

Through the Veil: Double Consciousness and Labor in Eighteenth and  
Nineteenth Century Southern New England

Frederick William Lumb

Williamsburg, Virginia

B. S. Mercyhurst College, 2000

A Thesis presented to the Graduate Faculty  
of the College of William and Mary in Candidacy for the Degree of  
Master of Arts

Department of Anthropology

The College of William and Mary  
May, 2009

# APPROVAL PAGE

This Thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the degree of

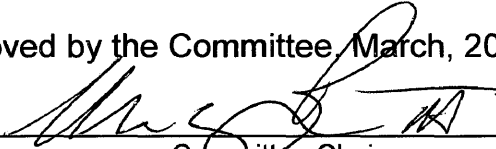
Master of Arts



---

Frederick William Lumb

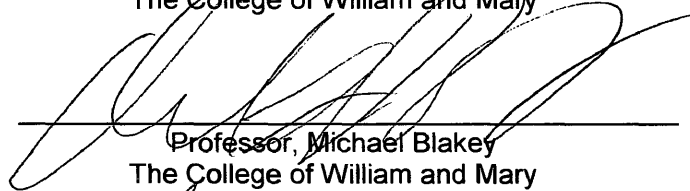
Approved by the Committee, March, 2009



---

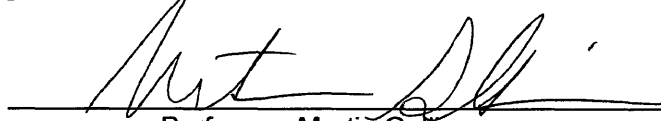
Committee Chair

Research Professor, Marley Brown III  
The College of William and Mary



---

Professor, Michael Blakey  
The College of William and Mary



---

Professor, Martin Galivan  
The College of William and Mary

## ABSTRACT PAGE

In the past, the issue of slavery and racism in New England has been largely ignored. Towards the end of the twentieth century this issue has been revisited by a number of scholars. Their research has shown that slavery was common in New England during the colonial era and that African Americans were discriminated against and economically oppressed throughout the early national period as well. Two archaeological sites in New England were examined in order to ascertain whether double consciousness as defined by W.E.B. Du Bois may be visible in the archaeological record of these two sites. The first site is a colonial quarter for enslaved people in Medford, Massachusetts. The second site is the remains of an early nineteenth century tenant house in Saunterstown, Rhode Island. The examination of the artifacts and their contexts found at the two sites has found that it is likely that although both sites were from two different time periods and the inhabitants of the sites faced different situations, there is evidence that double consciousness was present in how the sites' inhabitants perceived the world around them.

## Table of Contents

<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	iv
<b>Chapter 1: Introduction</b> .....	1
<b>Chapter 2: The Commoditization of African Labor in New England</b> .....	12
Gradual Emancipation.....	17
Antebellum.....	21
<b>Chapter 3: Theoretical Considerations</b> .....	29
Marxist Theory.....	29
Double Consciousness.....	35
<b>Chapter 4: The Isaac Royall House</b> .....	39
Archaeology.....	41
<b>Chapter 5: The Casey Farm</b> .....	48
<b>Chapter 6: Conclusion</b> .....	57
<b>References</b> .....	64
<b>Vita</b> .....	72

## Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to thank my fiancé Courtney. Her love and support for me has not wavered through the toughest of times and I cannot begin to express my appreciation for everything that she has done and continues to do for me.

I would also like to thank my Thesis Committee for their guidance on this difficult project. Dr. Marley Brown III has helped me on this from the beginning and his advice has been invaluable. Dr. Michael Blakey helped to point out the limitations of what I can do with the information that I have, and I am grateful to him for teaching me to be more critical of the information that I come in contact with. Dr. Martin Gallivan helped educate me on complex issues relating to archaeological theory which helped me shape my theoretical perspective for this project.

Finally, I would like to thank my late mother, Lina Lumb, who never let me give up when things were tough.

## Chapter 1: Introduction

Although, the first permanent English settlement in North America was at Jamestown, Virginia, the people of the modern United States tend to associate the Pilgrims of Plymouth Massachusetts with the beginnings of the country as we know it (Deetz 2000: 9). The history of the founding of New England is largely influenced by the ideology of religious freedom, equality, and liberty. Unfortunately, if any of these ideals existed in the minds of the first colonists, they only applied to a select few in the early days of colonial New England. Within sixteen years of the landing of the *Mayflower*, the English settlers were at war with a tribe of the indigenous inhabitants of North America and eventually, many Native Americans became enslaved (Moore 1866: 3-15). It was not long before New England joined their southern neighbors in the active involvement of the enslavement of people from Africa. During the colonial period, southern New England played a very significant part in the trans-Atlantic slave trade (Coughtry 1981: 61).

Although not as extensively studied as slavery in the south, slavery in the north, and New England especially, has been examined more closely by modern scholars (Garman 1994, Fitts 1998, Koo 2007, Gidwitz 2005). Although the North became a center for industrialization in the nineteenth century, it was a largely agricultural economy before this time. Many New England plantations were worked by indentured servants or enslaved people (Fitts 1998: 81-97). Although the existence of the institution of slavery in New England is rarely denied by historians, it

was until recently generally considered to have existed for only a very short period of time and executed with the utmost kindness and fairness (Melish 1998: 10-15).

The question of New England slavery has been revisited by a number of scholars in the twentieth century. Before this time, the study of slavery and its history in New England was rare, but not unheard of. In 1866, George H. Moore wrote a harsh critique and history of slavery in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. In the introduction he writes:

The stains which slavery has left on the proud escutcheon even of Massachusetts, are quite as significant of its hideous character as the satanic defiance of God and Humanity which accompanied the cornerstone of the Slave-holders' Confederacy (Moore, 1866: 2).

In 1893, George Sheldon published an article in *New England Magazine* about slavery in Deerfield, Massachusetts (Sheldon 1893). Some scholarly works have also examined the underlying concept of racism that seems to be a prerequisite for institutional slavery in the Americas (Fitts 1998: 32-47). The position that the African people were inferior to the European colonists was present in New England even after most New England states outlawed slavery and the slave trade (Fitts 1998: 32-47).

New England slavery and institutionalized racism has been studied more extensively in recent years. William Pierson examined the relationships between the enslaved and their enslavers in colonial New England. He developed a theory of Resistant Accommodation that sought to explain these relations in terms of conformity to certain European American lifestyles versus ways in which enslaved people resisted the control of those who oppressed them (Pierson 1988, Garman

1998). Jay and Jamie Coughtry published detailed information on the role of Rhode Island in the slave trade as well as information regarding African American burial records in Rhode Island (1981, 1958). Ann and Dickran Tashjian studied an African American cemetery in Newport, Rhode Island's common burying ground (1989). Robert Fitts studied the documentary and historical records in order to shed light on the intricacies of enslaved life in New England. His research exposed many details regarding the cruelty of slavery in the north (1998). Joanne Melish has done extensive historical research on the period of gradual emancipation in New England. (1998). Warren Perry has conducted documentary research and archaeological excavations of places in New England that are connected to slavery (Gidwitz 2005). James Garman has studied slavery in Newport and in the East bay section of Rhode Island (Garman 1998, 1994, 1992). These people are only a portion of the individuals who have recently studied the issue of race and labor in colonial and early national New England, but their work has helped change what many people have thought about slavery in the north and their research has provided a solid base for this project to emerge from.

The primary work that is used to examine New England slavery in this thesis is Alexandra Chan's dissertation entitled: *The Slaves of Colonial New England: Discourses of Colonialism and Identity at the Royall House, Medford, Massachusetts, 1732-1775*. This dissertation examines the results of three seasons of fieldwork at the Isaac Royall House Slave Quarters in Medford, Massachusetts as well as historical documents relating to the site. Chan uses an ethnographic approach to study the historical documents and archaeological record in order to examine the experiences of

the European Americans and African Americans at the site. She also discusses how the experiences of people at the site express themselves through symbols (Chan 2003). Alexandra Chan's dissertation is a valuable contribution to the study of African American life in colonial New England. It is a good example of how recent scholarly research has provided valuable insight into issues of ethnicity and self expression among enslaved African Americans in New England and how slavery in the north is not as benign as what has previously been implied.

Public awareness of the realities of Northern slavery has increased in recent years. In 2006, the *Providence Journal*, a daily newspaper in Providence, Rhode Island, published a series of six articles relating to the subject. The series discussed topics such as Rhode Island's role in the slave-rum trade, the plantation system in southern Rhode Island, and the role of the Quakers in bringing about the abolition of slavery (Davis 2005). This article and other educational endeavors have given New Englanders an opportunity to reexamine their misconceptions about northern slavery and racism. New Englanders are finally beginning to fully acknowledge the truth of their slaveholding past.

Despite the recent public dialogue concerning New England slavery, there are still many misconceptions about relations between European Americans and African Americans during the early national and the antebellum period. Although the New England colonies were the first to enact emancipation laws, the enacting of these laws hardly amounted to freedom for enslaved Africans (Sweet 1997: 27-44). As is the case with many things the upper class will often times have little trouble circumventing laws that interfere with their prosperity. Although some states like

Massachusetts enacted laws that immediately freed all enslaved people, other states, like Rhode Island and Connecticut enacted gradual emancipation laws. These gradual emancipation laws provided a myriad of ways for enslavers to continue their subjugation of the African people (Melish 1998: 84-86).

Once the institution of human bondage was no longer tolerated within the borders of the New England states, African Americans continued to provide labor for the European American population as free individuals. African American families would often find themselves working as tenant farmers for a much wealthier landowner. Although they were no longer legally considered to be the property of other human beings, they still occupied an underclass as producers of commodities for those that were above them on the socioeconomic ladder. They still had little control over their daily schedule and still had little access to the same things that European Americans did.

The study that this thesis concentrates on for its analysis of life in the early national period of southern New England is Ann-Eliza Lewis' dissertation entitled: *Defining and Creating African-American Identity: An Archaeological Study of Ethnicity at Casey Farm, Saunterstown, Rhode Island, 1790-1820*. Lewis examines the archaeological data from the tenant house at Casey Farm and identifies markers of ethnicity focusing on spheres of interaction between the European American residents of the farm and the African American residents of the tenant house (Lewis 1998). Ann-Eliza Lewis's project provides detailed information on how African Americans in the early national period viewed themselves in relation to their European American

landlords and gives valuable insight into the lives of African Americans in rural New England at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

The antebellum period during the nineteenth century was a time of great significance for the African people in the North just as it was for their counterparts in the south. Although the issue of slavery was a point of great disagreement between European Americans in the north and in the south, the idea that abolition should occur throughout the entire United States was not a universal belief in southern New England. Moreover, people in New England of all backgrounds had reasons to oppose southern abolition. European Americans in New England shared social and economic ties with the southern plantation states and many believed that abolition would cause a strain on those relations and would have a negative impact on the quality of life that white New Englanders enjoyed (Stachiw 1983).

As W. E. B. Du Bois illustrates in *The Souls of Black Folk*, African Americans had a dual identity that he termed “double consciousness” (Du Bois 2007: 3). This was certainly the case in the era of Northern slavery even though the view of the American self was likely somewhat different in the North than in the South. Such differences in self view would result in the differences of enslaved life in the north and south. These differences would revolve around things such as: living space, European traditions, geography, and even weather. Nevertheless, in both the north and the south, African Americans had two distinct selves, that of African and of American (Du Bois 2007: 3-4).

The definition of “African” and “American” can be somewhat ambiguous. Du Bois describes his experience of double consciousness as a youth in his hometown of Great Barrington, Massachusetts.

“Alas, with the years all this fine contempt began to fade; for the worlds I longed for, and all their dazzling opportunities, were theirs, not mine” (Du Bois 1993: 8).”

The American portion of Du Bois’ double consciousness, it seems, is full of the “power and freedom” that European Americans enjoyed as well as their cultural practices (Du Bois 1993: xxi). The American side of “the veil” was oppressive and at first he held only contempt for it, but as time went on, he decided that he wanted a part of what was behind that veil. On the African side of Du Bois’ double consciousness were the things and ideas that were distinctly part of his African self. This is true even with things that may have been made by European Americans such as the fireplace tongs that his grandfather Othello used (Paynter 1992: 282). Another example of something that Du Bois would have held as exclusively part of his African self would be the song that his family used to sing at his boyhood home (Paynter 1992: 282).

Although the two archeological sites that are examined in this project are different from themselves as well as from Du Bois’ home, the inhabitants of those sites would have still had aspects of their lives that were distinctly African and other aspects that were distinctly American. Items used during activities that were unique to African Americans such as gaming pieces, spiritual artifacts and rituals, songs, stories, and even living quarters would be part of their African selves. Things such as items used to perform work for their enslavers or their employers, national identity,

American ideology (even if African Americans were excluded from certain aspects of this), class distinctions, and social norms would have been included as part of their American selves. Many aspects of their lives would have had elements of both their African and American identities, such as an African style meal prepared in European American style pots and served on European American style platters. All of these aspects of the lives of the people living at the Royall House or the Casey Farm would have combined to create their unique state of double consciousness in an American world.

As the emancipation laws in New England began to go into effect, the legal difference between white and black people became more blurred, but in reality, the difference between African and European were just as pronounced as they had been before. As the narrative of William J. Brown (an African American living during the antebellum period in Providence, Rhode Island) shows, racism was still common during this period and people of African decent continued to fill roles of a subservient nature such as the tenants of the Casey Farm in Saunderstown, Rhode Island (Melish 1998: 109; Cottrol 1998: 73-100; Lewis 1998). They were now receiving wages for their services, but these wages were low enough to guarantee that they lived in a condition that was economically similar to slavery. Du Bois noticed the effect of hundreds of years of slavery and institutionalized racism on African Americans living in the post-bellum south. Because of the Jim Crow laws, racist hiring practices, and living conditions that African Americans had to endure, their lives were kept in a state of oppression (Aldridge 1999: 188). Conditions in the north during the early national period were probably quite similar to those of the South during the post-

bellum periods as far as white attitudes and social status were concerned. Technology and material culture would have been quite different, but the double consciousness of those living in this state of economic oppression would have been similar.

Although African Americans may have had similar levels of economic status under the days of early emancipation that they did under slavery, their view of the “American” side of themselves was undoubtedly different. The ideals expressed by the founding fathers of the United States were not worded in such a way to exclude any group of Americans in documents such as *The Declaration of Independence* or *The Federalist Papers*. If European Americans believed in individual liberties for themselves so strongly, then there must have been room for those ideas in the consciousness of African Americans.

The idea of race relations and socioeconomic distinctions has been studied in detail by both archeologists and historians. In *The Archaeology of Liberty in an American Capital*, Mark Leone explores how African Americans had confronted the ideology of possessive individualism in Annapolis, Maryland (Leone 2005: 34-36). His study explores the duality of identity that African Americans coped with from the early national periods through the antebellum period. Paul Mullins explores the ideal of double consciousness and how it relates to African Americans throughout the early history of the United States in *Race and affluence: Archaeology of African America and Consumer Culture* (Mullins 1999).

In 1989, a study by Steve Mrozowski and others, found that people living in Boardinghouses in Lowell, Massachusetts while working for the industrial corporations based there in the nineteenth century, found their lives controlled by

their employers in almost every aspect (Mrozowski et. al.1989: 304). These people were European Americans and were not enslaved, but it is interesting to wonder if these people actually considered themselves to be “free”. Factory workers were free to leave their employer at any time, but if they did so they would consign themselves to destitution and starvation. One could argue that as far as economic considerations were concerned, their condition was no better than slavery. Despite this, they were not owned by their employers and only their labor could be exploited. Other aspects of their lives were free from abuse. They were American citizens and were officially entitled to the same rights as all other citizens. They must have seen themselves as such, but perhaps they also saw themselves as tools of an oppressive class consisting of the owners of the means of production in industrialized America.

This study examines African American labor in Southern New England. Two African American archaeological sites will be studied to determine how the laborers occupying the sites viewed themselves as being both “African” and “American”. One of these sites is located in Medford, Massachusetts and dates to the mid eighteenth century when slavery was legal in Southern New England. The other site is located on a tenant farmhouse at the Casey Farm in Saunderstown, Rhode Island and dates to the early national period of the early nineteenth century when Rhode Island’s gradual emancipation laws had begun to take effect. The tenants of the farmhouse were free people of African decent. The two sites will then be compared to see if there is any real difference between the two time periods in how they perceived themselves as being both African and American.

This study will determine based on W.E.B. Dubois concept of double consciousness, that there were many similarities in how enslaved African Americans and African American tenant farmers viewed their African selves and their American selves in Southern New England. A Marxian theoretical approach will be employed to study this issue since the relations between enslaved and enslaver and between employer and employee can be viewed as a struggle between the controllers of the means of production and those that are producing commodities (McGuire 1992: 42). The study will begin by exploring the history of slavery in New England as well as the history of the early period of emancipation in New England in order to set the stage for the study of the dichotomy between European Americans and African Americans in colonial and early national New England. It will then outline the theoretical approach used to draw conclusions about these relationships. Next, it will examine the Royall House quarter site in Medford, Massachusetts and Chan's conclusions regarding African American culture at the site. The study will then address these issues and Lewis's conclusions at the Casey Farm site in Saunderstown, Rhode Island. Finally, the two sites will be brought together to determine how double consciousness is expressed during slavery and early emancipation. This study will be able to contribute to future scholarly discussions about race and class relations in New England by the examination of archaeological investigations in order to examine double consciousness in those two locations.

## **Chapter 2: The Commoditization of African American Labor in New England**

### **New England Slavery during the Colonial Period**

Although indentured servitude existed during the early days of the settlement of New England, slavery as we know it did not begin in the area until the Pequot War (Moore, 1866:1). Indians that were captured during this conflict were enslaved and put to work in the households of the English. The practice of native enslavement intensified after King Phillips's War (Shultz and Tougias 1995: 45), but slavery did not reach its peak in southern New England until large plantations were established. As with the plantations of the south, slaves were expected to obey their enslavers without question and were subject to harsh punishments if they refused to do so.

The plantation system in southern Rhode Island began after King Phillips War between the English and the Wampanoag tribe and their allies (Fitts 1998: 73). After the war, the Native inhabitants of the region, the Narragansett tribe, had been severely weakened. What was once a hostile area for English people to settle, now offered a large range of fertile land that could support a plantation system. The majority of these planters lived in the town of South Kingstown and the size of the planters land holdings varied greatly (Fitts 1998: 73). Many of the planters' landholdings were dispersed and required tenants to oversee the management of separate tracts of land. Livestock, grains and dairy products were the chief productions of these plantations and there were enough surpluses of these items to warrant export (Fitts 1998: 74-78).

The majority of the labor required for the operation of these plantations was provided by enslaved people and indentured servants. Most of the individuals who were enslaved on the New England plantations were of African descent. In the years prior to 1740, the majority of these slaves originated from the West Indies as part of the triangle slave trade (Coughtry 1981). Demand for labor produced from human bondage increased after 1740 and the New England colonists began importing slaves directly from Africa. (Fitts 1998: 79). Many enslaved Africans married enslaved Native Americans. The enslaved populations of the New England plantations performed a number of tasks that allowed for a smooth and profitable operation. In addition to the regular duties associated with agricultural work, enslaved people performed domestic and artisan work as well. Blacksmithing and rope making are examples of these activities (Fitts 1998: 87).

Enslaved Africans and African Americans were considered to be the personal property of their owner. Although some colonies had laws mandating the manumission of enslaved people after a certain period of time, many planters ignored this law and it was not enforced. Enslaved people were expected to conform to the belief that they were property and obedience to their master's will was expected of them. Any person who attempted escape was dealt with extremely harshly (Fitts 1998: 107).

The relationship between the enslaver and the enslaved was often influenced by religious attitudes in the early days of northern slavery. In her article *Strangers in the House of God: Cotton Mather, Onesimus and an Experiment in Christian Slaveholding*, Kathryn Koo explores this issue in her examination of the relationship

between the Reverend Cotton Mather and the enslaved African American, Onesimus (Koo 2007). She points out that in early eighteenth century Christian society, the relationship is infused with religious expectations of how the enslaved experienced God. According to Mather, an enslaved person was considered to be part of the enslaver's household and the enslaver was responsible for the spiritual welfare of those under his control (Koo 2007: 151). Cotton Mather felt that it was his responsibility to convert the enslaved African Americans in his household to Christianity. Once converted, the enslaved person would be considered to be a fellow Christian and would partake in the rewards of the afterlife, but would still be enslaved on earth. If Mather failed to bring those in his household to the Christian faith, he believed that it would reflect poorly on him in the eyes of God. Mather attempted to convince his fellow Christians of this idea, but met with little success (Koo 2007: 149).

Before the latter half of the twentieth century, there were few studies conducted on the living conditions of enslaved Africans in New England. Nevertheless, narratives exist that provide first-hand accounts of life as a northern slave. *From African to Yankee: Narratives of Slavery and Freedom in Antebellum New England*, edited by Robert Cottrol, provides examples of narratives from people who were enslaved in New England during the colonial period as well as those who lived in New England after slavery was abolished in the region. The narratives of this volume provide a unique opportunity to examine the lifestyles of enslaved people in New England.

The narrative of Venture Smith recalls his capture from Africa and his life as an enslaved person in Rhode Island and Connecticut. Venture Smith was an unfortunate victim of the cruelty of the Rhode Island slave trade. He was purchased by a wealthy citizen of the colony by the name of Robertson Mumford. Venture Smith was subject to the typical horrid conditions of disease and other unpleasant situations on this voyage. Out of 260 people that sailed out of Africa on this voyage, only 200 survived. Venture was then put to work on a plantation in Narragansett and was soon forced to do extremely difficult work, sometimes late into the night. His enslaver's son also subjected him to much cruelty. At one point, the son forced Venture to hang on a gallows for an hour. Venture's second master, Robert Stanton subjected him to even greater cruelty. After Venture got into an argument with Stanton's wife, Stanton and his brother severely beat him and forced him to wear a large, heavy chain for some time. Venture was next placed in the servitude of a man referred to as Colonel Smith. Smith allowed Venture to leave his service periodically to seek employment, but only if Venture would pay Smith a certain portion of his earnings. Eventually, Venture made enough money to buy his freedom from Smith. Later, Venture was able to purchase the freedom of his wife and child from Stanton. He eventually led a successful life owning more than 100 acres of land and three houses (Cottrol 1998: 22).

Venture's situation is an unusual success story for people who were enslaved in the Americas. Despite this, the hardships and punishments that he was subjected to as a slave were extremely cruel. Even the enslaver who allowed Venture to work did not allow him to keep all of his profits. Although one may point out the kindness in

Colonel Smith's decision to allow Venture to purchase his freedom, freedom is a right that should not have to be purchased. Venture Smith apparently made varying impressions on his different masters. Some considered him to be hard working and obedient, while others considered him to be rebellious and difficult. Those that considered him to be difficult were persuaded to this opinion by a specific conflict with Venture. The fact that these conflicts occur are a testament to Venture's sense of dignity. Although he was usually cooperative with his enslavers, he never hesitated to defend himself when necessary. For example, when Venture was suddenly attacked by Stanton with a club, he temporarily escaped and reported the incident to the authorities. Ventures account provides evidence that Slavery in New England was not a benign institution.

Robert Fitts documents the cruel treatment of the enslaved people of Rhode Island in his book, *Inventing New England's Slave Paradise: Mater/Slave Relations in Eighteenth Century, Narragansett, Rhode Island*. A variety of physical and psychological methods of intimidation were used against enslaved people in order to force them into submission. Whippings and beatings and threats of further punishment were common. Fitts cites the methods of Reverend James MacSparran as an example of someone who would resort to violence to subdue those under his authority. MacSparren also subjected disobedient enslaved Africans to punishing devices. A pothook is an example of such a device. It was a heavy metal collar with iron bars protruding from it, which would cause considerable pain and discomfort for anyone wearing it (Fitts 1998). Sometimes enslaved Africans in New England were punished so severely that it resulted in their death. This claim is supported by both

oral and written history. In Newport, Rhode Island, a newspaper story tells of a person being whipped to death. There is another account where a master allowed his slave to be eaten to death by mosquitoes. After running away, the boy returned to his master after having learned that the master had made a promise that he would not whip him. The Master did not whip him, but tied him to a stake in the middle of a salt marsh. The boy was dead by the next morning (Fitts 1998: 108).

There were other methods besides punishment that were employed in order to prevent slaves from deviating from what was considered to be acceptable behavior. Legislative acts were often undertaken to restrict the slaves' movement and enforce rules regarding their obedience. For example, it was illegal for enslaved people to congregate without the permission of their masters. In 1776, the Town of South Kingstown enacted a law that prevented slaves from attending an annual slave festival (Fitts 1998: 111). Some of these legislative acts also forced people who didn't own enslaved people to assist in capturing runaways. Another punishment that was given to enslaved people was the threat of sale to another colony. This would result in the removal of an individual from his or her family. This punishment would also present the possibility of the enslaved individual being sold to a colony where the treatment of slaves was allegedly harsher than in the North (Fitts 1998:114). These punishments helped to instill a culture of fear within the African population of the New England colonies and are reflective of cruel treatment.

### **Gradual Emancipation**

The ideas that were sprouted by the American Revolution had some influence over the enactment of emancipation laws in New England. In Britain, the rebellious

American colonies were often criticized for their ideological contradictions (Melish, 1998:54). Samuel Johnson of England asked “How is it that one hears the loudest yelps for liberty among the drivers of the Negroes” (Sweet 1997: 2). The American Declaration of Independence specifically stated that “all men are created equal”. As long as the colonies continued the practice of slavery, equality was not a reality in North America. Many northern states allowed African Americans to serve in their militias. In return, they would be granted their freedom after the war. Although many African Americans did not receive the land or money that was promised to them for their military service, most were eventually granted their freedom (Melish, 1998: 56).

The ideas of the Revolution and the subsequent preaching of religious groups such as the Quakers prompted New England governments to begin the process of emancipation. In Rhode Island, Moses Brown was prominent among these voices of liberation. He was a member of a prominent New England slave-trading family. Brown would often offer support and legal advice to enslaved people who were attempting to gain their emancipation. He attacked his own brothers, John Brown and Nicholas Brown for their involvement in the slave trade (Melish 1998: 67). Some states, such as Massachusetts and Vermont enacted legislation that allowed for the immediate emancipation of all enslaved people. This decision was usually decided by court cases. For example, the Massachusetts Supreme Court declared that slavery was incompatible with the clause “all men are created equal” which was included in the newly adopted state constitution (Cottrel 1998: xvii). Other New England states, such as Rhode Island and Connecticut enacted gradual emancipation laws. These

laws mandated that only enslaved people born after a certain date would be emancipated. In the case of the state of Rhode Island, an enslaved individual born after 1784 would be emancipated after their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday (Sweet 1997: 27).

Despite the enactment of emancipation and the changing attitudes present in New England society, racism and a desire to participate in the institution of slavery were still present. Various New England planters attempted to circumvent the emancipation laws. Others would try to turn a profit by selling people who were due to be emancipated into slavery in the South and the West Indies. Although, this type of activity was technically illegal, it was very difficult for the governments of the New England states to prosecute these cases once the enslaved individuals had been sold out of state (Sweet 1997: 44). It is certain that the practice of discriminatory behavior and participation in the institution of slavery persisted after enslaved people were officially emancipated in New England.

An example of the continued exploitation of enslaved African Americans is the case of a young girl who was enslaved by the Vinton family of Providence, Rhode Island (Sweet 1997: 35-37). She was born to an enslaved mother in 1789. Under the law, her situation fell under the provisions of the gradual emancipation act. Her mother was soon sold to a person living in Boston Massachusetts. The Vintons never informed the girl of her rights under the law and treated her very harshly at first. They repeatedly lied to the girl, telling her that she would eventually be paid a wage, but they never followed through with that promise. The Providence Town Council then illegally awarded the Vintons a contract of servitude for the young girl in 1797. Eventually, the young girl's mother paid her a visit from Boston. She informed the

girl that she was over the age of twenty-one and was therefore free under the law. The girl then attempted to flee with her mother to Boston, but the Vintons were able to overtake her. They then proceeded to confiscate her clothing and personal possessions. The young girl then appealed to Moses Brown for help. Through a series of negotiations, Brown was eventually able to persuade Mr. Vinton to give up his claim for the girl. Vinton made the transition as difficult as possible, however, and did not return all of the girl's items. Nevertheless, the girl was now free and no longer under the Vintons' control. Although, the situation greatly upset Mrs. Vinton, the girl never had to work for them again (Sweet 1997: 37). This situation is an example of how people attempted to keep their enslaved servants from knowledge of the laws that were there to protect them.

Another example of how precarious African Americans freedoms were in the early days of emancipation was the case of the Thompson family (Sweet 1997: 39-41). Nancy Thompson was born into slavery in New Jersey, but she made an agreement with her enslavers that allowed her to work for wages in New York City in order to purchase her freedom. After years of diligent, hard work, she was finally able to earn the required funds and was set free. She then moved to Rhode Island with her sister. It was not long before a pair of professional kidnappers arrived in town with a scheme to re-enslave the women. They were able to obtain an arrest warrant for the theft of the women's own clothing. The Abolition Society of Rhode Island found out about the situation and challenged the kidnappers' claim. The kidnappers then attempted to claim the Thompsons as runaway slaves as well as thieves. With the involvement of the Abolition Society, the court did not uphold the

kidnappers runaway slave claim, but scheduled a hearing to determine the thievery issue. The kidnappers then proceeded to illegally put the Thompsons on a boat bound for New York. The court was able to find out about the deception in time and dispatched a rowboat to overtake the vessel with the Thompsons on board. Because the wind was low that day, the rowboat overtook the boat carrying the Thompsons and they were returned to Rhode Island where they regained their freedom (Sweet 1997: 40).

In the early years of the enactment of the emancipation laws, enslaved people often found themselves in servitude to their masters for a fixed period of time. They would have to bargain with their masters constantly for the terms of the contract. To begin with, African Americans did not have the same rights as White children who were bound into servitude. Upon completion of their terms of service, white children were given two suits, one hundred dollars, and a bible. Africans were given nothing except their freedom and that freedom was often not found easily (Cottrol 1998: 61). The Narrative of James Mars illustrates the difficulty that African Americans faced in negotiating their freedom. Mars's enslaver, Mr. Munger, was constantly trying to extend the terms of their contract. Since Munger knew the legal system better than Mars did, he was often successful in getting out of certain promises that he made to Mars. Nevertheless, Mars was extremely intelligent and was an excellent negotiator. He was often able to strike deals with this master and others that worked in Mars's favor (Cottrol 1998: 61-64).

### **Antebellum Period**

From the time of the second decade of the nineteenth century up until the civil war, the Northern and Southern states grew further and further apart in both the realms of economic production and ideological beliefs. The North prided itself on being a free society. Since they didn't have the institution of slavery, many northerners were convinced that they lived in a morally superior region of the country. History has often portrayed the citizens of the North as being fiercely devoted to protecting the rights of African Americans. One is led to believe that no one in the Northern states could have had any involvement in the exploitation of African Americans (Melish 1998). Despite the romanticized ideal of northern morality, African Americans were still faced with discrimination in the time period leading up to the civil war. During the 1820s and 1830's they were faced with an even more intensified attitude of racism and discrimination than they were during the revolutionary period (Cottrol 1998). It is also true that not everyone in the north supported the idea of the nationwide abolition of slavery. Manufacturers in New England had much to gain in profit from the slave-based agricultural economy of the South.

African Americans faced much discrimination and hardship in the State of Rhode Island during the years that led up to the civil war. The right to vote had been granted to them after the American Revolution, but this right was revoked by the Rhode Island state government in 1820 (Cottrol, 1998: xix). Clearly this was an indication that white people feared the influence of African Americans in government. They probably also felt uncomfortable with the African Americans' involvement in the labor force at a time when competition for jobs was severe. The city of Providence became a dangerous place for African Americans during the

1820's and 1830's when the general feelings of racism were at their most intense. Africans during this time were subject to repeated harassment and acts of violence (Cottrol 1998: 143). Aside from the general random beatings and insults anti African riots sometimes occurred. Two of the more well-known of these riots were the Hardscabble Riot of 1824 and the Olney Street Riot of 1831 (Cottrol 1998: xxi). Racial relations in Rhode Island were much improved after Dorr's rebellion. Many African Americans joined with the Whig party during this conflict. Since the Whig party was victorious in the struggle, Africans were once again given the right to vote and violence against them greatly subsided (Cottrol 1998: xxi).

The narrative of William J. Brown of Providence Rhode Island offers rare first person insight into the situation that African Americans faced during the antebellum period. He provides a detailed account of economic, social and religious issues that faced many African Americans during this time. Brown became actively involved in the African American community and worked hard to protect the rights and safety of his community. His involvement began when he, along with other wage-earning African Americans, started a Union for the protection of African American labor interests in Rhode Island. This organization became known as the Young Mens' Union Funds Society (Cottrol 1998: 141). Eventually, Browns' society expanded and became more involved in the everyday activities of African Americans. The group became known as the Young Mens' Union Friends Society. They began to wear uniforms and created a group of guards that would escort African Americans who were wandering through town on their own. During this time, it was not safe to do so because of the risk of being attacked by unruly mobs. Later in life, Brown also

became more involved in religious matters. He became a victim of violence himself on many occasions. On one such occasion, he was escorting a woman towards an evening prayer service when a couple of rowdy white men began uttering vulgarities toward Brown and his companion. The situation would have become physical if another African American had not intervened. On another occasion, Brown was physically assaulted on a main street during the middle of the day. A group of individuals attempted to pin the blame on Brown. As they were preparing to take Brown to jail, a local shopkeeper intervened on his behalf and a serious injustice was prevented from occurring (Cottrol 1998: 143). The narrative of William brown illustrates the difficulties that African Americans were forced to face during the antebellum period.

The period just before the civil war was a time of great national debate over the issue of slavery. While the southern states insisted that their “peculiar institution” was necessary for the preservation of the economy of the nation, the people of the northern states were determined to end slavery on moral grounds. Despite the general belief in the north that slavery was immoral, not every northern citizen favored its abolition (Stachiw 1983). The wealthy textile manufacturers in Rhode Island were particularly opposed to the idea of the abolition of slavery. This is primarily due to the fact that Rhode Island was a leading manufacturer of cloth that was made specifically for the use of enslaved people in the south. Rhode Island became a leading manufacturer of textiles after the war of 1812. During this time there was an increased call to create domestically manufactured goods. This would reduce the dependence of the United States on other countries for material goods. Since the

plantations of the south provided a lucrative market for the sale of cheap clothing, many manufacturers in Rhode Island began selling clothes specifically meant for slaves. Myron O. Stachiw conducted a study of this situation in 1983. He quotes from Frederick Law Olmsted's observations of the clothing worn by enslaved people of the south (Stachiw 1983: 2):

“As to the Clothing of the slaves on the plantations, they are said to be usually furnished by their owners or masters, every year, each with a coat and trousers, of a course woolen and cotton stuff (mostly made, especially for this purpose in Providence, Rhode Island) for the winter, trousers of cotton osnaburghs for summer, sometimes with a jacket also of the same...The women have two dresses of striped cotton, three shifts, two pairs of shoes (Olmstead 1953: 92)”.

Clearly, the textile manufacturers of Rhode Island had a large amount of capital invested in the institution of slavery.

In addition to Rhode Island's involvement in the manufacturing of clothing for slaves, there were a great many other textile mills in the area as well. Economic concerns were a prevalent cause for the owners of these mills to continue to support slavery. The wealthy plantation owners of the South had threatened a boycott of Northern goods if the north continued to support the abolition of slavery. During the 1860s there was an effort to create textile businesses in the South in an effort to disrupt the reliance on the northern textile industry (Stachiw 1983: 5). In the minds of the northern manufacturers, such a boycott would effectively cripple the textile industry in the North.

The people of the state of Rhode Island shared social ties with the South as well as economic ones. Many wealthy southern families would travel to Newport, Rhode Island during the summer. In addition, many prominent families in Rhode

Island had relatives in the South and many merchants and manufacturers of Rhode Island goods spent a great deal of their time in the South on business ventures. Rhode Island and the South had many historical ties as well. The plantation system of eighteenth century Rhode Island was very similar to that of the South and Rhode Island had always enjoyed prosperity resulting from a trading system known as the trade triangle. This system involved an elaborate network of molasses, rum and enslaved Africans and Rhode Island was positioned as one of the points on this triangle (Coughtry 1981: 26-28).

Because of these concerns, some of the wealthier citizens of Rhode Island began organizing anti-abolitionist meetings. These meetings were organized by the textile manufacturers and other wealthy members of the community. They held meetings in Pawtucket, Smithfield, Providence, Newport and Woonsocket (Stachiw 1983: 3). By holding these meetings, the manufacturers of Rhode Island wanted to communicate to the South that they were not in favor of the abolition of slavery. They did this in order to avoid a southern boycott of northern goods. Many of these anti-abolitionists used the ideology of the “rights of property” to bolster their claim that abolition was wrong. Although many of them claimed to think that slavery was immoral, they did not believe that the north had any right to impose their morals on the south (Stachiw 1983: 6).

Attitudes towards southern slavery in New England changed with the South’s attempt to legalize the practice of slavery in the western territories. Manufacturers were also unhappy with the enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Act. When the Civil War finally broke out, most people in Rhode Island who formerly opposed abolition

were now committed to the Union. Even the democratic governor of Rhode Island, William Sprague, who ran for office on an anti-abolitionist platform, changed his mind about slavery. With the textile mills now employed in manufacturing uniforms for the Union Army, the fears about economic collapse were unfounded (Stachiw 1983: 7).

Clearly the history of human bondage and its aftermath in New England is more complex than most history textbooks leave one to believe. There are no black and white distinctions between the “good people” and the “bad people” when the issue of northern slavery and racism is discussed. People are a product of the circumstances surrounding their culture and experiences, which shape their behavior. The culture and experiences of the European Americans living in New England created a situation where many of them ended up exploiting other people and did not find anything morally wrong with it. While European American views of African Americans in New England are complex, the African American view of self is just as, if not more complex.

The historical record of the colonial through antebellum periods of Southern New England discussed in this chapter raises some key issues. Three of those issues are especially relevant to this thesis:

1. Slavery existed in New England and the conditions of enslaved life were harsh.
2. Racist attitudes in New England persisted throughout the antebellum period (e.g. the lax enforcement of the gradual emancipation laws and the Providence race riots)

3. There are differences between traditional historical accounts and what actually happened.

The archaeological record is one way to gather additional information about how life was for enslaved people in the colonial and early national periods in Southern New England. The study of African American sites in New England such as the Royall House and Casey Farm sites should be able to provide insight into the African American mindset during the early national and antebellum time periods in New England by examining the artifacts and considering what they were used for, how they were used, who used them and in what situations they would be used in. Placing the archaeological information within the historical context should allow the double consciousness of the people of the Royall House and Casey Farm to manifest itself.

### **Chapter 3: Theoretical Considerations**

The study of the material culture of the Isaac Royall house and the Casey Farm site requires a theoretical perspective that takes into account both race and class. While this is true for many agricultural and residential sites throughout North America, it is especially important for these sites because of the fact that they involve slavery and a racial division of labor. The Royall house contains the only existing remains of a quarter in New England and the Casey Farm site is one of the few intensely excavated African American tenant farmsteads in the state of Rhode Island. A Marxian perspectives on these sites coupled with a concern for the manifestation of double consciousness in the archaeological record provides an adequate way to address the issues of class and race.

#### **Marxist Theory**

Marxism is a theoretical perspective that has been used extensively by archaeologists in the past and continues to be useful today. This approach examines culture in terms of a struggle between the people who control the means of production and the working class. This theoretical approach has been used extensively in the study of the historical archaeology of the United States (Mullins 1999; Leone 2005; McGuire 1992). The United States is a capitalist society and falls into the category of societies that Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels were attempting to critique.

Archaeology provides an opportunity to counter what has been an elitist interpretation of History that has largely been influenced by capitalist ideology (Wylie 1999: 23-24). The historical portrayal of slavery in New England is a perfect example of this

type of elitist interpretation and makes a Marxist approach to the archaeology of slavery useful. An archaeological examination of the Royall House and Casey Farm presents an excellent opportunity to use Marxist theory in archaeological research. European American agricultural industries exist as a form of uncontrolled capitalism, and a struggle between the working class and the controllers of the forces of production is clearly evident in the historical records. More information about the day to day lives and struggles of the enslaved African Americans working at the Royall House and the tenant farmers working at the Casey Farm can be obtained by the analysis of the material remains at those sites. A review of Marxist study in Archaeology and its application to the analysis of the archaeological record is necessary in order to apply Marxist theory to the study of the plantation life in southern New England.

Karl Marx's and Frederick Engels' opinions about social conditions in society influenced the development of Marxist archaeology (Patterson 2003: 7). They believed that societies moved along an evolutionary path which would ultimately lead to a communist utopia if their suggested reforms were implemented. Marx and Engels did not believe that biological reasons were responsible for change along their evolutionary line. They believed that class struggle and a change in the control of the means of production from the labor forces that actually produced materials to an outside entity would cause evolution to progress. They believed that society changed from primitive communism to ancient society to feudalism to capitalism. Marx made several observations that influenced the development of his social theory. He claimed that human individuals are individually natural and social beings, that they are

distinguished from animals by virtue of their creative intelligence, productive activity and sociality, that they transform objects of nature to satisfy needs and that they create new needs in the process and thereby transform their own nature (Patterson 2003: 14).

Randall McGuire in his publication, *A Marxist Archaeology* outlines his interpretation of the use of Marxist theory in archaeology. He stresses the Marxist belief that society is full of contradictions and that these contradictions create a dialectical nature of society (McGuire 1992: 94-102). He claims that the social world is defined between the structures of internal relations. These relations are constantly moving and full of contradictions. These contradictions are inherent and drive social change (McGuire 1992: 95). Each social category needs its opposite in order to survive.

McGuire outlines the laws of the dialectic that Engels drew from Marx's reading of Hegel's dialectic. He summarizes them into three main ideas: the transformation of quantity into quality and vice versa; the unity of opposites; and the negation of the negation. He explains that quantitative change can lead to a qualitative transformation and that qualitative change necessarily implies a quantitative change. The unity of opposites refers to the relations that opposites share in order to exist. In the case of the Royall House, the relationship between the enslaved workers and the property owners illustrate the unity of opposites. In the case of the Casey Farm, the relationship between the owners of the farm and their tenants also illustrates the unity of opposites. The negation of the negation refers to

the transformation of the relation or set of relations into another form (McGuire 1992: 97-98).

In his article, *The Cultural Biography of Things*, Igor Kopytoff discusses the production and use of commodities in society and how each influences social structures. The Royall House and the Casey Farm provide two examples of the exploitation of two different commodities: plantation products and human labor. Kopytoff mentions that people have been used in the past as commodities and that this occurred under slavery (Kopytoff 1986). In the capitalist societies of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, slavery was becoming replaced by paid labor. Although working class people were paid a wage, it was often times only enough for them to survive. Even though the working class was not enslaved, they shared similar living conditions. In the case of the Casey Farm, these laborers were necessary for the production of agricultural products and were therefore a very valuable commodity to the farm and agricultural enterprises in southern New England. Without the workers, the commodity of the agricultural products could not be produced.

Mark Leone, Parker Potter, and Paul Shaker discuss the concept of ideology in their article, *A Critical Archaeology*. They cite how Shanks and Tilley have used the concept of ideology in archaeology to explain inequality (Leone et al. 1987: 459). They claim that ideology facilitates the alienation of labor and creates a situation of exploitation. Ideology masks the inequalities of the capitalist labor system by either justifying it or supernaturalizing it or naturalizing it (Leone et al. 1987: 459). It prevents people from resisting in a stratified society. Leone et al. then explain how Shanks and Tilley apply ideology to the Bronze Age of northwestern Europe.

It should be possible to examine the use of ideology in the archaeological and historic record at the Royall House and the Casey Farm. One can safely assume that the workers were exposed to many different forms of ideology to justify their position in the system that produced agricultural and domestic products. Some of this ideology is still prevalent in American capitalist society. An example of this type of ideology is the belief that in the United States, all people are equal and therefore have the same chances of economic success as anyone else. The rich get rich because of hard work and ingenuity and the working class are stuck in their position because they are not smart or strong enough to climb the social ladder.

Robert Paynter believed that Marxism offered a way to study historic archaeology that addressed issues that were largely ignored by previous historic archaeologists (Paynter 1988: 411). He believed that idealist models and diffusionist explanations of history were overused and that studying class relations would be helpful in understanding a society. Marxism was primarily a critique of capitalist societies. Since the United States is a perfect example of a complex capitalist society, he was of the opinion that the use of Marxism would be able to answer many questions about historical archeology in the United States (Paynter 1988: 424)

Since the development of Marxist archaeology in the 1980's there have been numerous attempts to observe class relations in industrial archaeology and other historical studies. S. Mrozowski studies the impact of health issues such as disease and poor sanitation in nineteenth century Lowell, Massachusetts. His study focused on the boarding houses for the Boots Mills. Although there were company efforts to maintain the outside appearance of these boarding houses, corporate neglect led to

unsanitary conditions and ultimately to the poor health of the workers. The managers of the mill tended to blame the poor health of the workers on their indulgence in alcohol, but documentary and archaeological evidence indicates that unsanitary conditions were the leading cause of poor health in the boarding houses. This was compounded by the fact that the workers were exposed to a number of industrial poisons that were present in the water that they drank and the soils around their houses (Mrozowski et. al. 1989). Although it was official company policy to maintain a clean and healthy environment for their workers, the archaeological evidence shows that this was not the case.

Phillip Scranton examines the issue of paternalism in industrial situations. The attitude that the company had to control the other aspects of workers' lives besides their actual employment activities was common in nineteenth century industrial society (Scranton 1984: 236). This issue of worker housing that Mrozowski explores, is related to the issue of company paternalism. It is clear that the owners of Boots Mills micromanaged the activities of the lives of their workers.

While many of the studies mentioned above refer to situations involving industrial factory workers, the theory employed by these studies can be applied to the race based economic separation of the classes in rural New England as well. Although the players change, the story is still the same. The people who control the wealth and means of production exploit others to create more wealth for themselves. In the case of the Royall house and the Casey farm, the owners of these two properties exploited the labor of the African Americans who produced the commodities of their operations to increase the owners' wealth. Even in the case of

what may be considered purely domestic activities such as cooking and laundry, the property owners were free to use their time in order to pursue activities that would increase their wealth and status because these activities were being conducted by others. Marxian theory is useful in teasing apart the different aspects of this exploitation and in identifying ways in which the exploited laborers resisted their oppression.

### **Double Consciousness**

While Marxism provides a way to study class issues relating to the Royall House and Casey Farm sites, it does not adequately address the issue of race even if, as in the case of slavery, race occupies a class. People who are oppressed can be of any ancestry but in North America, people of African descent have occupied a specific niche in the mindset of the European American psyche. Africans were well aware of their perceived position in society and this undoubtedly had an influence on how Africans and African Americans viewed themselves. William Edward Burghardt Du Bois was a late nineteenth-early twentieth century sociologist who understood the social condition of nineteenth century African Americans. His approach to the study of their social condition provides a way to address the issue of race in the complex social interactions of colonial and early national New England. In Dubois's book *The Souls of Black Folk*, Dubois describes the concept of double consciousness (Du Bois 2007). He explains how people of African descent living in America view themselves as belonging to two cultures and can only see their African selves through the "veil" of European American culture.

By the late colonial era in North America, American culture was already infused with aspects of African culture. It is reasonable to expect that even when a cultural group is looked down upon by another cultural group (as in the case of European Americans and African Americans); each group will incorporate some aspects of the other in their cultural practices. The groups are still separate from each other, but are defined more by their boundaries rather than internal differences (Barth, 1969). Since African populations have immigrated to North America many aspects of African culture such as art, music, philosophy, and vocabulary have been seamlessly integrated into European American life (Thompson 1983). Because of this, the American side of the double consciousness of the inhabitants of the Royall House and especially the Casey farm would have African aspects to it. This makes the social conditions of African Americans throughout American history unique.

Du Bois' approach to the study of African American issues during his lifetime has been used to study archaeological sites. Robert Paynter from the University of Massachusetts Amherst has used this approach to study the boyhood home of W.E.B. Dubois, himself. Paynter makes a number of good points regarding the problems of traditional methods and theory of historical archaeology and the interpretation of African American culture. He points out that many of the most important aspects of African American cultural identity do not usually manifest themselves in the archaeological record (Paynter, 1992: 283). To support his argument, Paynter provides excerpts from Du Bois, written accounts of his life at his home in Great Barrington, Massachusetts. It seems that while Du Bois does indeed mention items that would be found archaeologically such as fireplace tongs, these items are only

important to his African American Heritage when they are combined with African American people and the emotions and thoughts associated with them. Other things such as songs and African American work ethic would be mostly invisible in the archaeological record (Paynter 1992: 282-283).

As archaeologists, we must be careful when assigning cultural labels based on items that are found in the ground. Archaeology only tells a very small portion, albeit important, part of the story. Jim Adovasio, Olga Soffer, and Jake Page point out this problem in prehistoric archaeology. Due to preservation conditions, often the only thing left of Paleolithic culture is an assemblage of stone tools even though such tools only account for a very small portion of the material culture of the people who used them. Nevertheless, entire cultures have been named and explained based only on the presence of stone tools. This kind of interpretation can lead to a very misleading perception of life during Paleolithic times. Such a cultural interpretation would ignore the contributions of anyone who didn't make stone tools, such as women and children who are often more associated with perishable artifacts (Adovasio, Soffer and Page 2007: 24).

The same type of problem persists in historical archaeology. As Paynter points out, historical archaeologists often attempt to associate certain assemblages of material culture with African Americans. Such an approach can be dangerous because jumping to conclusions about African American life based solely on the presence or absence of artifacts that have been attributed to African American culture can lead to a misleading interpretation of how the people associated with such artifacts lived (Paynter 1992: 279-285). This purpose of this thesis is not to identify

artifacts found at the Royal house and Casey farm and to declare them as being distinctly African American in nature. Instead, this study attempts to show how the interactions between the inhabitants of the two sites and their respective material culture illustrate how double consciousness impacted their perceptions of the objects that they used.

The enslaved residents of the Royal House and the tenant farmers of the Casey Farm would have manifested this condition of double consciousness in their daily lives. Their eating habits, living conditions, clothing, and recreational activities would express their condition of being both African and American, but also how they would view the African portion of their selves through the lens of European Northern New England culture. This would be represented in the material culture left at the Royal House and Casey Farm sites. This thesis will review the cultural material of both sites in order to determine if a find a physical manifestation of double consciousness exists in the archaeological record of colonial and early national southern New England. The artifacts and their context at the Royall House and Casey Farm might be able to show the American and African side of double consciousness at these sites. The American side would reveal the oppressive culture and class distinctions of the European American society that African Americans were a part of, while the African side would reveal what is solely reserved to their inner most selves and private social interactions. In his article “Afro-Americans in the Massachusetts Historical Landscape”, Robert Paynter identifies the need for more demonstration of African American life in the north (Paynter, 1990: 52-53). This thesis will attempt to contribute to the African American discussion in New England.

## Chapter 4: The Royall House

Isaac Royall Sr. was born in 1677 in the town of North Yarmouth, Maine. Although he was of the middle class, he was ambitious for more wealth and status and became a merchant when he was still a teenager. He married Elizabeth Elliot Oliver at the age of twenty, but lost her and his newborn son two years later during child birth. He then began his career in the slave trade. In 1707 he was re-married and settled in Antigua at the town of Popeshead. He lived there for 33 years and participated in the slave, sugar, and rum industries. He received many honors during these years including becoming a major, a colonel and a judge (Chan 2003: 54-67).

After suffering hardship from both natural and economic causes, Isaac Royall purchased Lieutenant Governor John Usher's Massachusetts farm in 1732. He also acquired two other farms in the New England area. On July 27, 1737 the Royalls arrived at their new home in what is now Medford, Massachusetts. Royall Sr. wasted no time in solidifying his position as a stately individual among the citizens of the Massachusetts colony. He immediately began construction and renovation work to transform the farm into the picture of Georgian gentility. The improvements to the property, such as the landscaped gardens, mansion, and gazebo quadrupled its value (Chan 2003: 67-79).

In 1739, Isaac Royall Sr. died and Isaac Royall Jr. inherited the property. Isaac Jr. continued the opulent lifestyle of his father. Royall Jr. was born in Antigua, but was schooled in Boston where he allegedly developed some habits and personality traits that did not impress his father. Royall Jr. moved back into his

father's Antigua estate, but when the family moved to their new Massachusetts home, the younger Royall accompanied them and was able to assimilate to the lifestyle of the colonial elite. Isaac Royall Jr. married Elizabeth McIntosh in 1738. They had two daughters, Elizabeth and Mary. When Elizabeth died, they had another daughter whom they also named Elizabeth (Chan 2003: 80-81).

Isaac Royall Jr. took the notoriety and aristocratic nature of his father and amplified it to propel himself to even greater status. Like his father, he held numerous distinctions and honors in the town of Medford and the surrounding area. He became the Justice of the Peace for Suffolk County, he served on the Governor's Council for 23 years, he was the chair of the selectmen in Charlestown and Medford for nine years and was also the deputy to the General Court of Boston from 1743-1752 (Chan 2003: 80). During his time at the Royall estate, he also hosted numerous social events that were expected of the New England Elite such as balls and parties. It is clear that Isaac Royall Jr. wished to be thought of as not only a powerful man, but generous as well. He donated to various charities and schools such as a public school in Boston and donated funds to rebuild the burnt down library of Harvard University (Chan 2003).

Isaac Royall Jr.'s adventures in New England ended with the outbreak of the revolutionary war. Although he was not a militant royalist, he found himself in a situation where he believed it would be best to support the British cause and ultimately fled to England where his health and wealth quickly declined. He died there in 1781. He was perceived as a traitor by the new government in Massachusetts and his property was later confiscated by the state (Chan 2003: 83).

## Archaeology

From 1999 through 2001, the Boston University Department of Anthropology conducted an archaeological investigation of various locations on the Isaac Royall property (Ten Hills Farm) in Medford, Massachusetts under the direction of Dr. Ricardo Elia. The investigations focused on the areas around the main house, the quarter, and the courtyard in between the two existing structures (Chan 2003: 146). The excavations were able to verify the historical and archaeological significance of the site as well as produce cultural material that is relative to this thesis. Many of the artifacts recovered by the excavation and described by Chan's dissertation illustrate the condition of double consciousness in the enslaved population under the oppression of the Royall family.

Most of the artifacts that are relevant for discussion in this study are domestic in nature. They not only attest to the functional aspect of life under slavery in New England, but also to the internal struggles and identities of the people who did the daily work of the Ten Hills Farm enterprise. Each artifact was used and in some cases, constructed and modified with the dual nature of African American life under slavery in mind. Since the enslaved people of the Royall farm lived in such close proximity to their enslavers, not every artifact in the collection can be definitively defined as being used by the African American or European American residents of the Ten Hills Farm. There is also a danger that almost any unusual artifact can be read as African, American, or both. Because of these concerns, only those artifacts

that were very likely to be used exclusively by the enslaved population and exhibit both American and African attributes at the Ten Hills Farm have been examined for evidence of double consciousness.

Most of the artifacts recovered in the slave quarter area were of low quality materials for the time such as black glazed course earthenware (Chan 2003). This is not surprising, but it illustrates the difference in class between the two cultures that inhabited the site. While many of the artifacts that were used by the African Americans at the farm were “hand me downs”, some such as marbles, gaming pieces, and tobacco pipes were made or modified by their users. In some cases, the Royalls may have given their enslaved workers better quality materials, but probably only when such material had served out its useful life for the Royall family.

Marbles are an example of artifacts that would have been manufactured by the people who use them. Chan points out that since marbles was considered to be a boy’s game and that the Royalls only had girls, the ones found at the site were most likely the property of African American children (Chan 2003: 317). Since the African American children were likely the exclusive players of the game, the marbles and the game associated with it were likely to be considered to be an activity unique to them. While one does not usually consider marbles to be a uniquely African pastime, at the Royall estate it may have been considered part of the African portion of the player’s consciousness. This would especially be true if it became a way for the children to separate themselves from their work activities which were exclusively for the benefit of the European American inhabitants of the site. The game would have been an escape from their enslavers and a chance to bond with their African

American friends. They may have seen the marbles as African, but through the lens of the European American culture around them. They were toys for use during their free time, and they contributed to making them different from the non African members of New England society.

A pair of Dutch delftware gaming pieces was also recovered from the area around the quarter and was probably used by both children and adults in the African American household. Chan notes that both pieces feature a fleur-de-lis pattern and may have been crafted intentionally so that they would match (Chan 2003: 327). It is interesting to note that although the pieces themselves were made of European clay and by a European potter, they were crafted by the African American players to conform to their games. Although the enslaved people would be playing a game that may have been African in origin and would most definitely be only played with other enslaved people, the fact that the material itself was reflective of their European American world must have further underscored their dual consciousness as it related to their game playing activities. The fact that the imported ceramic tile is something that only a free person and a controller of societies means of production could afford and use for its intended purpose would emphasize the separation of the African American residents and the European American residents of the farm, but would have also shown how the two cultures functioned in a closely knit social system.

Fragments of a French tin glazed earthenware plate were also recovered from the area around the quarter. Such an item would only be available to the upper class residents of New England such as the Royalls. After the plate was broken, however, it was mended back together with a tar-like substance used as the glue (Chan 2003:

328). It is unlikely that the Royalls would have taken the time to do this. Their enslaved workers probably recovered the plate after it was discarded. The enslaved people at the Ten Hills Farm would have known about the value of the plate and would have understood the status that such an item would have conveyed. If they did indeed reconstruct and use the plate as Chan has suggested, it may have served as a status symbol for the Ten Hills Farm workers among the African American community in the area. They would have used a European status symbol and assimilated it into their own dual culture. The plate would have served as a bridge between their African selves and their American selves.

Cultural material recovered from the excavations at the Royall house included evidence that suggest differences in how the African American inhabitants of the Royall farm clothed themselves from how the European Americans did. A square button was recovered from the excavations around the quarter. As Chan states, this may have been done as a way of making a common clothing element different in order to maintain an African identity (Chan 2003: 329-331). Although this was probably true, it is interesting to note that since the buttons probably came from European clothing items, they would contribute to the American portion of the African American consciousness. The fact that the button was different in shape from the European American buttons would have reinforced the African consciousness of the wearer. Warren Perry explains in his report on the archeology at the New York African Burial Ground how things such as buttons were recycled and reshaped for different uses (Bianchi and Bianco 2006: 318). The button may have originally been used for something else, like a cufflink, by the Royalls or their workers and may have

been modified for use as a button when no other buttons were available. Such a situation would add to the dual cultural significance of the button by emphasizing the enslaved class's lack of access to a wide variety of materials and by allowing them to express themselves by modifying the original object.

While many of the artifacts recovered from the Royall site had both African and American characteristics, there were some that were uniquely African in their cultural significance. These items must have helped reinforce the African side of the enslaved occupants' consciousness. One example of these items is a hand drilled stone bead. As Chan points out this may have been used by women to illustrate kinship ties (Chan 2003: 334). Another example of this type of artifact was an arrowhead amulet found in the yard of the quarter. Chan states that the design and structure of the artifact indicate that it was not intended for use as a weapon, but as a spiritual tool (Chan 2003: 337). While the use of charms was employed in African religious practices (Chan 2003: 337, Ward 1958: 32), their use on a combination of African and American culture must have taken on special meanings. For example, according to Chan, Africans would sometimes curate Native American artifacts and use them in their own religious practices (Chan 2003: 339). At the Ten Hills Farm, an Archaic Native American pestle recovered from the site may have been used for this purpose. By incorporating a Native American object into African American spiritual beliefs and practices, it shows that the American side of enslaved peoples' double consciousness had influences from both European and Native American culture. A black glazed coarseware teacup from the area around the quarter had heavy wear and because of the uniqueness of the find, may have been used for

religious practices (Chan 2003: 342). This is another example of a European or American manufactured good being employed to reinforce the double culture of the African Americans at Ten Hills Farm.

The artifacts discussed in this chapter are unique because their context places them in a situation where they can be clearly linked to both the African and American aspects of the enslaved people at the Ten Hills Farm. Things such as clothing, the European manufactured delft plate and the arrowhead amulet fit into the dual aspect of their culture well. This does not mean that there are no other artifacts from the Royall House site that may exhibit aspects of double consciousness, but they were not discussed in this thesis because they did not exhibit double consciousness as well archaeologically as the highlighted artifacts did.

People living under slavery in colonial New England lived in a situation that is vastly different from any other cultural group experience. Some of the individuals who lived there may have been brought directly from Africa and would have been thrown into Euro-American culture like someone being thrown into a cold swimming pool. The shock of their new status combined with their new culture that would exist alongside their old culture must have created great anxiety. Others were probably born into the dual culture and since they had lived with it their entire lives, their perception of living in two worlds may not have been noticeable unless they really stopped to think about it or if it were suggested to them. The two cultures, African and American would have seemed as one, but the knowledge of their dual selves may have been present in their subconscious minds.

In the European American culture of eighteenth century New England, the role of the African American was clear. Although many during this time were aware of the immorality of slavery, African Americans were thought of as property. Slavery was institutionalized through the law and the status of enslaved people was defined in the Constitution of the United States, as being a percentage of a person. This legal status helped African Americans define who they were, but when they were given equal rights as European Americans under the law, they were still faced with racism and inequality under the European American capitalist system.

## **Chapter 5: The Casey Farm**

The Casey Farm is located in Saunderstown, Rhode Island, which is in Washington County in between the village of Wickford and the town of Narragansett. The first records of ownership of the land are from a deed in the mid seventeenth century which lists the owner as Major Humphrey Atherton (Lewis 1998: 7-12). In 1781, the owner of the property, Daniel Coggershall, died and left the property to his son-in-law Silas Casey. Casey used the place as a retirement home for himself and leased out portions of the farm to various tenants. These tenants occupied what would be considered the lower classes of the time. They were Native Americans and African Americans (Lewis 1998: 5). The Native American tenants were the first to occupy the property as tenant farmers, but they were only there from 1802 until 1803. After the Native American occupants left, the tenant house and surrounding land was leased to African American tenants who lived there from 1804 until 1814.

### **Archaeology**

The name of the African American tenant was Henry Carr and the house that he occupied was excavated by archaeologists and students from Rhode Island College in 1995 (Lewis 1998: 16). The results of the excavations were studied by Ann-Eliza Lewis and published as a dissertation in 1998. The data from the archaeological excavation indicate that the house had a cut stone foundation and was constructed of timber. Since, according to Lewis, the house was constructed by Casey's father-in-

law and not by Casey or his tenants, it was most likely of European-American design and probably looked like many other small houses in the area. The Carr's vacated the property after Silas Casey died in 1814 and there is no evidence that it was ever occupied again (Lewis 1998:103).

Lewis's evidence that the first occupant of the property, Henry Niles was Native American and that the second occupant, Henry Carr was African American is convincing. She points out that although Niles was sometimes referred to in Casey's records by slang terms generally used with African Americans, he was also referred to as a Native American. It is possible that he was of both native and African descent, but the fact that he attended regular meetings in Charlestown, Rhode Island, where the Narragansett Indian tribe met and did not attend the Negro Election day indicates that Niles considered himself to be a Native American and identified with that culture. Carr did not attend meetings in Charlestown, but did attend Negro Election Day, so he most likely identified himself with the African culture and not with the Native American culture. Also, Carr is consistently referred to as an African American in Casey's records (Lewis 1998:150).

Most of the things found at the site are not that different from any other small house site from the early nineteenth century in rural New England. Eating utensils found at the site were plain and did not bear anything obviously characteristic of African culture. Plain, undecorated pearlware was the most common find at the site. Nevertheless, as Lewis points out, on closer inspection meaning can be derived from what was found there.

Fashionable tableware was recovered from the site, although it is unlikely that the tableware was purchased all at once or in a matched set (Lewis 1998: 163). This would have resulted in a table setting that would have been made of the same basic material as a European American table setting (i.e. pearlware), but the vessels would have been different sizes and styles. These tablewares would have to be purchased with the Carr's money and since there was not likely to be much of that, it would have been difficult for them to have matched sets even if they wanted them. Lewis points out that the mismatched tableware may have been an indicator of ethnicity (Lewis 1998: 214). In the early nineteenth century New England, it is very likely that the members of the Carr family had been born in America and had never seen Africa. Their eating habits would therefore probably be distinctly African American and not solely African. Despite this, the class difference paired with the skin color difference would have reinforced their African identity. The designs on the tableware as well as their form would have been European or European American in nature, but the manner of their use would have been African American. They must have known that they were immersed in a culture that exploited their labor, but their exploiters culture was also part of their culture.

Lewis states that there were few bowls found at the tenant house site, but that there were many plates (Lewis 1998: 159). Although, the plates of the early nineteenth century were less shallow than later ones, it is likely that stews and gumbos were not as prevalent in the African American diet of that time as it was during the time period of the Royall House. By this time, the general style of food may have been similar to European-American food styles, but the Carr's economic

status as well as their racialized position in society would have limited what they could eat. It is very likely that recipes were created that would make the best use of what they could afford. Like the stews did during the eighteenth century, these dishes would have reinforced the African side of the Carr's double consciousness.

The results of the archaeological excavations yielded little redware or other ceramics associated with dairy activities (Lewis 1998: 165). As Lewis points out, the Casey Farm was a dairy farm and it is likely that the Carrs used the facilities there for dairying purposes and perhaps other domestic activities (Lewis 1998:166). This creates an interesting situation. Although the Carrs are free African American citizens, they would share domestic space with their European American landlords. Although, the Caseys would have no legal authority over the Carrs other than that which was stated explicitly in the lease, the difference in status and social standing would be readily visible during the times when the two families would share domestic space. At these times, the Carrs would only be able to see themselves through the veil of the Casey's culture, and the difference between African American and European American would be clear.

The remains of agricultural tools were not identified at the Carr site even though the lease agreement implies that the Carrs engaged in agricultural work (Lewis 1998: 200). This would mean that like the materials associated with dairying, agricultural tools were probably housed and borrowed from Casey. This situation would have been an interesting manifestation of double consciousness for the Carrs. The very tools that were used to sustain their lives did not even belong to them. It is similar to a landscaping or other business today where the company owns the tools

and the employees use them, but in this case, Casey had significantly more power over Carr than an employer-employee relationship. Carr would have had to depend on Casey to provide the tools necessary for the work that fed Carr and his family, not only for the work to meet his contractual obligations with Casey. The tools would have had a dual identity for Carr of a symbol of his servitude and as a provider of his sustenance.

Tobacco pipes that were found at the site were of European manufacture (Lewis 1998: 168). Although there was no obvious indicator of African self identity on the pipes, tobacco smoking was certainly a significant leisure activity for the inhabitants of the Carr household. Leisure time activities such as this were probably done away from the main house and in the presence of other African Americans. It is likely that intimate conversations would be had and stories would be told over a pipe and a bottle of beer or wine. These leisure activities and the objects associated with them would have been part of the African side of the double consciousness of the Carrs even though the objects themselves, like the tobacco pipes, were of European construction. The form of the objects was part of their American selves, but the action of smoking was part of their African selves.

A large amount of buttons were recovered from the site. Lewis calls this a strong indicator of ethnicity (Lewis 1998: 184). It is possible that the large numbers of buttons found at the Carr site was caused by the inhabitants making quilts out of old clothes that may have been discarded by the Casey family (Lewis 1998: 184). This has been the case on other African American sites (Samford 1996: 111). Although the presents of such mismatched pieces of cloth would certainly reinforce

African identity, the material and clothing used to construct the quilts would have most likely been of European or European American manufacture. There would still be a dual interpretation of the cultural significance of the mismatched fabric pieces just as there would be with the mismatched tea set and tablewares. Not completely African, but not completely American either.

Much of the cultural material discussed above is a result of the Carr's lack of accessibilities to certain resources. These objects then obtain an ethnic identity of their own. Despite this, some of the results of the excavations of the house reveal artifacts that may have been used in ways that were intentionally and distinctly African. Some of these practices may have been brought over from East Africa and survived into the nineteenth century. When the archaeologists were excavating around the well they found a small pit feature with a single iron fragment at the bottom of it near the stones of the well. As Lewis points out, iron was considered to have magical properties by some African cultures (Lewis 1998: 225). She states that the iron may have been placed there to protect the purity of the water and ensure that the well would not dry up. The well was not constructed by the Carrs. It was probably constructed by Casey's father in law when he built the house. The well may have subconsciously symbolized the Carr's oppression by the Caseys and they may not have completely trusted the water that came out of the well. Unfortunately, there is no way to tell if this were indeed the case. The example of the iron in the well is an example of the limitations of what archaeology can communicate about things such as spiritual practices. The only thing we know for sure is that there was a piece of iron near the well and it appears that it was buried there. We do not know

who put it there, and even if we did, we cannot ask them why they did it. It is possible that the iron had nothing to do with the Carrs and that the deposit predates their occupancy of the site. Findings such as these, do raise some interesting questions however. There may indeed have been spiritual as well as practical aspects of the Carrs' usage of the well. It was certainly part of the double consciousness of the Carrs and the finding of the iron next to the well is intriguing, but without additional information it is not possible to know exactly how that double consciousness was manifested in the Carr's relationship to the well.

A small blue glass fragment was also found at the site and Lewis suggests that this fragment may have had a spiritual quality to it (Lewis 1998: 227). It is unlikely that the Carrs would have manufactured items such as glass beads themselves. They probably would have been purchased from a store selling European American goods. There is evidence that color blue has spiritual significance in African American culture (Lewis 1998: 229). It is interesting that an item made by European Americans and most likely sold by European Americans to African Americans might be attributed with such protective powers. It seems that the color itself is enough to bestow this power, which would make the object part of the African culture. If the glass fragment were part of a bead, it would have served as personal adornment for the individual who owned it. As Barbara Bianco, C.R. DeCorse, and Jean Howson point out in their discussion on the archaeology of the New York African Burial Ground, items of personal adornment may have been among the most meaningful of artifacts that belonged to enslaved people (Bianco et. al. 2006). The same may be

true of those living under economic oppression after slavery was abolished in New England.

The finding of the blue glass fragment at the Casey Farm tenant house provides a good example of the difficulties in identifying conditions such as double consciousness through archaeology. Without additional contextual information, it is impossible to know the role that the piece of blue glass played in the lives of the Carrs. Nevertheless, it does open up a dialogue about roles that items of personal adornment may have had in the lives of African Americans living in New England during the early national period. Items used as personal adornment, such as beads, might have been part of the double consciousness of the Carr's because the style and make of the object was part of their American selves, but the power and message of self expression of the object was part of their African consciousness.

It is clear that the Carr family saw their African selves only through the veil of the American culture that surrounded them. The boundary between the American side of their consciousness and the African side may have been less distinct than the enslaved people of the Royall household, but it was still well defined. They were African Americans and would not be treated the same as their European American counterparts even though emancipation laws had already been enacted in Rhode Island. There is also no indication that they were much better off economically than they were under slavery either. Although they were technically not the property of Silas Casey, they depended on him for survival and he knew what their daily activities were and recorded them in his log (Lewis 1998). Just like under slavery,

the European Americans controlled the means of production at the Casey Farm while the African Americans were the ones who were doing the producing.

## Chapter 6: Conclusion

History students in the United States have often been taught that although slavery occurred in the North, it was only for a short period of time, was of a benign nature, and ended with white northerners being fiercely opposed to southern slavery and the racism that was associated with it. I specifically remember reading a passage in a textbook that said “Northerners did not have slaves and they did not want them”. It then went on to explain how the New England soil was too rocky for the type of agriculture that went on in the south as well as other reasons why slavery did not make sense in the north.

Numerous studies have shown that this was not the case. Not only did the northern colonies and later states employ the institution of slavery in its labor force, they practiced institutionalized racism and human exploitation well after gradual emancipation laws were enacted. Although this study focuses on the late colonial and early national periods, it is reasonable to assume that exploitative labor practices towards African Americans continued well into the nineteenth century and perhaps beyond. The African Americans who were exploited would have seen themselves through the lens of the European American culture they were in (Du Bois 1989: 5). This lens might have been shaped differently during the time of slavery than it was during the time after the gradual emancipation laws were enacted, but this study has shown similarities in the lives of people living in both time periods.

The enslaved condition of the African Americans who worked at the Isaac Royall house would have had their social position carved out for them by law and

tradition. The law made it explicitly clear that certain people could legally own others and that enslaved people were little more than the property of their European American masters. Although the enslaved people at the Royall house may have had a material quality of life that was similar to other poor New Englanders in the area, their owners could manipulate every aspect of their private lives. The Royalls could have at any time, ventured into their workers private space and abuse the enslaved African Americans living there. The people who were subject to this oppression would have had little legal or physical recourse for such abuse. Even if an enslaved individual were inclined to remove him or herself from the situation by escaping, most would have had families and most would not be willing to risk putting those families in danger.

At the time when W.E.B. DuBois was writing about double consciousness, slavery had ended in the United States and the tenant farming situation of the Carrs would not have been in place. African Americans were facing a much different situation in post bellum and early twentieth century New England than in the time periods focused on in this study. Nevertheless, there was still racial oppression and the oppressive nature of European American culture helped shape the lens of double consciousness during Du Bois' time (Du Bois 1993: 10). In Chapter one of *The Souls of Black Folk*, Du Bois writes:

“The Nation has not yet found peace from its sins; the freedman has not yet found in freedom his promised land” (Du Bois 1993: 12”).

It is clear that in Du Bois' time that although African Americans were not enslaved, old racial hatreds and prejudices still helped shape the lives of both African Americans and European Americans. Despite this, the condition of double consciousness in the colonial period, the early national period, and the late nineteenth to early twentieth century, was not the same. This study has shown, however, that there is evidence of the dualism that Du Bois was referring to in the cultural material and its context that was left at the Royall House and the Casey Farm.

The artifacts and their context show the dual nature of the consciousness of the people at the Royall House site. The repaired French tin glazed earthenware plate, for example, shows their reliance on European or European American manufactured goods as well as the infusion of European socioeconomic system into their culture. The cultural implications of other items, such as the square button, might not have been as obvious, but would have certainly been part of the double consciousness of the enslaved people at the Royall House not only because the style of clothing would have been different from African styles of clothing, but because it would have also been different from European American clothing styles.

The African Americans who lived at the tenant house at the Casey Farm entered into their contract with their landlord willingly. They were not enslaved and were only bound to serve Silas Casey through the written document that outlined their labor agreements. Nevertheless, the Carr family would have felt compelled to enter into this agreement with Casey because it would ensure their economic survival. It is unlikely that they would have been able to find much work elsewhere. The written

agreement between Silas Casey and Henry Carr provides a glimpse of the lens that the Carr family would have seen themselves through:

“March 26/1805 after the rate of Eighty Dollars for one years labor with the Privilege of the Hous & Lott a jining that he improved last year also the Privilege of one aker of land in the 8 aker lott to plant he paying the Epense of Plowing & Howing & So forth (Lewis 1998: 103).”

Much of this language implies an adversarial relationship between Casey and Carr. It also explicitly shows that Casey considers himself to be Carr's social better. It reads very similar to a medieval feudal agreement between a lord and a vassal. The use of the house is described as being a “privilege”. The use of the land is described as being a “privilege” as well. Although Carr is paid for his labor, it is likely that this money only provided for the Carr family's immediate needs as well as “the Expense of Plowing and Hoeing and so forth”. This condition seems to share some similarities to slavery. The dual nature of the consciousness of the Carrs would have been manifested in artifacts recovered from their house site. For example, the table setting would have shown the double consciousness of the Carr's very well because although their economic situation limited what they could have resulting in things such as incomplete and mismatched table settings, the result would be a display that was uniquely African American. The veil between European American and African American was still very thick. Nevertheless, technically the Carrs were free and must have taken some pride in that even though the freedom was mostly in name only.

In recent years, many other studies have been done on intersecting cultures and ethnicities. Stephen Silliman explores the issue of colonialism at Rancho Petaluma in nineteenth century northern California (Silliman 2004). He takes a theoretical approach to his studies that views labor as a social phenomenon (Silliman

2001: 379). A good example of this type of approach is his study of colonialism at Rancho Pataluma in Northern California where he examines the archaeological record in order to fill gaps in the historical documents regarding the lives of native people living there in the nineteenth century (Silliman 2004). The labor related artifacts found at the site such as hunting tools and sewing materials as well as certain cultural features provide clues as to how these people used labor for different purposes in their relationships such as resistance and identity maintenance (Silliman 2004). It is likely that the indigenous people at Rancho Pataluma also experienced a type of double consciousness in their lives. This consciousness would have been different from the African Americans of colonial and early national southern New England, but it is possible that there would have been some similarities and that these similarities may be visible in the archaeological record.

Silliman (2006) presents a need for an increase in the use of labor as a key to social interaction and presents other such endeavors that do so, such as the study of the Colorado Coal Field War (Ludlow Collective 2001; McGuire and Reckner 2002; Saitta 2004). While this thesis did not focus exclusively on labor, labor was a key component in the interactions between enslaved and enslaver at the Royall House and landowner and tenant at the Casey Farm and like the Indians of the ranchos, the African American contribution to the general history of southern New England is underrepresented in the written documents of the applicable time period. Silliman's theoretical approach of conceptualizing labor as practice would be worth keeping in mind when excavating sites in New England where labor and the relationships surrounding it figure so prominently in the lives of the inhabitants. Also, the use of

double consciousness as a theoretical perspective may be helpful in many situations where the boundaries of different cultures intersect not just African American sites.

Archaeology is not the only way to discover manifestations of double consciousness. In fact, there is much that archaeology can not tell us about this state of self perception. Things such as songs, stories, and oral history are absent in the archaeological record. Only the people who lived at the Royall House and the Casey Farm know for sure what their lives were like, but unfortunately they are no longer around to share their experiences. They and people from similar situations have sometimes been able to directly communicate certain aspects of their lives under oppression through narratives, such as the case of Venture Smith (Cottrol 1998), but even these do not convey all aspects of African American life. There are, of course, written historical accounts that describe African American life in the colonial and early national periods, but all of the problems with written history apply to these accounts. Issues such as slavery and oppression are even more susceptible to the problems associated with written history because of institutional racism and conscious or subconscious attempts to alter information in order to make a certain group look a certain way.

In his book *Dusk of Dawn*, W.E.B. Dubois states that:

“...the main avenue to social power and class domination is wealth: income and oligarchic economic power, the consequent political power and the prestige of those who own and control capital and distribute credit (Dubois 2007: 96).”

From these words and the results of this study, it is clear that free tenant farmers of the nineteenth century and enslaved African Americans of the eighteenth century

shared many similarities as well as some differences. If wealth truly is the main avenue to social power and class domination then the European Americans had this domination over the African Americans in the early national period of southern New England regardless of official classifications. Nevertheless, tenant farmers of the early national period differed from enslaved people of the colonial period because they voluntarily entered into their labor agreement whereas enslaved people were forced into it. The Casey's control over the Carrs was limited to economic and labor related activities, but the Royall's control over the people whom they enslaved extended to all aspects of life. The veil that separated African from American was thick under slavery and tenant farming and the double consciousness of the inhabitants of both sites illustrates this fact. It is clear that a new approach to the study of the social relationships between African American and European Americans during other time periods may be beneficial. Such an approach may even change the way we perceive our society today. It is likely that the veil is still there, but we may not know how it manifests itself.

## References

Adovasio, J.M., Olga Soffer, and Jack Page

2007 *The Invisible Sex: Uncovering the True Roles of Women in Prehistory*.

Harper Collins, New York.

Alridge, Derrick P,

1999 Guiding Philosophical Principles for a Du Boisian-Based African American

Educational Model. *The Journal of Negro Education* 68(2):82-199.

Barth, Frederick

1969 *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture*

*Difference*. Waveland Press, Prospect Heights.

Bianchi, Leonard G. and Barbara Bianco

2006 New York African Burial Ground Archaeology Final Report. Chapter 12.

Buttons and Fasteners.

[http://www.africanburialground.gov/FinalReports/Archaeology/ABG\\_Ch12F](http://www.africanburialground.gov/FinalReports/Archaeology/ABG_Ch12F)

EB.pdf, Accessed April 12, 2009.

Bianco, Barbara, Christopher R. DeCorse and Jean Howson

2006 New York African Burial Ground Archaeology Final Report. Chapter 13.

Beads and Other Adornment.

[http://www.africanburialground.gov/FinalReports/Archaeology/ABG\\_Ch13F](http://www.africanburialground.gov/FinalReports/Archaeology/ABG_Ch13F)

EB.pdf, Accessed April 12, 2009

Chan, Alexandra A.

2003 *The Slaves of Colonial New England: Discourses of Colonialism and*

*Identity at the Isaac Royall House, Medford, Massachusetts, 1732-1775*. Ph.

D. dissertation, Boston University, Boston. University Microfilms, Ann Arbor.

Cottrol, Robert J. (editor)

1998 *From African to Yankee: Narratives of Slavery and Freedom in Antebellum New England*. M.E. Sharpe, Armonk.

Coughtry, Jamie and Jay Coughtry

1985 Black Pauper Burial Records: Providence, Rhode Island, 1777-1831. *Rhode Island History* 44(4):109-119.

Coughtry, Jay

1981 *The Notorious Triangle: Rhode Island and the African Slave Trade, 1700-1807*. Temple University Press, Philadelphia.

Davis, Paul

2005 Unrighteous Traffic, Buying and Selling the Human Species: Newport and the Slave Trade. *The Providence Sunday Journal* 12 March:A1, A10. Providence.

Deetz, James and Patricia S. Deetz

2000 *The Times of their Lives: Life, Love, and Death in Plymouth Colony*. W. H. Freeman, New York.

Du Bois, William E. B.

1989 *The Souls of Black Folk*. Penguin Books, New York.

1993 *The Souls of Black Folk*. Random House, New York.

2007 *The Souls of Black Folk*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Fitts, Robert K.

1998 *Inventing New England's Slave Paradise: Master/Slave Relationships in Eighteenth Century Narragansett, Rhode Island*. Garland Publications, New York.

Garman, James C.

1992 "Faithful and Loyal Servants": *The Masking and Marking of Ethnicity in the Material Culture of Death*. South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology, Charleston, South Carolina.

1994 Viewing the Color Line Through the Material Culture of Death. *Historical Archaeology* 28(3):74-93.

1998 Rethinking "Resistant Accommodation": Toward an Archaeology of African-American Lives in Southern New England, 1638-1800.

Gidwitz, Tom

2005 Freeing Captive History: The Hunt for Evidence of Slavery in the North. *Archaeology* March/April 2005.

Koo, Kathryn S.

2007 Strangers in the House of God: Cotton Mather, Onesimus, and an Experiment in Christian Slaveholding. *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* 117(1):143-176.

Koptyoff, Igor

1986 The Cultural Biography of Things. In *The Social Life of Things*, edited by A. Appadurai, pp. 377-397. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Leone, Mark P., Parker B. Potter, and Paul A. Shackel

1987 Toward a Critical Archaeology. *Current Anthropology* 28:283-302.

Leone, Mark P.

2005 *The Archaeology of Liberty in an American Capital: Excavations in Annapolis*. University of California Press, Berkeley.

Lewis, Ann-Eliza

1998 *Defining and Creating African-American Identity: An Archaeological Study of Ethnicity at Casey Farm, Saunderstown, Rhode Island, 1790-1820*. Ph. D. dissertation, Boston University, Boston. University Microfilms, Ann Arbor.

Ludlow Collective

2001 Archaeology of the Colorado Coal Field War, 1913-1914. In *Archaeologies of the Contemporary Past*, edited by Victor Buchli and Gavin Lucas, pp. 94-107. Routledge, London.

McGuire, Randall H.

1992 *A Marxist Archaeology*. Academic Press, San Diego.

McGuire, Randall H. and Paul Reckner

2002 The Unromantic West: Labor, Capital, and Struggle. *Historical Archaeology* 36(3):44-58.

Melish, Joanne P.

1998 *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and "Race" in New England, 1780-1860*. Cornell University Press, Ithaca.

Moore, George H.

1866 *Notes on the History of Slavery in Massachusetts*. D. Appelton and Co., New York.

Mrozowski, S. A., E. L. Bell, M. C. Beaudry, D. B. Landon, and G. K. Kelso

1989 Living on the Boott: Health and Well Being in a Boardinghouse Population.  
*World Archaeology* 21:298-319.

Mullins, Paul R.

1999 *Race and Affluence: An Archaeology of African America and Consumer Culture*. Plenum Publishers, New York.

Olmstead, Frederick R.

1953 *The Cotton Kingdom; a Traveler's Observations on Cotton and Slavery in the American Slave States. Based Upon Three Former Volumes of Journeys and Investigations by the Same Author*. Knopf, New York.

Patterson, Thomas C.

2003 *Marx's Ghost: Conversations with Archaeologists*. Berg, Oxford.

Paynter, Robert

1988 Steps to an Archaeology of Capitalism: Material Change and Class Analysis. In *The Recovery of Meaning: Historical Archaeology in the Eastern United States*, edited by M. Leone and P. B. Potter, pp. 407-433. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington.

1990 Afro-Americans in the Massachusetts Historical Landscape. In *The Politics of the Past*, edited by Peter Gathercole and David Lowenthal, pp. 49-62. Unwin Hyman, London.

1992 W.E.B. Du Bois and the Material World of African-Americans in Great Barrington, Massachusetts. *Critique of Anthropology* 12(3):277-291.

Pierson, W. D.

1988 *Black Yankees: The Development of an Afro-American Subculture in Eighteenth-Century New England*. University of Massachusetts Press, Amherst.

Saitta, Dean J.

2004 Labor and Class in the American West. In *North American Archaeology*, edited by Timothy R. Pauketat and Diana DiPaolo Loren, pp. 359-385. Blackwell, Malden.

Samford, Patricia

1996 The Archaeology of African-American Slavery and Material Culture. *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3<sup>rd</sup> series 53(1):87-113.

Schultz, Eric B. and Michael J. Tougias

1995 *King Phillip's War: The History and Legacy of America's Forgotten Conflict*. The Countryman Press, Woodstock.

Scranton, Philip

1984 Varieties of Paternalism: Industrial Structures and the Social Relations of Production in American Textiles. *American Quarterly* 36(2):235-257.

Sheldon, George

1893 Negro Slavery in Old Deerfield. *New England Magazine* 8(New Series):49-59.

Silliman, Stephen W.

2001 Theoretical Perspectives on Labor and Colonialism: Reconsidering the California Missions. *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 20:379-407.

2004 *Lost Laborers in Colonial California: Native Americans and the Archaeology of Rancho Pataluma*. University of Arizona Press. Tucson.

Silliman, Stephen W.

2006 *Struggling with Labor, Working with Identities*. In *Historical Archaeology*, edited by Martin Hall and Stephen W. Silliman, pp. 147-166. Blackwell, Malden.

Stachiw, Myron O.

1983 "For the Sake of Commerce": Rhode Island, Slavery, and the Textile Industry. An essay to accompany the exhibit "The Loom and the Lash: Northern Industry and Southern Slavery". Rhode Island Historical Society, Providence.

Sweet, John W.

1997 *Negotiating Freedom: Slaves, Masters, and Values in Late Eighteenth-Century Rhode Island*. Part of "The Institute of Early American History and Culture Colloquium". The Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg.

Tashjian, Ann and Dickran Tashjian

1989 *The Afro-American Section of Newport, Rhode Island's Common Burying Ground*. In *Cemeteries and Gravemarkers: Voices of American Culture*, edited by Richard E. Meyer, pp. 163-196. U.M.I. Research Press, Ann Arbor.

Thompson, Robert F.

1983 *Flash of the Spirit: African and Afro-American Art and Philosophy*. Random House, New York.

Wylie, Alison

1999 Why Should Historical Archaeologists Study Capitalism?: The Logic of Question and Answer and the Challenge of Systemic Analysis. in *Historical Archaeologies of Capitalism*, edited by Mark P. Leone and Parker B. Potter Jr., Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers, New York.

## **Vita**

Frederick William Lumb is originally from East Greenwich, Rhode Island and received his Bachelor of Science degree from Mercyhurst College in Erie Pennsylvania in 2000. After graduation from Mercyhurst, Fred spent a summer working on field excavation and faunal analysis at Castro de Chao Samartin in Grandas de Salime in Asturias, Spain. He then found employment at various cultural resource management firms throughout the southeast and mid-Atlantic states. He entered the M.A. program at the College of William and Mary in 2004. Since then, he has been employed as a project archaeologist by the James River Institute for Archaeology in Williamsburg, Virginia. Fred lives with his fiancé, Courtney and their two cats.