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Reputation and 'Reputational Entrepreneurship' in the Colonial South and Early Republic: The Case of Plantation Overseers.

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Abstract: Overseers were essential both to the profitability of North American slave plantations and to maintaining white racial hegemony. Yet they and their families were frequently condemned by planters as shiftless, incompetent, dishonest and brutal. Drawing on the sociology of reputation, and in particular the concept of 'reputational entrepreneurship,' it is here argued that the damning claims made by planters, and the responses of overseers and their wives, reveal an on-going and significant social conflict, within white colonial society, between wealthy, but insecure, planter 'patriarchs' and their free, ambitious and independently minded employees.

Reputation and 'Reputational Entrepreneurship' in the Colonial South and Early Republic: The Case of Plantation Overseers.[1]

While historians have long concerned themselves with shaping (and oft-times revising) individual's post-mortem reputations, they have paid little attention to reputation as a historical phenomenon in its own right, or to understanding its prosaic but significant role in political, cultural, and socio-economic relationships. In one of the few historical works to treat the subject seriously, the medievalists Thelma Fenster and Daniel Lord Smail have noted 'how talk could fly with astonishing rapidity from mouth to ear; how images could be fixed, information conveyed, and reputations, made – or lost – thereby,' and how important this was, especially in terms of an individual's consequent legal and social standing.[2] Historians should note this well and consider reputation as a crucial and malleable component of social capital (understood here as 'the resources, trust and networks that are constitutive of social capacity and empowerment') held collectively by groups or by an individual.[3] The sociologist Gary Fine has usefully defined a reputation as 'a socially recognised persona: an organising principle by which the actions of a person can be linked together'. He has demonstrated that such reputations were not simply 'made' or 'lost', but might also be dynamic, contested, and revealing, not only of those about whom reputational claims were made, but, crucially, also about those who made the claims themselves. His work offers historians a particularly valuable theoretical concept by which they might approach the subject: 'reputational entrepreneurship.' This is practised by individuals who 'see it as in their *interest* and have the resources to shape a reputation and share it with the public.'[4]

The notion of the 'reputational entrepreneur' is especially well illustrated by the case of the plantation overseer in eighteenth and early nineteenth century North America. In August 1815, Thomas Jefferson wrote to William Wirt, fellow Virginia lawyer and soon to be President James Monroe's Attorney General, outlining his thoughts on the social stratification that had characterised their state over the course of the preceding century. He described a markedly hierarchical society: 'There were then aristocrats [the great planter families], half-breeds [yeoman who had married into

established families], pretenders [self-made, wealthy men with no connection to the established families], a solid independent yeomanry, looking askance at those above, yet not venturing to jostle them, and, last and lowest, a seculum of beings called overseers, the most abject, degraded and unprincipled race…'[5] Jefferson's disdain for those who actually managed enslaved labourers (held to their bondage by planters of his own class) was widely shared. His contemporary the political theorist and agricultural reformer John Taylor wrote of the evils that beset plantation economics, for which he blamed 'a demon called ignorance, for whose worship the slave states have erected an established church, with a ministry, entitled overseers…'[6] Indeed, by the time that Jefferson and Taylor proffered their opinions on the characters and habits of overseers, their poor reputation had been long established. Robert Pringle, in his Letterbook (1737-1742) contemptuously asserted that 'the Station of an Overseer' was invariably occupied by men of 'low circumstances' who had 'no fix'd or Certain abode' and were 'Oblidg'd often to Shift and move about.'[7] Joseph Ball had, in 1745, described two in his employ as 'slubbering sons of bitches' and bemoaned the expenses he incurred when such men had the audacity to bring wives and children with them to the plantation.[8] In 1711, when, one boozy tavern evening, a wealthy planter named George Wortham had offered his struggling neighbour Benjamin Davis a position in his employ as an overseer, the latter had been so offended that the two men had come to blows. Davis (or so the witnesses testified) died when he 'ran himself of Wortham's outstretched sword.'[9]

Planters like Jefferson, Taylor, Pringle and Ball who employed overseers had a very clear self-interest in characterising them as brutal, dishonest, and incompetent. For historians such as James Baird, this was primarily a means by which planters established their own contrasting credentials as virtuous and benevolent paternalists, committed to the wellbeing of 'their people' and anxious to distance themselves from the cruelties inflicted upon their bondsmen and women.[10] Yet this interpretation needs, at the very least, substantial elaboration. Such reputational claim-making did far more than bolster the ideological self-image of those who considered themselves enlightened patriarchs. Reputation was a crucial factor in the recruitment of overseers, in shaping their pay and

conditions (especially in terms of attempting to manage their expectations), in justifying interference in their management of plantations and enslaved workers, and in scapegoating them for poor crops. It even allowed planters to flout colonial society's legal and racial mores, by defying legislation requiring the presence of white overseers on plantations and appointing 'loyal' and 'honest' enslaved managers in their stead. Reputational entrepreneurship was, thus, a manifestation of the practical exercise of power during a period when planters strove to defend their mastery on their own property and consolidate their wider social and political authority. For their part, overseers and their wives and families (whose reputations were similarly besmirched) frequently responded to this evolving rhetorical and ideological framework by actively, and defiantly, asserting their own competence and autonomy and by vigorously pursuing their own aspirations.

The context for this strident and deepening disputation was a century of swift changes that transformed plantation enterprises far from their English organisational antecedents, from the late seventeenth century onwards. Max Edelson has stressed their evolution in South Carolina. Intent on securing profits, adaptable and ruthlessly ambitious planters overcame their distaste for swamps and marshes and learned rice cultivation. They expanded into peripheral regions, dispossessed the indigenous population, diversified their operations (supplementing rice with indigo and other crops) and maximised the labour they extracted from their bonded workers. While they outwardly decried cruelty, the burdens they placed upon the enslaved were indicative of a brutally harsh and coercive work regime. Yet, for the planters themselves, their ostentatious accumulation of wealth and the mastery they exercised fostered the development of their own sense of self-worth and status, modelled largely on English notions of gentility, with a world-view stressing order, stability and deference.[11] Lorena Walsh, examining Virginia and Maryland, placed a similar emphasis on eighteenth-century planters' relentless pursuit of profit and mastery. This was achieved largely through the more rigorous exploitation of the enslaved, alongside the practical application of the lessons of the English agricultural revolution, such as crop rotation. In the drive to plant more

efficiently, Walsh notes increasing demand, and indeed competition, for the most capable overseers.[12]

Such demand drew in overseers from increasingly diverse socio-economic backgrounds: skilled farmers, market gardeners, artisans and 'gentlemen.' Assertive, ambitious and, in many cases, determined to establish themselves as independent planters, these recruits may have made for more profitable plantations, but frequently challenged the established planters' sense of their own untrammelled mastery. The tension that ensued from this challenge, counterintuitively, appears largely unmitigated by any emerging sense of white racial solidarity (and the enslaved too, could engage in claim-making about those who supervised them, exploiting and reinforcing the claims made by planters to their own advantage). As Peter Thompson has observed, 'Whiteness within the slaveholding society Virginia became in the eighteenth century did not always, even often, trump class identities formed in the seventeenth century.'[13]

The extant scholarship on colonial overseers has paid some attention to attempting to explain why a profession so necessary to the management of thriving plantations was, nevertheless, the object of such persistent obloquy.[14] William E. Wiethoff's 2006 monograph offered an analysis of how the overseer had been perceived by others from the establishment of race slavery in the seventeenth century through to its collapse in 1865.[15] It was organised in seven thematic chapters, in each of which Wiethoff considered one of the performative roles, as he saw them, enacted by the plantation overseer: taskmaster, scoundrel, rival, subaltern, colleague, spy, and warrior. His work offered many important insights into the forging of the image of plantation managers. Perhaps his most striking chapter was that on the (white) overseer's rivalry with unfree plantation managers, drivers, foremen and, indeed, quite explicitly in some cases, overseers. This situation, in which the enslaved competed with freemen for a position of authority and power, challenged colonial society's racial hierarchy and drove down the wages of white overseers. The hostility and tensions that arose from this contest also played their part in forging the image of the 'taskmaster' and the 'scoundrel.'

Yet, overall, Wiethoff's focus on the image of overseers, discussed as performative roles such as 'scoundrel' and 'taskmaster,' rather veiled the lived reality of the acts of violence, sexual assault, and ruthless exploitation of labour, as experienced by those they supervised.

In an important essay published in that same year, James Baird tackled the question of the overseer's standing head-on. He noted the ideological function of the overseer's poor reputation in the discourse of planters who, over the course of the eighteenth century, increasingly saw themselves as benevolent masters, allegedly committed to the order, happiness and wellbeing of 'their people': their exploited, diseased, and brutalised enslaved workers and the dependent (white) poor they employed. Focusing on Virginia in the period 1750-1825, Baird noted the paradox of an institution that was a central driver of the newly emerging capitalistic, market-orientated Atlantic economy but was characterized by traditional social relations, putatively built on ties of personal inter-dependence and reciprocal obligations. The dissonance experienced by profit-maximizing planters, when confronted by the suffering of their extended plantation 'families', was relieved by their growing self-image as 'paternalists.' These consequently fretful patriarchs distanced themselves from the cruel realities of managing unfree labour by their employment of others to wield the whip and drive the enslaved to exhaustion. The (by repute) degraded, unprincipled, and tyrannical overseer could thus bear the responsibility for the sins of slavery.[16]

A recent treatment of the subject by Tristan Stubbs recognised, like Baird, the violence of which overseers were certainly capable and the frequent instability of their employment. Stubbs noted too the 'sociological role' fulfilled by overseers, and that the stereotypes levelled at them served their purpose in the construction of the self-image of planters as 'paternalists.' The delegation of the task of physically punishing slaves to overseers, for example, created 'one of the most enduring facets of the plantation manager's negative image.' Thus, for Stubbs, the declining reputation of the poor, 'dependent' overseer over the course of the eighteenth century resulted from an ideological shift among planters (albeit one that drew upon pre-existing prejudices against

the dependent classes) increasingly eager to stress their own virtues as 'enlightened patriarchs' while distancing themselves from the prosaic and debasing cruelties of plantation management.[17]

The fullest study of colonial overseers (covering both free and enslaved plantation managers and recognising, for the first time, the supervisory roles taken on by the wives of overseers) is by Laura Sandy. She has demonstrated that overseers largely defied easy categorisation. By the early eighteenth century, many recruits into the overseeing profession were highly skilled agriculturists, artisans and craftsmen. Some were themselves slave owners. Some were 'gentlemen', serving an apprenticeship to be planters. These overseers were often aspirational and independently minded.[18] While many forged successful and positive relationships with their employers, they also demonstrated a capacity for self-assertion and ambition that could put them at odds with planters.

These were significant characteristics. It has been argued, most notably by Eugene Genovese, that the planter class exercised an effective hegemony, engineering and dominating a social consensus, in the slave South. Although his main focus was on antebellum society, Genovese argued that the planters had become this 'entrenched ruling class' by the end of the eighteenth century.[19] Drawing from the work of the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci, he was especially insistent that they exercised a cultural hegemony; the legitimacy of their value systems was essentially accepted by both the enslaved and by poorer whites. It thus simply did not seem to occur to him that the reputational claims made by planters might be contested by others: 'it is bizarre and psychologically impossible to assert that the planters held the overseers as a class in contempt, but that the overseers had no feelings of inferiority as a result.'[20] However, the reputational entrepreneurship practised in colonial society illustrates very clearly that overseers did not accept planters' notions of their inferiority. In some, admittedly rare, instances, this is clearly demonstrated by public responses countering the reputational claims made by planters. However, there is, unfortunately, little such direct testimony authored by overseers themselves, and less still by their wives and family members. Yet their part in the debate over reputation may still be recovered, for,

as Rhys Isaac has so forcefully emphasised, 'actions must be viewed as statements.'[21] It is, thus, the record of social interactions between planters, overseers, their wives, and the enslaved, that reveals planters' reputational entrepreneurship as a component of social conflict and, in particular, a response to perceived threats to their authority and status.

Contests over reputations can be most clearly identified in the public sphere, where rival reputational entrepreneurs can hope to make the widest appeals to their 'communities of support.'[22] In the colonial South and the early republic, planters were at an advantage here. They had both the time and the influence to ensure their claim-making reached a wide audience and they exploited society's high levels of literacy to make claims about the character and competence of overseers. John Taylor's castigating overseers as the 'ministers' of a demonic church of ignorance, cited above, in his series of published essays on agriculture, being one notable example.[23] These reputational claims might also be made indirectly, but still effectively, as is evident in the advertisements that planters placed in newspapers when seeking to employ an overseer. While planters frequently expressed their desire to hire managers with specific skills and experience, as farmers or artisans, character and individual reputation were, if anything, emphasised as equally and, sometimes, the most important, qualifications. They insisted that applicants provide 'good testimonials' from 'Gentlemen of distinguished judgement and candour,' that would confirm that they were 'industrious', 'diligent', 'prudent', 'discreet', 'faithful', and 'of good moral character' in their 'management of Negroes.' Planters warned emphatically, 'none need apply who have not got good written recommendation' that endorsed their reputation.[24] This (public) emphasis upon demonstrating possession of these personal characteristics implied, of course, that such qualities were not simply to be expected in those applying to be overseers. Furthermore, the necessity of providing testimonials from suitable 'gentlemen' indicated that the planter class aimed to reserve the right to judge reputation, and would exercise that judgement to control who was, and who was not, to be employed as an overseer, thereby bolstering their social authority.

The process by which overseers were recruited thus indicates the profound significance of reputation as a component of social capital in colonial societies, even when reputational claims were being made subtly and implicitly. In other instances, the claim-making was very explicit indeed. In February 1776, Matthew Marable, a Virginia planter, published his opinion in the *Virginia Gazette*, the most influential paper in the colony, that he was 'fully convinced that the trusting of plantations and slaves to the management of a set of people calling themselves overseers, will never produce anything but ruin and destruction.'[25] Yet such claims were sometimes robustly and publicly contested and Marable's diatribe provoked a response from one reader. The following April, the paper published this reader's letter to the editor starkly mocking Marable's claims, '[Marable was] subscribing himself, in capital letters, A FOOL', and dripping with sarcasm: 'while some scribble lofty heroics, to decorate the Poet's Corner … he, more humbly, but no less useful, vents his scribbling itch on the pestilent Race of Overseers.' The author moved swiftly on to challenging the arrogance of one who would denigrate not one individual but an entire occupational group: 'is it not still more extraordinary, that while libelling a single person is severely punishable by the laws, this new mode of libelling a whole society of men … should pass uncensured?' In a final and unequivocal statement that he had himself acquired no sense of his own inferiority, and that he rejected the reputational claims made by the planter class, the author closed his letter as one 'not ashamed to subscribe himself An OVERSEER.'[26]

This particular exchange is a reminder that, like all 'entrepreneurship', attempting to shape reputations carried risk. As Fine notes some reputations can be 'sticky': 'they have the potential to characterize the selves of those who propose them.'[27] By making negative reputational claims about overseers, planters not only bolstered their own reputations as 'paternalists' (as they might have hoped) but also reinforced an image among other colonists of their arrogance and aristocratic pretentions. This, too, would be manifest in the autonomous, even defiant, behaviour displayed by overseers and their families towards planters. In order to understand how the reputational claims made in regard to overseers reflected actual contests surrounding status, authority and power being

enacted on slave plantations, it is useful to consider exactly what the role of the overseer was on the plantation enterprise and, crucially, how this role developed over time. One of the reasons that the reputation of overseers was being contested was that their role itself changed significantly over the course of the late seventeenth and eighteenth century, reflecting important, and to planters potentially destabilising, developments in both the wider economy and society. Their response, 'this new mode of libelling a whole society of men,' was thus a reflection of the 'new' circumstances that emerged on increasingly complex and diversified plantations, especially the racialization of their labour force and the widening demographic background of overseers themselves.

The word 'overseer' itself (and the basic underlying concept, a manager with a direct responsibility for both the supervising and wellbeing of labourers) was familiar to the people of late Elizabethan and early Stuart England. For example, overseers appear in manorial court leet records of the 1590s, tasked with directing particular groups of workers, such as 'theym that putt Butter Creame or Shewitt [suet] in cakes.'[28] The Poor Law of 1598 gave to the 'overseer of the poor' in each parish responsibility both for providing for indigent parishioners and for directing them in gainful work.[29] In 1613, in a speech to mark the opening of a new water supply to Islington, the 'overseer' of the labourers was lauded as 'that tride man, An ancient souldier, and an artisan.'[30] Shortly thereafter, overseers were among the first colonists to arrive in England's newly-established possessions in the New World. In 1621 the Virginia Company introduced the use of overseers to the southern colonies, initially to supervise (European) indentured servants and then enslaved Africans and their descendants. The company described one of its first productive agricultural units 'as consisting of one thousand acres worked by five persons and an overseer.'[31] Edmund Morgan describes how, on seventeenth-century tobacco plantations in Virginia, '[servants'] labour was … supervised in groups of eight or ten by an overseer,' and that they were 'already subject to correction by the whip,' even before slavery dominated southern agriculture. When enslaved Africans joined plantation workforces in increasing numbers from the mid-seventeenth century

onwards, overseers then supervised groups of racially mixed labourers: men and women, black and white, free, indentured and unfree, who worked side by side.[32]

For the most part these early plantation overseers were recruited from the same servile class as those they supervised, 'servants and slaves whose condition differed little from their own.'[33] They were often themselves time-expired indentured servants, whose own period of servitude had now ended but remained in the employ of their former master. As Virginian Robert Beverley noted in 1705, 'An Overseer is a Man, that having served his time, has acquired the Skill and Character of an experienced Planter, and is therefore intrusted with the Direction of the Servants and Slaves.'[34] Yet that world was already passing. The evolution of plantation economics over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries would both extend the duties and responsibilities of the overseer and draw in a far wider range of individuals, from more diverse backgrounds, into plantation management. The two key developments were the rise of racial slavery that saw European indentured servants largely supplanted by enslaved Africans as the main source of plantation labour (attempts to enmesh Native Americans in this emerging labour system also indicate its racialised character), and the increasing complexity and sophistication of large plantation enterprises.[35]

In the context of the emerging system of racial slavery, the overseer was not merely the supervisor of labour on a particular plantation but also had a wider responsibility for enforcing the subordination of African Americans and in forestalling any possibility of servile insurrection. As was so often the case, the continental colonies took Caribbean models in this respect. After slave plots were uncovered in the 1670s and 1680s, 'deficiency laws' had been passed in Barbados imposing fines on planters who failed to keep a quota of white Europeans in their employ for every enslaved African who worked on their plantation. These laws were quickly copied on the mainland, as slaves came to dominate their plantation labour forces. L. H. Roper has also noted that, at this point in time, many white colonists themselves still had an imperfect understanding of what enslavement entailed and thus (unconsciously) threatened the stability of the institution. In South Carolina, the

colony's authorities had lamented that many owners allowed their slaves 'to do what and go whither they list, & to work where they please,' even permitting them to earn money in their right. Hence legislation was passed to ensure 'the Better Ordering of Slaves,' an 'ordering' to which overseers were central.[36] In 1712, for example, a deficiency law (revised and expanded in scope in 1726 and 1755) was passed in South Carolina that penalized the owners of plantations 'wherein six negroes or slaves shall be employed without one or more white person living and residing on the same plantation.'[37]

The significance of overseers to the establishment and defence of the institution of race slavery was reinforced by their exemption from active service with the militia in wartime, which was a recurrent and destabilising condition of Britain's North American colonies in the eighteenth century. Armed conflict, be it with Native Americans, rival colonial powers or, eventually, the British government itself, loosened the bonds of slavery, presenting opportunities for escape, rebellion, *marronage* or defection to the enemy. When slave colonies found themselves at war, they generally thus enacted legislation that tightened the supervision of the enslaved yet further, as is evident in South Carolina in 1712, when the colony joined North Carolina in its conflict against the Tuscarora, and in 1717, following the war with the Yamasee, when the frontier remained volatile (in 1728, an English report on the numerous 'Robberys, Murders and Piracys' committed upon South Carolinian plantations identified Yamasees, Creeks, and runaway slaves based in Spanish Florida as the culprits).[38] When armies mobilised or raiding parties threatened, overseers were thus expected to defend surrounding communities from those they held in chains, rather than from their external enemies.[39] As well as defending against the threat of those wishing to purloin plantation resources and steal slaves, they had, by the closing years of the seventeenth century, thus become instrumental figures in the maintenance and policing of racial subordination. The importance of this function was periodically reinforced by rumours of plots, or actual insurrections, most notably the Stono rising in South Carolina in 1739, when the rebels attempted to seek refuge in Florida.[40]

This role in the policing of racial slavery was not the only aspect of overseers' employment that developed in the context of southern plantation economies. Although primarily associated with the management and supervision of agricultural labour, which was organised either in gangs or set to individual tasks, overseers undertook an increasing range of duties. They were responsible for distributing rations, clothing, and sundry supplies to the enslaved. In the event of ill-health, they, in the first instance, were to act as physicians and treat the sick. Ensuring the harmony of the quarters, arranging marriages or organising celebrations, such as those held at Christmas, were frequently their responsibilities too. They policed the physical boundaries of the plantation; they pursued runaways and ejected unauthorised visitors.[41] They maintained the fabric of the estate, mending fences and buildings, procured livestock and transported goods to market. The South Carolinian planter John Colhoun even specified in one contract that his overseer Thomas Gravestock was not only to 'carry on the whole Business of the said Plantation with care & diligence' but was also 'to attend to the Ferry,' at the river crossing on his property.[42] When planters purchased new land, it was often the overseer who established a new farm, frequently in isolated and hostile frontier conditions. And all the time, his anxious employer (possibly absent for the season, or perhaps resident elsewhere) would be pressing for detailed reports, stock taking, accounts, and news.

Thus, over the course of the eighteenth century, as plantations diversified economically, the overseer's duties became yet more extensive and demanding. Moving away from relying on the production of a single crop such as tobacco in Virginia or rice in South Carolina, planters looked to grow additional cash crops, such as wheat in the Chesapeake or indigo in the Low Country. Many, such as Thomas Jefferson at Monticello, also developed their plantations as centres of production for manufactured goods: textiles, clothes, shoes, nails and barrels.[43] Overseers, and frequently their wives too, with whom they formed managerial partnerships, now supervised the production of varied crops and manufactured goods, while maintaining market gardens, dairies and livestock. In many instances they were additionally responsible for training the enslaved to undertake this new range of work too, therefore adding instructor to their list of duties.[44]

Given both the extent of the responsibilities, and the requirement for a diverse range of skills, it should be no surprise that recruits to the overseeing profession were soon being drawn from a much wider range of socio-economic backgrounds. It was not impossible, even in the late eighteenth century, for those from impoverished backgrounds to succeed as overseers. In 1768, Henry Laurens employed a recent Dutch or German immigrant, Casper Springer, as a servant on one of his plantations. Springer was so poor Laurens had to supply him with a suit of clothes, a coat, a hat, and a pair of shoes. The 'greatcoat' he wore was the same as those Laurens issued to his enslaved drivers. Yet Laurens soon found Springer 'very industrious', 'honest and grateful', and 'a tolerable good planter', and eventually promoted him to the position of overseer.[45] Yet this background was far from representative. Considering the actual background of eighteenth-century overseers, illuminates Jefferson's stigmatizing of overseers as, collectively, members of an 'abject, degraded and unprincipled race' for what is was: reputational entrepreneurship, a claim made to an established community of support (other planters) with an interest in denigrating those they employed to manage their plantations, in order to bolster their own authority.

For example, many overseers who arrived in North America as indentured servants over the course of the eighteenth century were not drawn from the traditional background in agricultural labour. They were craftsmen and artisans, neither 'abject' nor 'degraded' but skilled and ambitious. Their indentures paid from their crossing of the Atlantic, where they sought economic opportunity. Their skills were in high demand on plantations and they were employed to both supervise and train the enslaved. John Askew was a joiner by trade. He arrived in Virginia in 1754 and was indentured for four years to George Washington's lawyer George Mercer, who had paid his passage to the colony. In 1759, his indenture expired, he was then employed by Washington 'to work true and faithfully at his trade as a joiner' and 'use his best endeavour to instruct in the art of his trade any negro or negroes' for the annual salary of £25 (Virginia currency) per annum, plus provisions and housing for him and his wife.[46] Other skilled craftsmen had paid their own passages and arrived with the intention of pursuing their own trades but found overseeing a lucrative option on their arrival in

the colonies. Peter Horlbeck had worked as a 'master mason' in Germany and England before emigrating. He initially pursued his trade in Charleston but then took a job as an overseer for Henry Laurens on his Mepkin plantation. He later resumed his work as a mason and, drawing on the funds and reputation gained through his association with Laurens, set himself up as an independent planter.[47]

Horlbeck's career is highly instructive when considering the contest surrounding overseers' reputations. He defied the stereotype. He was a talented craftsman, ambitious, capable and confident enough to establish himself eventually as an independent planter. These were, by mid-century, far from uncommon characteristics in plantation overseers. Some, indeed, were referred to as 'gentlemen apprentices': the sons of American planters or wealthy Europeans, who were employed as overseers as training for establishing themselves as planters in their own right. Henry Laurens (himself of Huguenot descent) employed two French Protestant *émigré*s, James Rossel and John Lewis Gervais, as gentleman-overseers. When they first came to him in the 1760s, he noted that while they were clearly 'gentlemen' they were 'no planters.' However, Laurens hoped that with his guidance and the 'tuition and assistance of a capable overseer,' both men, after a couple of years would be trusted as an 'Overlooker' or agent for wealthy planters in the area. Laurens anticipated that Rossel and Gervais would eventually settle in the region as planters in their own right.[48] Other overseers were yeoman farmers, who owned land and, in some cases, slaves. At least 11 out of 32 of the overseers that Henry Laurens's employed over his lifetime owned their own slaves.[49] And, as Robert Olwell has observed, slave ownership turned a man into 'a master and, in a slave society, into a member of the ruling class.'[50]

Considering the negative reputational claims made about overseers by planters such as Jefferson, this situation presents something of paradox. In many instances, established planters very clearly benefitted from being able to employ such individuals. An overseers' slaves, for example, would work alongside their own and thus increase productivity. Many planters who advertised for overseers in the *South Carolina Gazette* thus welcomed overseers who brought their own slaves.

Planters offered to either hire the overseer's slaves or offer a share of the crop as payment (to their owner naturally) for their labour. One planter advertising for an overseer expressed a solid preference for 'a Person [who] has two or three Hands to put on Shares', stating that a man who could add his own slaves to the workforce would be 'more acceptable' than one without.[51] John Ewing Colhoun was one of a number of planters who sold slaves to their overseers, sometimes advancing them credit in order to meet the purchase price.[52] In other instances, the patronage relationship established between planters and ambitious overseers lasted long after the latter had established themselves independently. John Laurens arranged for John Lewis Gervais, his former overseer and by then master of his own plantation, to take on a wealthy Genevan immigrant, Charles Masson, as a 'gentleman apprentice' on his behalf.[53]

Yet, notwithstanding such successful and mutually beneficial individual relationships, it is also apparent that the rise of the ambitious and independently minded overseer also presented challenges to the status and authority of established planters. This contest provided an essential context for the reputational battle over the character of that 'seculum of beings called overseers'. With highly marketable skills, they were less dependent upon their employers than men drawn from a servile class of agricultural labourers. They were more likely to drive a hard bargain in negotiating pay and terms, more likely to leave employment if circumstances did not suit them, more likely to object to interference in how they managed plantation business, occupied their own time or who they invited as guest onto the plantation. If they were being paid in shares of a crop, they were more likely to drive the enslaved brutally to increase crop yields, provoking resistance, fostering grievances and disrupting the harmony of the planter's domain. Examples of all these behaviours and the friction they generated with planters are well attested in the records.

Hyland Crow was employed as an overseer on one of George Washington's farms from 1792 to 1794. Crow delivered large crops, but his management of Washington's workers was characterized by 'bad temper' and 'floggings'. Although uneasy about Crow's brutality, Washington increased his wages over two consecutive years, because the crops 'had been the most productive of

any I made' and he hoped that the pay rise was an incentive to encourage 'future exertions' that would ensure continued profits. Yet Crow continued to press for higher pay, and Washington finally warned him the following year that further demands for more money would be 'fruitless' and he must 'seek for it elsewhere.' Shortly after, the two parted ways, allegedly over Crow's subsequent willful 'inattentions and neglect' of his duties.[54]

Yet Washington's frustration with his overseer was rooted not in his performance, nor even in his brutality, to which the planter acquiesced whilst it yielded a high profit, but rather to Crow's ambition. Epitomizing the value system of the Virginia aristocracy (itself a conscious reflection of English genteel society), Washington presupposed the existence of a rigidly hierarchical society where all knew their rank and moderated their behaviour, manners, dress - and demands for wages - accordingly. The 110 'Rules of Civility & Decent Behaviour In Company and Conversation' that Washington so famously and laboriously copied out as a child, and which were reflected in his own behaviour throughout his life (although, as William Sayen demonstrates, Washington himself was capable of 'unmannerly' behaviour when his own 'honor' was at stake), were characterized by their support of an ordered, obedient and caste-conscious society. They taught deference, and submission to authority, urging men to 'Strive not with your Superiers in argument, but always Submit your Judgment to others with Modesty.'[55] Washington's conflict with Crow arose from the latter's failure to abide by the same set of rules and his presumptuous (to the planter's eyes) habit of immodest self-assertion and ingratitude.

Such conflicts were not unusual. In 1773, William Gambell became an overseer for Henry Laurens and brought with him five of his own slaves. Laurens soon began to fret about Gambell's brutal handling of his workers, worrying that 'Negroes Cruelly treated' would be 'driven to severity' and be more likely to abscond. At one point, he even claimed he was prepared to 'Submit to make less Rice & keep my Negroes at Home in some degree of happiness, in preference to Large Crops acquired by Rigour and Barbarity.' He suspected that a slave-owning overseer who was paid in shares had 'his own Interest rather too much in View'. Gambell was, however, equally unimpressed

with his employer's warnings and interference in his management of plantation business. As a result, the two argued and Gambell, who knew that an overseer with his track-record of delivering large crops would easily find alternative employment, left Laurens' plantation.[56]

While the brutality of some overseers presented planters with an awkward dilemma, caught between their own greed for profit and their self-image as paternalists, in many cases the behaviour of overseers was more clearly and directly damaging to their employer's material wellbeing. In 1737, Virginia planter John Baylor attempted to gain redress through the law courts for the damages he alleged his overseer, Philip Easter, had inflicted upon him. He accused his erstwhile employee of a multitude of faults and, indeed, crimes: 'Neglect' and theft of crops and seed, loss and misuse of stock and horses, 'driving the negroes off', fraudulent accounting and reporting, and the misappropriation of his employer's resources for use at his own plantation.[57] It is worth just emphasizing that last point; Easter was master of his own burgeoning plantation. This does not necessarily mean that he was not guilty of the offences of which he was accused, but it is a reminder that many overseers were socially and economically ambitious and strove for autonomy and a place in the ranks of the colonial aristocracy. Baylor's conflict with Easter was one between an established planter, and one whose aspirations (advanced legitimately or otherwise) challenged the status quo.

This was not simply a question of money, but also authority on the plantation. Personal behavior and character became arenas of contention, profoundly reflected in the reputational claims made about overseers. As overseers frequently controlled physical access to the plantation and its resources, planters fretted over both the conduct of their social lives and the presence of their kin and friends. Alexander Spotswood actually provided a reference for one former overseer, Roger Farrell, in which he described his abilities in glowing terms: he was a 'very capable man' who 'does business quick.' Farrell, he noted too, was an 'honest man', 'neat' and 'fine tempered' and he had 'never had a better overseer.' Yet, ultimately, he felt compelled to release him from his post because he had '… many connections and acquaintances near him' who frequently visited. Spotswood justified this action by claiming that this not only diverted Farrell from his proper duties, but also

that his family and friends used his grain to feed their horses. Farrell's dismissal from his post was, thus, legitimised by an appeal to the familiar claims that overseers were inattentive of their proper duties and purloined plantation property for their own use. The poor reputation of the overseer generally facilitated the dismissal of an honest, even-tempered and capable individual, whose simple exercise of hospitality to relatives and friends had threatened an anxious planter's sense of control of his own property.[58]

This desire to wield reputation as a tool to maintain a hierarchical social order challenged by ambitious and independently minded employees was particularly evident in planters' attitudes towards the wives and daughters of overseers. Yet in this instance it was further inflected by a powerful gendered ideology concerning appropriate social relations and behaviours. Although almost entirely overlooked in the historiography, non-elite white women made significant contributions to the business and management of plantation enterprises. Those married to overseers often formed effective supervisory partnerships with their spouses, contributing both to the care and ordering of the quarters and to the diverse economic activities being undertaken. They, and single white women employed for specific roles, offered particular skillsets. They baked, brewed beer, ran dairies and cared for poultry, attended births as midwives and produced textiles, soap and candles. And, as with male overseers, they both supervised and instructed the enslaved in these tasks. In addition, planters believed that a wife would offer a settled domesticity to an overseer, quietening a potentially disorderly social life and reducing the risk of their committing sexual assaults against enslaved women, a powerful catalyst of resentment and disruption in the quarters.[59] Unsurprisingly, their value was thus often explicitly recognized by planters, who frequently advertised specifically for married overseers with a 'wife that understands a dairy' or that could 'mind a dairy and poultry.' Recognizing that planters valued such women, some overseers themselves highlighted their marital status when seeking employment. One overseer advertised that he was 'a married man'; another advertised himself as 'a man, with a family.'[60]

Yet, once again, notwithstanding the contribution such women made to the plantation enterprise, planters frequently made stark and harsh reputational claims about the characters and habits of their male employees' wives. They employed an established and ferociously misogynistic vocabulary to do so. Overseers' wives were frequently referred to as 'whores', 'wenches' and 'bitches' in planters' papers. This confirms the wider significance of a peculiarly gendered sense of anxiety among eighteenth-century Southern 'patriarchs' that Kenneth Lockridge has identified in the commonplace books of Thomas Jefferson and William Byrd (another prominent Virginia planter). The selection of quotations, aphorisms and anecdotes collected in these works reveals to Lockridge a fear 'not only of an annihilating female sexuality but also of a threat to manhood construed as domestic and political power, independence and control.'[61] Just as the independently minded and ambitious overseer threatened planters' settled notions of social hierarchy, so the assertive behaviour of their wives was perceived by their employers as dangerous, disruptive and potentially disempowering, hence their assaults on these women's reputations.

Once again, the documentary record furnishes plentiful evidence of how the reputational claims made by planters were rooted in very real conflicts over authority and status on the plantations. In many instances, it was a simple display of social aspiration, expressed in dress or manners, which attracted planter ire. After one visit to an overseer's home, Landon Carter sneered 'I was sorry to see his wife act the part of a fine lady in all her wearing apparel with at least two maids beside her own girl to get dinner and wait upon her… I would rather have seen the diligent, industrious women.'[62] The expression of these anxieties concerning non-elite women who did not know their proper station, was usually accompanied by allegations that they were misappropriating the planter's property. Thus Carter also complained that one of his horses was 'saddle galled', a consequence, he alleged sarcastically, of being used 'as a pad for the overseers lady.'[63] Loss of control over their own resources was a particularly fraught issue for men who, like Byrd, were inclined to boast that patriarchal authority in 'Edenic' Virginia was so complete that the master of a plantation 'was truly a first mover,' akin to God.[64] Thus, after realizing one of his overseeing

households had commandeered additional slaves for their own convenience, one planter in Virginia concluded, 'as for their wives and children I shan't maintain them; for I think they do more hurt than good, taking the hands to wait upon them.'[65]

In other instances, planters were confronted by what seem more clear-cut criminal behaviours. In South Carolina, Margaret Gelder, the wife of Tobias Gelder who was overseer at the Beach Hill plantation of Joseph Waring, stole a seventeen-year-old slave named Caesar. She abandoned her husband and her post on the plantation and, it was thought, that she absconded 'in company' with the intention of selling the 'Negro in the back Settlements, or in one of the neighbouring colonies.'[66] However, in other circumstances of alleged theft, some care must be exercised before simply accepting planters' vilification of overseer and their families at face value. It is possible that the events being described were actually a form of social protest: an assertion of a customary right threatened by the more rigorous control of 'private property' being actively promoted by eighteenth-century landowners and merchants across the Anglo-American world.[67] Certainly, those employees who availed themselves of the resources of the plantation upon which they worked seem to have regarded themselves as entitled to do so.

Their robust insistence upon continuing to do so might therefore be understood in much the same way that the persistence of poaching and gleaning (collecting the uncut or fallen grain left in the fields after the harvest) in England during the same period are now understood. Poachers and gleaners both rejected the stigma of criminality that landowners fashioned upon them. They insisted that their access to the resources they took was long-established and legitimate, and they undermined social authority by continuing to engage in these activities, even when confronted by local authorities representing propertied interests.[68] Similar attitudes seem very evident in some of the fractious disputes that often arose between planters and overseeing families. From 1770 to 1778, Tom Freshwater worked as an overseer for Landon Carter. He lived upon one of Carter's plantations with his wife and daughters, soon to be freely disparaged by their employer as 'mad bitches'. Carter recalled how they had helped themselves to peaches growing on the property, and

how, when challenged, they defiantly unleashed a 'vile strain of Abuse' at the planter. Carter threatened Mrs Freshwater, that if she and her daughters continued to misbehave, he would have them 'whipped off the plantation.' Freshwater himself, was, to Carter's mind, no better and was 'again abusively outrageous.' The Freshwater women boldly continued to do very much as they pleased, disturbing not only Carter's sense of domestic authority, but the harmony of the quarters too. Angry and frustrated, he raged about the 'gang of Devils of Freshwaters, whose wife and all his daughters… lie there to do me all kinds of mischief as they can. Stealing away my Chickens … Quarrelling with the people.' As a result, Carter decided he could tolerate the Freshwater family no more and noted their fate in his diary: 'He, wife, and daughters shall be this day drove off.'[69]

Once again, considering such apparently prosaic disputes as actually rooted in a deeper social conflict (exemplified in both the aspirations of new entrants to the overseeing profession and the assertiveness of non-elite white women) provides a clear explanation for the negative reputational claims advanced by planters about those they employed as managers. Such behaviours were by no means characteristic of overseers and their families, examples of harmonious and mutually beneficial planter/overseer relations abound. Yet they clearly occurred frequently enough to make slights and insulting generalizations about a putative 'class' of overseers believable and thus useful in establishing and maintaining an ordered social hierarchy. The masters of the enslaved were not an 'entrenched ruling class' in the late eighteenth century. They were, however, actively attempting to entrench themselves, in a society where their authority was being challenged by unruly and assertive men and women in their employ.

That situation was, of course, further complicated by the rise of race slavery in these colonies. In this context, planter reputational entrepreneurship can again be best understood in terms of advancing their own interests, which, in some instances, necessitated flouting both the legal and socio-cultural framework of white supremacy. Denigrating (white) overseers allowed planters to defy existing laws over who they could, and who they could not, appoint to managerial roles on plantations. It also allowed them to shape new legislation that would give them greater

scope for policing the behaviour of overseers. The risk involved in this particular manifestation of reputational entrepreneurship was that it threatened to undermine white solidarity and thus racial hegemony. Thus, the enslaved, too, became actively involved in claim-making about overseers.

Considered from the planters' perspective, the body of custom, law, and practice that formed the institutional framework of racialized slavery was both essential to their status and prosperity, and, simultaneously, frustratingly restrictive in terms of the untrammeled exercise of their authority on their own plantations. It was, for example, very difficult to prosecute overseers who put the enslaved to work on their own behalf. In most instances the only witnesses to this putative theft of labour were the enslaved themselves, and they could not testify against white people in court. However, fostering a particularly nefarious reputation for overseers would facilitate passing legislation that would allow, exceptionally, black testimony against them. And this is exactly what can be seen in South Carolina, which enacted a law in 1747 stating:

> In case any overseer or manager as aforesaid shall employ upon his own account or business, any of the negroes committed to his care, by sending them of errands or in any other manner whatever, such overseer or manager shall pay the sum of ten shillings to his master or employer, for every day, he or they shall so employ any negro committed to his care, to be recovered as aforesaid; *and the information of any negroes committed to the care of such overseer of manager shall be deemed sufficient proof in every such case*…[70] [emphasis added]

Yet it was more common for planters to exploit the fruits of their reputational entrepreneurship not to enact such legislation but rather to justify flouting existing legislation designed to ensure white hegemony. This is most apparent in the case of the deficiency laws, which required the enslaved to labour under the control of a white overseer. William Wiethoff is one of the few historians to recognize both the scale and the significance of the appointment of the enslaved to supervisory roles on southern plantations: 'slaves served as overseers more frequently and more competently than previously reported.' He notes, correctly, that this both challenged the social status of white overseers and depressed their wages, allowing planters to draw on an alternative, cheaper, more controllable, but clearly capable, cadre of plantation managers.[71] Quantifying the

exact scale of this phenomenon is difficult. In many instances, planters described such individuals as 'drivers' and 'foremen'; these were lesser, supervisory roles traditionally fulfilled by the enslaved. Yet it is clear from their records that such men were, very often, undertaking the same managerial duties expected of an overseer, and, in some cases, they were being employed in place of a white overseer. In 1769, correspondence from the McCall plantation in Virginia revealed that the planter had been advised that he would fare better without a white overseer, and, as a result, decided to have 'no Overseer this year' and instead to rely upon an enslaved man, Joe, to 'aid' labour and production.[72]

In other instances, the terminology was more explicit; the enslaved man was to serve as an 'overseer'. For example, both Washington and Jefferson began to describe enslaved plantation managers clearly as overseers. The former had begun to employ enslaved overseers alongside free ones in the 1760s (this seems to be the decade in which the practice became established). Indeed, his longest-serving overseer was an enslaved man, Davy Gray. Gray was originally appointed to the position in 1770, at the age of about 27, at the Mill Tract Plantation when the white overseer there was moved to another property. In 1785, he took charge of the Muddy Hole Planation, following the death of John Alton, the white overseer there. Washington wrote 'Davy carries on his business as well as the white Overseers, and with more quietness than any of them, with proper directions he will do very well and probably give you less trouble than any of them.'[73] Washington's emphasis on Gray's 'quietness' and responsiveness to 'proper directions' offers a stark contrast to his evident dissatisfaction with Gray's white contemporary, the ill-tempered and demanding Hyland Crow.

A similar pattern can be seen at Jefferson's properties. Toward the close of the eighteenth century, he entrusted his slave 'Great George' with a range of managerial duties. The experiment proved successful. By the early nineteenth century, just when he was freely denigrating (white) overseers as 'the most abject, degraded and unprincipled race…,' he was very clearly referring to one enslaved man, Jim, as 'overseer' in his plantation records.[74] The simultaneous assault on the reputation of the former and the elevation of the latter can surely not be purely coincidental.

As a corollary, it is worth noting that the reputational claims made by planters about enslaved overseers were generally positive; they were often described in terms such as 'good overseer' or 'excellent leader.'[75] Such reputational claims not only served to justify planters' flouting of the deficiency laws, but no doubt helped foster the myth of the faithful slave, a recurring component of the pro-slavery ideology emerging over the course of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century.[76] Promoting the admirable characteristics of such individuals also served an obvious financial motive for planters wishing to profit from trading their human capital. A good reputation was an eminently marketable commodity. When 'Two fine Drivers' were put up for sale in 1774, the owner emphasised that they had been responsible for 'sole management' of his plantations. He boasted that these enslaved overseers produced 'as large Crops the Hands under their Care, as any Managers whatsoever.' Similarly, after the disruption of the Revolutionary War, a newspaper advertisement described one enslaved overseer as a particularly valuable and loyal individual, because 'during the invasion of the country, [he] never went with the British, and had the address to prevent any [slaves] going who were under his care.'[77] It is no surprise to note, therefore, that the reputation of enslaved overseers was reflected in their high market price. Proven enslaved managers often fetched double or triple that of a 'prime' hand. Henry Laurens paid the large sum of £600 currency for an enslaved overseer, even before the price of 'Negroes' was 'very high'. He also paid £1200 currency for 'a mulatto named Samuel,' a skilled bricklayer, 'well versed in other methods of construction' and, at times, employed as an overseer and steward.[78]

Yet, while the promotion of a positive reputation for enslaved overseers clearly served planters' interests, in another sense, their reputational entrepreneurship risked the racial hierarchy upon which chattel slavery rested. The communities that formed in the slave quarters of the eighteenth century were an important context for understanding the tensions that could arise between planter and overseer. Increasingly, the enslaved were American by birth, raised in bondage yet striving to achieve some measure of influence over their own lives, to set bounds on their treatment, to raise and maintain families, to carve out 'customary rights,' half-day and holidays,

garden plots and access to hunting and fishing.[79] They were thus significant actors in the day-to-day politics of the plantation. They, too, could engage in claim-making about overseers and anxious and suspicious masters proved receptive to tales of white overseers' malfeasance from those they considered 'their people.' Thomas Jefferson, for example, once received an account from a white overseer that he had slaughtered twelve hogs. Shortly after, he was informed by a slave that the overseer had actually killed sixteen, and sold plantation corn, for which he had not properly accounted. In these situations, Jefferson, almost invariably, credited what the 'negroes say.'[80] This attitude was not uncommon. James Mercer, another Virginia planter, declared that he 'almost constantly found Nigroes tell Truth enough of distant overseers.'[81]

South Carolinian planter Henry Laurens effectively tasked one enslaved man with the duty of reporting on his overseers, while in Virginia an overseer named James Bishop vehemently objected to being subject to the scrutiny of the enslaved. On one occasion he was so angry at being reported on by the enslaved 'steward Robin,' that he demanded his employer visit the plantation himself or at least 'send a white man' to make an inspection. Further, he threatened his employer that if Robin were sent again, he would 'tie him up and give him fifty lashes.' Outraged by the insinuation that his word could not be 'taken before a negro,' and that his authority and status had been undermined by his enslaved, racial inferior, he informed his employer he refused to 'serve for no such person' who would use enslaved informants and trust them above white man. James Bishop issued his employer with an ultimatum; he either alter his management hierarchy to ensure white men were not under the jurisdiction of the enslaved or else he would resign.[82]

Such conflicts are, again, a forceful reminder that the reputational claims concerning overseers were not simply rhetorical; they were rooted in the contests over power, authority, and status taking place on slave plantations. The reputational entrepreneurship engaged in by planters was demonstrative of their anxieties concerning potential loss of control of their own plantations and its labour force, free and unfree. It was in their interests to denigrate (white) overseers as shiftless, degraded, dishonest, and incompetent. This allowed them to reinforce their own authority

and entrench their rigidly hierarchical vision of society. And it gave them, as individual planters, the leeway to defy restrictive legislation surrounding the policing of racial slavery (in which white overseers had a vital communal function) by appointing 'loyal', 'honest' (more easily controlled and cheaper) enslaved overseers in their stead.

In large measure, the claims made by planters about overseers were a response to the changing demographics of the free labour force employed in managerial capacities on eighteenth-century plantation enterprises. In particular, the employment of independently minded, aspiring, and highly skilled individuals as overseers had the potential to generate friction with planters who expected their employees to 'Strive not with your Superiers in argument…' They were frequently disappointed in this regard, as overseers asserted their own demands, over payment, their treatment of the enslaved, and their freedom to manage without interference. This tension between planters and their more ambitious and restive employees was particularly evident in the misogynistic invective directed towards overseers' wives and daughters, whenever they attempted to 'act the lady' or made free use of the resources available on the plantation. Planters were quick to stigmatise the latter behaviour as theft, as they (characteristically of eighteenth-century landowners across the Anglo-American world) grew more assertive in enforcing exclusive claims to their 'private property.' The defiant response by overseeing families, such as the Freshwaters, indicates the extent to which they rejected both the claims to untrammeled authority and the reputational slights made by planters.

Such exchanges do not support the notion of a 'planter hegemony' in colonial society. Indeed, by engaging in reputational entrepreneurship, planters risked their own reputations, inviting public condemnation, like that of Matthew Marable, for their arrogance in 'libeling a whole society of men.' And in this regard, the study of overseers' reputation does not simply illuminate an important, if hitherto little recognised, facet of American slavery but contributes more broadly to our understanding of social conflict within the southern colonies. Scholars such as Michael McDonnell and Woody Holton have long disposed of the notion of any social consensus among the

revolutionary generation in slave colonies such as Virginia.[83] The experience of many overseers during the conflict with Britain provided a particularly graphic illustration of that point. Those who enlisted risked being damned for abandoning their duties; those who remained in their post and, perforce, lived off plantation resources, were oft condemned for waging their own 'predatory war' against their employers.[84] Understanding the role of reputational entrepreneurship in colonial societies helps explain why no social consensus had emerged over the course of the proceeding century, even though the existence of racial slavery might have been thought to have promoted white racial solidarity over narrower interest of class or caste. Indeed, it is particularly instructive to consider, in this instance, that such social conflict was being played out upon the plantations themselves, between free white men and women, employers and employees, amongst the enslaved workers they struggled together to control.

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[1] The authors wish to thank the anonymous referees of *Historical Research* and Dr Dianne and John Phillips, for their comments on earlier drafts of this article.

[2] Thelma Fenster and Daniel Lord Smail (eds.), *Fama: The Politics of Talk and Reputation in Medieval Europe* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), pp. 1-11. It should be noted that some legal historians have also offered valuable treatments of *fama* in their own field. See for example Laura Ikins Stern, "Public Fame in the Fifteenth Century," *The American Journal of Legal History,* Vol. 44, No. 2 (2000), 198-222.

[3] 'Social Capital,' in David and Julie Jary (eds), *Collins Dictionary of Sociology* (Glasgow: Harper Collins, 1991), p. 562.

[4] See Gary Alan Fine, *Difficult Reputations: Collective Memories of the Evil, Inept, and Controversial* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001) p.2, and *Sticky Reputations: The Politics of Collective Memory in Mid-century America* (London: Routledge, 2012), p. ix.

[5] *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson: Retirement Series* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), (eds.) J. Jefferson Looney, 14 volumes, 7: 544. Richard J. Gray, *A Web of Words: The Great Dialogue of Southern Literature* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2007), p. 76.

[6] John Taylor, *Being a Series of Agricultural Essays, Practical and Political: In Sixty-One Numbers*, (Georgetown J. M. and J. B. Carter, 1813), p. 69.

[7] Walter Edgar ed., *The Letter Book of Robert Pringle* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press. 1972), pp. 474, 577.

[8] Joseph Ball to Joseph Chinn, 19 March 1745, *Joseph Ball Letterbook*, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

[9] Darrett Rutman and Anita Rutman, *A Place in Time: Middlesex County, Virginia, 1650-1750* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1984), pp. 33, 140, 142, 187.

[10] James M. Baird, 'Paternalism and Profits: Planters and Overseers in Piedmont Virginia, 1750-1825,' in *Cultures and Identities in Colonial British America*, (eds.) Robert Olwell and Alan Tully (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), pp. 147-68.

[11] S. Max Edelson, *Plantation Enterprise in Colonial South Carolina* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006).

[12] Lorena S. Walsh, *Motives of Honor, Pleasure, and Profit: Plantation Management in the Colonial Chesapeake, 1607-1763* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

[13] Peter Thompson, 'The Thief, the Householder, and the Commons: Languages of Class in Seventeenth-Century Virginia,' *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, Vol. 63, No. 2 (2006), 280.

[14] The literature on colonial overseers has been slow to develop. Much more work has been done on the antebellum period. See, for example, John Spencer Bassett, *The Plantation Overseer as Revealed in His Letters* (Northampton, Mass.: (Smith College Publications, 1925); William Kauffman Scarborough, *The Overseer: Plantation Management in the Old South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1966); Mark S. Schantz, '"A Very Serious Business": Managerial Relationships on the Ball Plantations, 1800-1835,' *The South Carolina Historical Magazine*, Vol. 88, No. 1 (1987), 1-22; Charles G. Steffen, 'In Search of the Good Overseer: The Failure of the Agricultural Reform Movement in Lowcountry South Carolina, 1821-1834,' *The Journal of Southern History*, Vol. 63, No. 4 (1997), 753-802. Useful material can also be found in William Dusinberre, *Them Dark Days: Slavery in the American Rice Swamps* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996); Michael Wayne, *Death of an Overseer: Reopening a Murder Investigation from the Plantation South* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) and Nathaniel T. Wilcox, 'The Overseer Problem: A New Data Set and Method,' in Robert W. Fogel, Ralph Galantine, and Richard Manning, (eds.), *Without Consent or Contract: Evidence and Methods* (New York: Norton, 1992), pp. 84-109. Invaluable as these studies are, their conclusions cannot be

securely projected back into the colonial era, nor do they explain the origins of the overseer's poor reputation in the eighteenth century.

[15] William Wiethoff, *Crafting the Overseer's Image* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2006).

[16] James M. Baird, 'Paternalism and Profits: Planters and Overseers in Piedmont Virginia, 1750-1825,' in *Cultures and Identities in Colonial British America*, pp. 147-68.

[17] Tristan Stubbs, *Masters of Violence: The Plantation Overseers of Eighteenth-Century Virginia, South Carolina and Georgia* (Colombia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2018), pp.160-163.

[18] Laura Sandy, *The Overseers of Early American Slavery: Supervisors, Enslaved Labourers, and the Plantation Enterprise* (New York: Routledge, 2020). See also, Laura Sandy, 'Supervisors of Small Worlds: The Role of Overseers on Colonial South Carolina Slave Plantations,' *Journal of Early American History*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (2012), 178-210 and 'Slave Owning Overseers in Eighteenth-Century Virginia and South Carolina,' *Slavery & Abolition*, Vol. 38, No.3, 459-474

[19] Eugene D. Genovese*, Roll Jordan Roll: The World the Slaves Made The World the Slaves* Made (New York: Pantheon, 1974)*,* p. 5.

[20] Eugene D. Genovese, '*The Overseer: Plantation Management in the Old South* by William Kauffman Scarborough', *Agricultural History*, Vol. 41, No. 4 (1967), 411.

[21] Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1982), p. 324.

[22] Fine, *Sticky Reputations*, pp. xii-xiii.

[23] On literacy in the North American colonies, see, F. W. Grubb, 'Growth of Literacy in Colonial America: Longitudinal Patterns, Economic Models, and the Direction of Future,' *Social Science History*, Vol. 14, No. 4 (1990): 451-482 and E. Jennifer Monaghan, *Learning to Read and Write in Colonial America* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2005).

[24] See advertisements for overseers placed in the *South Carolina Gazette,* the *Virginia Gazette* and other eighteenth-century newspapers. For example, see 26 August 1773, 11 October and 30 October 1770, *Virginia Gazette* (hereafter *VAG*); 7 August 1755, 17 November 1766, 18 November 1775, *South Carolina Gazette* (hereafter *SCG*); *The Papers of Henry Laurens, 1746- 1792* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1968-2003), (eds.) P. Hamer, G. Rogers, and D. Chesnutt, 16 volumes, (hereafter *PHL*), 4: 583, 585, 5: 6, 120, 145,

156-157, 227, 7: 310, 628, 668, 8: 339, 9: 162-172, 416, 11: 375; *The Diaries of George Washington* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1976 – 1979), (eds.) Donald Jackson and Dorothy Twohig, 6 volumes, (hereafter, *DGW*), 4: 141-143; *The Papers of George Washington* (Charlottesville: the University of Virginia Press, 1983-1988), (eds.) William Abbot, Philander Chase, and Dorothy Twohig, 6 series, (hereafter, *PGW*), Colonial Series, 7: 131-132, 143-146, 148- 151.

[25] 2 February 1776*, VAG*.

[26] 5 April 1776*, VAG.*

[27] Fine, *Sticky Reputations*, p. 201.

[28] *The Court Leet Records of the Manor of Manchester*, Vol. II (1586-1618), (ed.) J. P. Earwaker (Manchester: Henry Blacklock, 1885), p. 114.

[29] Marjorie K. McIntosh, 'Poverty, Charity, and Coercion in Elizabethan England,' *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Vol. 35, No. 3 (2005), 457-479. John Paul, *The Parish Officer's Complete Guide* (London: W. Richardson and L. Urquhart, 1773), p. 9.

[30] Quoted in John Nelson, *The Histories and Antiquities of the Parish of Islington* (London: 1823), pp. 158-159.

[31] Lorena Walsh, *Motives of Honor, Pleasure, and Profit: Plantation Management in the Colonial Chesapeake, 1607-1763*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 106; William Scarborough, *The Overseer* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1984), pp. 3-4.

[32] Edmund Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* (New York: W.W Norton and Co. Inc., 1976), p. 308; Kenneth Morgan, *Slavery and Servitude in North America, 1607-1800* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000), pp. 26-43; Philip D. Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press 1998), pp. 261-262; Walsh, *Motives of Honor, Pleasure, and Profit*, p. 94.

[33] Timothy Breen, *Tobacco Culture: The Mentality of the Great Tidewater Planters on the Eve of Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), p. 6.

[34] Robert Beverley, *The History and Present State of Virginia* (ed. W. Wright) (Chapel Hill: The University North Carolina Press, 1947), p. 272.

[35] For the development of southern plantations and their work forces in this period, in addition Edelson and Walsh, *op. cit*., see Trevor Burnard, *Plantations, Merchants and Slaves: Plantation Societies in British America, 1650-1820* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015); David Galenson*, White Servitude in Colonial America*

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Russell Menard, 'From Servants to Slaves: The Transformation of the Chesapeake Labor System,' *Southern Studies*, XVI (1997), 362-390; Anthony Parent, *Foul Means: The Formation of a Slave Society in Virginia, 1660-1740* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003) and Owen Stanwood, 'Captives and Slaves: Indian Labor, Cultural Conversion, and the Plantation Revolution in Virginia,' *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 114, No. 4 (2006), 434-463. Establishing a precise chronology for the establishment of racialized slavery is challenging. See John C. Coombs, 'The Phases of Conversion: A New Chronology for the Rise of Slavery in Early Virginia,' *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 68, No. 3 (2011), 332-360.

[36] L. H. Roper, 'The 1701 "Act for the Better Ordering of Slaves": Reconsidering the History of Slavery in Proprietary South Carolina,' *William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, Vol. 64, No. 2 (2007), 402.

[37] *Statutes at Large of South Carolina* (Columbia, SC: A. S. Johnson, 1836-1841), (eds.,) Thomas Cooper and David McCord, 10 volumes, 2: 363; 3: 193, 272; 97, 175. Russell Menard, *Sweet Negotiations: Sugar, Slavery and Plantation Agriculture in Early Barbados* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press), pp. 99-100.

[38] Verner W. Crane, *The Southern Frontier 1670-1732* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2004), p. 247.

[39] Roper, 'Act for the Better Ordering of Slaves,' 400. *The Statutes at Large: Being a Collection of All the Laws of Virginia, from the First Session of the Legislature in the Year 1619* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1969), (ed.) William Hening, 13 volumes, 7: 93 and 9: 28;

[40] John Thornton, 'African Dimensions of the Stono Rebellion,' *The American Historical Review*, 96 (1991), 1101-1113; Mark Smith, 'Remembering Mary, Shaping Revolt: Reconsidering the Stono Rebellion,' *The Journal of Southern History*, 67 (2001), 513-534.

[41] Examples of the range of duties outlined in this paragraph can be found in the plantation records of George Washington. DGW, 1: 306; *PGW*, Colonial Series, 7: 148-151. *DGW*, 4: 141-142; PGW, Colonial Series, 7: 131-132, 143-146, 148-151; Paul Wilstach, *Mount Vernon: Washington's Home and the Nation's Shrine* (New York: Doubleday, 1916), pp. 134-5.

[42] John Colhoun Overseer Agreement with Thomas Gravestock, 28 February 1793, box 1, series 2, folder 7, John Ewing Colhoun, Southern Historical Collection.

[43] For Monticello, see Lucia Stanton*, "Those Who Labor for My Happiness": Slavery at Thomas Jefferson's Monticello* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2012), pp. 9-15.

[44] For full discussions see, Laura Sandy, 'Supervisors of Small Worlds: The Role of Overseers on Colonial South Carolina Slave Plantations,' *Journal of Early American History*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (2012), 178-210 and 'Homemakers, Supervisors, and Peach Stealing Bitches: the role of overseers' wives on slave plantations in eighteenth-century Virginia and South Carolina,' *Women's History Review*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (2012), 473-494.

[45] *Henry Laurens' Account Book, 1763-1773*, Robert Scott Small Library, College of Charleston, 186, 387-8, 441; *PHL*, 8: 89; Edelson, *Plantation Enterprise*, 235. *PHL*, 8: 89, 339 and 9: 204, 334. For the importance of artisans to plantation enterprises generally, see Christine Daniels, "'WANTED: A Blacksmith who Understands Plantation Work": Artisans in Maryland, 1700-1810,' *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 50, No. 4 (1993), 765.

[46] John Askew and George Washington contract, 1st September 1759, George Washington Papers, Series 4, General Correspondence, https://www.loc.gov/item/mgw443059/, (accessed, June 2009) LC; *PGW*, Colonial Series, 6: 340-341, 377-78 7: 4, 10, 45, 93-94, 106, 139, 190, 227, 309, 313, 319, 332-34, 418 *DGW*, 1: 291-92, 295, 300, 304, 341-343; Dalzell and Dalzell, *George Washington's Mount Vernon*, pp.142-143, 145, 155.

[47] *PHL,* 2: 279, 4: 59, 575, 579, 585, 5: 92, 8: 339, 14: 335; Michelle Adams, *Boone Hall Plantation* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing Library, 2008).

[48] PHL, 4: 338, 585. Edelson notes that by the '1760s the post of plantation manager became a permanent supervisory position.' He asserts that with 'plantations scattered across the Lowcountry' managers or 'overlookers' were necessary to visit the planter's multiple holdings. Training gentlemen overseers/apprentices under overseers would provide them with an understanding of the 'day-today business of planting' and at the same time prepare them to 'undertake the direction and inspection of overseers.' After working as an overseer and alongside an overseer they would progress to become 'Gentleman Managers' and, thus, be qualified to act on behalf of the 'merchant-planter'; visiting plantations, inspecting land and slaves. The gentleman apprentice would then be able to exercise 'decision-making authority, backed by his own elite status.' Edelson, *Plantation Enterprise*, pp. 153-154.

[49] This number has been calculated from a variety of archival collections that contain plantation records for Henry Laurens: PHL; Henry Laurens Account Book, Robert Scott Small Library, College of Charleston; Henry

Laurens Papers, South Carolina Department of History and Archives, SC (hereafter SCDHA). Although, the total number of overseers employed by Henry Laurens is higher than the number that Philip Morgan claims, this estimate includes non-traditional overseers who were performing the role of an overseer and hired as an overseers but had other skills and duties, for example gentlemen-overseers and artisan-overseers. Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint*, p.327. For a full discussion of slave-owning overseers, see Laura Sandy, 'Slave owning overseers in eighteenth-century Virginia and South Carolina,' *Slavery & Abolition*, 38, 3 (2017), 459 - 474.

[50] Olwell, *Masters, Slaves, and Subjects*, p. 44.

[51] For example, see; December 1767, December 1768, March 1765, January 1765, 23 December 1774, *SCG*. .

[52] Overseer Agreement with John Foster, December 1789, and Overseer Agreement with Thomas Gravenstock, 1793, *John Ewing Colhoun Papers*, Southern Historical Collection.

[53] PHL, 8: 421

[54] John C. Fitzpatrick, ed., *The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799* (Washington: United States George Washington Bicentennial Commission, 1931-1944), 39 volumes, (hereafter, *WGW*), 33: pp.36-37, 193, 209-210, 470. For a full account of Washington's experiences with his hired, indentured and enslaved managers, see Mary V. Thompson, "*The Only Unavoidable Subject of Regret": George Washington, Slavery and the Enslaved Community at Mount Vernon* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2019), pp.78-104.

[55] William Guthrie Sayen, 'George Washington's "Unmannerly" Behavior: The Clash between Civility and Honor,' *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 107, No. 1 (1999), 12.

[56] PHL, 8: 88, 109, 365, 634-635, 647, 9: 100, 157, 162-163, 463,575-576. As noted earlier, research suggests that the majority of overseers worked for wages in South Carolina, however, the evidence also reveals that eighteenth-century planters understood the benefits of offering shares to high calibre recruits and slave-owning overseers and offered this form of payment. All overseers who received shares from Henry Laurens were slave-owners. Despite acknowledging such "financial incentives- under the 'shares' system" encouraged 'hard Driving' and use of the whip by overseers, planters allowed some of their favoured or successful overseers to work for shares. PHL, 5: 159, 197, 6: 126, 398, 7: 134, 9: 315-397; Josiah Smith to George Austin, 17th July 1771, Josiah Smith Letter Book (and, also, quoted in Edelson, *Plantation Enterprise*, 164). Other

works that discuss this issue include; Edelson, *Plantation Enterprise*, 220, 229, 230; Baird, *Paternalism and Profit*, pp.150-151, 156; Weithoff, *Crafting the Overseer's Image*, p. 4.

[57] Almanac, Collection 34/178/1-3SCHS; Charge against Philip Easter, Baylor Family Papers 1653-1915, legal and financial papers, series II, box 2, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia (hereafter UVA).

[58] PGW, Retirement Series, 2: 570, 571, 3: 6, 35, 218, 219-220.

[59] For a full discussion, see Laura Sandy, 'Homemakers, Supervisors, and Peach Stealing Bitches: the role of overseers' wives on slave plantations in eighteenth-century Virginia and South Carolina**,'** *Women's History Review*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (2012), 473-494.

[60] Plentiful examples of advertisements placed in newspapers by planters who expressly wanted overseers with wives can be found in both the *South Carolina Gazette* and the *Virginia Gazette*. For South Carolina examples see, January 1736, August 1745, October 1748, September 1752, March 1753, December 1754, February 1755, March 1756, March 1757, October 1758, 5 November 1764, 17 September 1765, SCG. For Virginia examples see, 31 October 1745, 30 October 1766, 2 September 1773, 15 June 1775, VAG.

[61] Kenneth Lockridge, *On the Sources of Patriarchal Rage: The Commonplace Books of William Byrd and Thomas Jefferson and the Gendering of Power in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: New York University Press. 1992), p.79. See, also, Kathleen Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches and Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race and Power in Colonial Virginia* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

[62] Jack Greene, ed., *The* Diary *of Colonel Landon Carter of Sabine Hall, 1752–1778* (Charlottesville, The University of Virginia Press, 1965), 2 volumes, (hereafter, *DLC*), 2 volumes, 2: pp.727-728.

[63] Ibid, 2: p. 1020.

[64] Lockridge, *Patriarchal Rage*, p. 93.

[65] Joseph Ball to Joseph Chinn, 19 March 1745, Joseph Ball Letter Book, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

[66] 30 June and 6 July 1767, *SCG*.

[67] Susan Staves, 'Chattel Property Rules and the Construction of Englishness, 1660-1800,' *Law and History Review*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (1994), 123-153.

[68] Joanna Innes and John Styles, 'The Crime Wave: Recent Writing on Crime and Criminal Justice in Eighteenth-Century England,' *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 4, (1986), 380-435. D. J. V. Jones, 'The Poacher: A

Study in Victorian Crime and Protest,' *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 22, No. 4 (1979), 825-86. Peter King, 'Gleaners, Farmers and the Failure of Legal Sanctions in England 1750-1850,' *Past & Present*, No. 125 (1989), 116-150 and 'Legal Change, Customary Right, and Social Conflict in Late Eighteenth-Century England: The Origins of the Great Gleaning Case of 1788,' *Law and History Review*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (1992), 1-31.

[69] DLC, 2: 1140-1142.

[70] *Statutes at Large of South Carolina*, 3, 698; W. Rice, *Digested Index of the Statute law of South Carolina: From the Earliest Period to the Year 1836* (Charleston: J. S. Burges, 1836), 231-232.

[71] William Wiethoff, 'Enslaved Africans' Rivalry with White Overseers in Plantation Culture: An Unconventional Interpretation,' *Journal of Black Studies*, Vol. 36, No. 3 (2006), 429-455. For the antebellum period, see William Van Deburg, *The Slave Drivers: Black Agricultural Labour Supervisors in the Antebellum South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

[72] 'The Correspondence of Archibald McCall and George McCall,' in *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* Vol. 73 (1965), 335, 440.

[73] See George Washington's Memorandum List of Tithables and Cash Accounts, 1760 to 1774. *DGW*, 4: 252; *PGW*, Colonial Series, 6: 217–220; *PGW*, Colonial Series; 8: 290, 362-364; *PGW,* Presidential Series, 7: 40–45. Entries for 7 January 1770, 9 April 1770, George Washington Ledger A, 1750-1772, *George Washington Papers, Series 5, Financial Papers: General Ledger A, -1772*. /1772, https://www.loc.gov/item/mgw500001/, (accessed, August 2017), LC; Entries for 25 December 1773, 22 April 1781, 16 February 185, George Washington Ledger B, 1772-1793, *George Washington Papers, Series 5, Financial Papers: General Ledger B, -1793*. /1793, https://www.loc.gov/item/mgw500002/, (accessed, August 2017), LC; Entries for 18 January 1798, 16 February 1799, George Washington Ledger C, 1790-1799, *George Washington Financial Papers Project*, http://financial.gwpapers.org/?q=content/ledger-c-1790-1799, (accessed, June 2017), UVA; Entry for 24 March, Manager Ledger (James Anderson), 1798-1800, George Washington Library, Mount Vernon; *WGW,* 32: 472, 474-476; *PGW*, Presidential Series, 12: 631–637, 13: 220-226.

[74] Lucinda Stanton, *Free Some Day: the African-American Families of Monticello* (Charlottesville: Thomas Jefferson Foundation, 2000); James Bear, ed., *Jefferson at Monticello: The Private Life of Thomas Jefferson* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1967), p. 51.

[75] Watson and Uxv. Cockes c. late 1740s, Legal Papers of Nicholas Wythe, 1740-1759, no.564, UVA. Also, quoted in, Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint*, 220.

[76] For which see Larry Tise, *Proslavery: A History of Slavery in America, 1701-1840* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1987).

[77] 16 May 1774, SCG; 10 June 1783, *South Carolina Gazette and General Advertiser*.

[78] *PHL*, 5: 574, 4: 202.

[79] See Michael Gomez, *Exchanging our Country Marks: The Transformation of African Identities in the Colonial and Antebellum South* (Chapel Hill NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1998); Michael Mullin, *Africa in America: Slave Acculturation and Resistance in the American South and British Caribbean, 1736-1831* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1992).

[80] Bear, ed., *Thomas Jefferson Account Book*, 164. Jefferson's Memorandum Books, *Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, 1: 354–383. One of Jefferson's slaves, Jupiter, kept a "tally" of livestock that was killed and sale of crops and related this to his master when his overseer, Stanley, appeared to have misinformed his employer and possibly embezzled plantation produce.

[81] James Mercer to Battalie Muse, 5 December 1778, Battalie Muse Papers, Duke.

[82] PHL, 4: 202, 241, 5: 574, 15: 301-307, 8: 66-67, 287, 9: 414, 15: 302-207, 16: 30, 389. James Bishop to Hartwell Marable, 27 August 1768, Major- Marable Papers, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

[83] Michael A. McDonnell and Woody Holton, 'Patriot vs. Patriot: Social Conflict in Virginia and the Origins of the American Revolution,' *Journal of American Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (2000): 231-256.

[84] Laura Sandy, 'Divided Loyalties in a Predatory War: Plantation Overseers and Slavery during the American Revolution, *Journal of American Studies*, Vol.48, No. 2 (2014), pp.357-392.