker. From here, there is the idea that a portrayal of black domestic working women was synonymous with black women. There is also the idea that this job position was reductive to a

black woman's personhood. This book is most helpful when used to analyze how American society viewed black women domestic workers.

Hudson, Lynn M. *The Making of "Mammy Pleasant": A Black Entrepreneur in Nineteenth-Century San Francisco*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2003.

The Making of "Mammy Pleasant" tells the story of Mary Ellen Pleasant, a successful African American business owner and abolitionist, and how she was turned into a mammy figure in the 1900s. Many aspects of her life were relatively unknown, as she did not reveal much about them until the years closely preceding her death. Due to this uncertainty, it was relatively easy for twentieth-century biographers to paint a different picture of how she lived. This could possibly be the case for Dinah's story as well, as most of her life is relatively unknown. It is not unreasonable to think some details about her may have been tweaked to better categorize her into the mammy stereotype.

Wallace-Sanders, Kimberly. *Mammy: A Century of Race, Gender, and Southern Memory*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008.

Wallace-Sanders aims to describe, provide context for, and shed light on the whitewashing of southern history and slavery in the U.S. Providing numerous examples, Wallace-Sanders describes the plantation literature of the mid-19th century South and its attempt to soften the rough edges of slavery. She highlights the staying power of the faithful slave stereotype in commercial memory through products like Aunt Jemima syrup, and how harmful continuing to represent that caricature can be. She also discusses women's roles – specifically that of the United Daughters of the Confederacy and their work in erecting monuments that sympathize with the Confederacy and its cause, which at the same time undermines African American attempts to prove the evils of slavery. Additionally, and relevant to our project at Stenton, Wallace-Sanders shows that Dinah is actually a very common female slave name in plantation literature.

Wallace-Sanders, Kimberly, ed. *Skin Deep, Spirit Strong: The Black Female Body in American Culture*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002.

Black women and their bodies have always been an enigma in mass culture. *Skin Deep, Spirit Strong* dives into the history of the black female body, and what makes them powerful. It includes stories about different women, what their bodies meant to them, and the power they believed they held. Many of the women profiled believed that their bodies did not have any meaning, like Audre Lorde who believed that her body did not exist at all. That she believed this was an expression of how she felt society had erased her. This can be connected to Dinah's story and how she is viewed in the history of Stenton. Dinah's story represents the same complexity that black women have always encountered in trying to locate themselves in American society.