The site will be an asset to faculty who teach world history, U.S. history, British history, and Latin American history. Furthermore, the site will also prove useful to those of us researching the African Diaspora in the greater Atlantic world.

Professor Rachel O’Toole, Department of History, UC Irvine
Sources from a multitude of archives and libraries illustrate the enormous breadth and variety of slave experience over the last five centuries. Correspondence, rare books, maps, ship’s logs, visual sources and manuscript accounts offer a diverse array of research opportunities.

“There are records of the Royal African Company, details of coastal forts, volumes of transactions, and spectacular maps of the African Coast from The National Archives, UK. First hand descriptions cover the operation of the slave trade on the west coast of Africa.

The Davenport Papers from Merseyside Maritime Museum provide both a human and economic perspective on the Middle Passage.

From Louisiana State University we include plantation journals, account books, lists of slaves and correspondence. Urban and domestic experience is well-documented through the collections of Long Island University, the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

For the first time all Supreme Court records relating to slavery from Louisiana, North Carolina, Georgia and Missouri are available together in digital form, along with material from various lower courts. Such records show the variety of positions and places slaves worked in, from mines, roads, railways, waterways, mills and shops to fields and households.

“The varied meanings of slavery, and its broader and deeper impact upon societies and individuals, have received much attention in recent years, yet there is much more to uncover.”

Professor Alan Gallay, Department of History, Ohio State University
Resistance

This resource offers a broad range of documents illustrating many different forms of resistance: from the Underground Railroad to slave rebellions in the Caribbean; and from nineteenth century abolitionists to everyday acts of resistance.

Collections from Duke University explore both the political debate surrounding abolition and the vast network of people who helped fugitive slaves. Material from the Historical Society of Pennsylvania covers the role of Philadelphia abolitionists and documents the activities of William Still and other members of the Underground Railroad.

There are sources from The National Archives, UK relating to the Demerera and Essequibo Riots of 1823, Tacky’s Rebellion (1760), the Second Maroon War (1795-6), the Christmas Rebellion (1831-2) and other key Caribbean uprisings.

From the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture there is fascinating material on Toussaint L’Ouverture, slave rebellion in Haiti, independence and post 1801 developments. Maroon communities in the Carolinas and in Brazil are also covered.

The court records provide a unique insight into various forms of resistance including runaway slaves, poisonings and outbursts of violence.

“All slaves opposed slavery not all of them resisted it. Just as there were multiple forms of conflict and oppression so too were there multiple forms of opposition and resistance – cultural, ideological, economic, political, passive, violent, individual and collective. Patterns of resistance were, to a large extent, shaped by peculiar circumstances. The urge to resist was almost certainly universal.”

Professor Sylvia Frey, Department of History, Tulane University
Social Justice

From the aftermath of the Emancipation Proclamation in 1865, to the continuing struggle against modern day slavery in its varied forms, social justice is a crucial part of the history of slavery. The battle for education, equality and fair treatment for African Americans after 1865 and the ongoing efforts of Anti-Slavery International and Free the Slaves to combat people trafficking, bonded labour and child slavery across the world are well-documented here.

We include the remarkable archives of Berea College, founded in 1855 as the first inter-racial and coeducational college in the South. Documents that reveal the efforts to assist freed slaves and the role of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands are also included.

Contemporary sources include Submissions to the UNCHR, annual reports, publications, educational material and ephemera from Anti-Slavery International. These documents take the history of slavery and bring it right up to date, demonstrating that slavery is unfortunately not an issue confined to history.

“In 2008 there were an estimated 27 million people in slavery around the world.”

Kevin Bales, President, Free the Slaves
Overview

This is an essential and groundbreaking resource for the study of slavery, the African American experience and world history.

Providing unparalleled access to archival sources from around the globe, this resource will prove invaluable to students and scholars alike.

Key subjects covered:

» Slavery in the Early Americas
» African Coast
» The Middle Passage
» Slavery and Agriculture
» Urban and Domestic Slavery
» Resistance and Revolts
» Underground Railroad
» The Abolition movement and the Slavery Debate
» Legislation: Enactment and Enforcement
» Freed Slaves, Freedmen and Free Black Settlements
» Education
» Slavery and the Islamic World
» Varieties of Slave Experience
» The Legacy of Slavery and Slavery Today

“The rise and decline of transatlantic slavery – and its relationship to the growth of national states and to imperialism – have been critical in defining the modern world. This resource will do much to raise international awareness and understanding of the human costs of one of the most powerful forces to have shaped it.”

Professor David Richardson, Department of History, University of Hull
Participating Libraries

This resource includes new digitised content from 26 libraries and archives from both sides of the Atlantic. To further contextualise the subject and augment this wealth of material we have provided links to over one hundred scholarly resources on the web. The principal participants are identified below:

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