# *Contesting Slave Masculinity in the American South* by David Stefan Doddington (review)

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Jackson's sophisticated efforts to reach beyond Congress to shape public opinion (p. 13). In a forerunner to twentieth-century communications teams, Jackson collaborated with advisers like Andrew Jackson Donelson, Martin Van Buren, John H. Eaton, and Amos Kendall to strategically adapt and distribute his views to the public. By examining subtleties of team members' drafts, Kiewe reveals the array of rhetorical sensitivities that informed Jackson as he adapted his messages regarding nullification, the national bank, and other vexing issues. Alongside analyses of how campaign surrogates and visual artists shaped Jackson's public persona, Kiewe makes a compelling case for Jackson as "the first rhetorical president" (p. 243).

Centering each chapter on a specific rhetorical act or policy area, Kiewe seldom veers far from Jackson's compositional process and the choices represented by his rhetoric. The advantage of this approach is that it highlights political pressures and contingent choices, complicating clear-cut moral judgments of the seventh president and his legacy. Disadvantageously, the approach separates Jackson's rhetoric into discrete silos, foreclosing opportunities to highlight thematic connections across texts.

For example, Kiewe misses an opportunity to interrogate the relationship between Jackson's racist ideology and his conception of national identity. In a chapter on Native American removal, Kiewe discusses at length the racism embedded in Jackson's rhetoric. Yet elsewhere in the book, this racism is treated as a passive element of Jackson's ideology—as "blind spots" common to his era (p. 3). In turn, Kiewe does not factor race into his assessments of how Jackson characterized American identity during major speeches like his first inaugural address. Ultimately, Kiewe concludes that Jackson "constituted 'the people' as a new political force comprised of laborers, shopkeepers, mechanics, and farmers"—a racially neutral depiction (p. 245). Following the lead of presidential scholarship like Vanessa B. Beasley's book *You, the People: American National Identity in Presidential Rhetoric* (College Station, Tex., 2004), Kiewe could have productively scrutinized how Jackson's pronouncements of indigenous "savagery" constituted, by antithesis, the normative whiteness of the American "people."

Despite these omissions, Kiewe accomplishes a great deal. He convincingly illustrates Jackson's role in expanding the persuasive powers of the presidency. He rigorously synthesizes and contextualizes more than a decade of presidential rhetoric. He provides intricate analyses of Jackson's decisions and justifications, offering a nuanced examination of national politics in the 1830s and 1840s. Ultimately, his portrayal helps further complicate the debate over Jackson's place in American public memory.

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*Contesting Slave Masculinity in the American South*. By David Stefan Doddington. Cambridge Studies on the American South. (New York and other cities: Cambridge University Press, 2018. Pp. xii, 246. $49.99, ISBN 978-1-108-42398-4.)

There is, perhaps, no better-known account of hard-won masculinity among enslaved men in the antebellum South than Frederick Douglass's recounting of

his fight with so-called slave breaker Edward Covey. "You have seen how a man was made a slave; you shall see how a slave was made a man," Douglass wrote in his first autobiography (*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* [Boston, 1845], pp. 65–66). After an intense two-hour physical confrontation, Douglass bested Covey and emerged transformed by his victory—he was "made a man."

While Douglass's illustration of his own manhood was undoubtedly one powerful example of masculinity as performed by an enslaved man, David Stefan Doddington offers insight into other, often competing, conceptions of enslaved men's masculinities. In *Contesting Slave Masculinity in the American South*, Doddington argues that historians have been too quick to assume that enslaved communities had a singular approach to resisting enslavers' attempts to emasculate enslaved men. Instead, Doddington draws our attention to fractures within enslaved communities and to hierarchies based on class, sex, and status. Through his exploration of multiple sites of masculine performance, including resistance and fugitivity, trusteeship and authority, work and providership, sexual violence and virility, and violence and leisure, Doddington argues that enslaved communities did not hold a monolithic ideal of masculinity. Rather, he shows that enslaved men performed many forms of masculinity and often confronted and contested other enslaved men who did not conform to their particular notion of appropriate masculine behavior. Overall, the book makes excellent use of close readings of texts written by formerly enslaved people, as well as the Works Progress Administration narratives from the New Deal era, to illustrate how enslaved people thought about masculinity and performed it. The latter sources, in particular, allow Doddington to incorporate formerly enslaved women's voices into his discussion of masculinity.

Further, *Contesting Slave Masculinity in the American South* troubles the agency-resistance dichotomy that has loomed over scholarship about enslaved people's lives. While the first chapter of the text offers a familiar argument about the centrality of the image of heroic fugitives from slavery in abolitionist discourse (for example, Douglass), the remainder of the book complicates this story by articulating other ways enslaved men performed masculinity. Instead of equating masculinity with resistance, Doddington has found compelling evidence that enslaved men in positions of authority—overseers or drivers—articulated a rival masculinity centered on negotiation and occasionally collaboration with enslavers. In the case of Josiah Henson, for example, it sometimes involved prohibiting other enslaved people from escaping. Another chapter explores enslaved family life and shows how some enslaved men tacked their sense of masculinity to familial obligation through the work they performed and their economic responsibilities, as well as the protection they provided.

In one of the crucial insights of the book, Doddington explores how for some enslaved men notions of what it meant to be a man were quite different. Some articulations of masculinity, he argues, were violent, particularly toward other enslaved people. In an important chapter on sex and power, Doddington argues that sexual dominance—including sexual violence—was also a site of constructing one form of masculinity. Sexual pressures, threats of rape, and homicide cases clearly illustrate the brutal reality of the effects of this masculinity for enslaved women. In this section of the text, Doddington is effective in

showing that categories of difference—explicitly sex—continued to matter in enslaved communities.

In sum, Doddington offers new insight that provides a complex understanding of the messiness of masculinity. His examination opens a window into how enslaved men made lives for themselves and their families, and it uncovers a history of masculinity that does not always map easily onto stories of heroism.

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*Fugitive Slaves and Spaces of Freedom in North America*. Edited by Damian Alan Pargas. Southern Dissent. (Gainesville and other cities: University Press of Florida, 2018. Pp. xii, 321. $90.00, ISBN 978-0-8130-5603-6.)

*Fugitive Slaves and Spaces of Freedom in North America* is the first edited collection that focuses on runaway slaves within different regions of North America. Exploring diverse geographies of freedom, the volume collects numerous chapters on runaway slaves who made their way north, south, east, and west. Expanding on geographical narratives previously limited to those runaway slaves who made their way to freedom in the North, the edition offers that freedom was a consistently relative concept for African Americans and that slaves often found informal freedom through pathways different from the memorialized treks of the Underground Railroad. As part of the celebrated Southern Dissent series from the University Press of Florida, *Fugitive Slaves and Spaces of Freedom in North America* complicates these simple narratives of northern freedom through novel geographical topics chosen by editor Damian Alan Pargas.

The introduction outlines these innovative historiographical dialogues by referencing the works of Eric Foner, John Hope Franklin and Loren Schweninger, Matthew J. Clavin, and others. The first chapter focuses on slave agency by connecting a timeline of the runaway phenomenon to well before the American Revolution. Although most of *Fugitive Slaves and Spaces of Freedom in North America* centers on diverse regions, this first chapter from Graham Russell Gao Hodges highlights a diachronic understanding of historical and moral high points when slaves found various pathways to autonomy, which were frequently provided within Spanish Florida, as a part of black Loyalism, and through the early routes of the Underground Railroad.

The volume turns to a geographical organization for the rest of the work. The next three chapters focus on complicating the history of freedom in the U.S. North and in Canada. Concentrating on Benjamin Drew's collection of slave narratives in *The Refugee: or, The Narratives of Fugitive Slaves in Canada* (1856), Gordon S. Barker looks at the racism of early Ontario to portray how slaves who bought into the moral "principle talk" of British leadership were often betrayed when expecting to find a racial haven in Canada (p. 38). Although free in principle, many of these free people of color encountered intense social repression and legalized racism, including in British educational systems.

Roy E. Finkenbine continues this northern focus with an analysis of early manifestations of the Underground Railroad in the Old Northwest. Looking at